

La Cima Family Handbook



La Cima
CHARTER SCHOOL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK	3
OUR MISSION AND VISION	3
OUR CARE PRINCIPLES	4
OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM	4
The La Cima Way— It Takes A Village to Develop A Changemaker	5
Sample Schedule	5
Homework Policy	6
FAMILY & STAFF COMMUNICATION	7
ATTENDANCE	7
SCHOOL CLOSINGS	9
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	10
Emergency Preparedness	10
Evacuation & Relocation	10
TRANSPORTATION & BUSSING	10
UNIFORMS	12
HEALTHY FOOD POLICY	13
BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS	13
NURSING SERVICES & MEDICATION	14
HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS	14
Immunization Requirements	14
Medication Administration	14
SCHOOL PETS & THERAPY DOGS	15
SCHOOL SUPPLIES	15
PERSONAL ITEMS	15
LOST & FOUND	15
CELL PHONE POLICY	16
PHOTOGRAPHY & MEDIA	16
TECHNOLOGY	16
Technology Use & Internet Safety	16
REPORT CARDS & CONFERENCES	17
What is a scholar-led conference?	17
GRADING & CLASSROOM PLACEMENT	18
Grading System	18
Academic Recognition	18
scholar Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion, or Retention	18
REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC TEACHERS	19
RE-ENROLLMENT & MIDDLE SCHOOL	19
SPECIAL POPULATIONS	19
Response to Intervention (RtI)	19

English as a New Language (ENL) Program	19
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES	20
What are Restorative Practices?	20
Behavior Code Community Expectations	20
Progressive Discipline	20
Progressive Ladder of Support & Disciplinary Responses	21
Scholar Intervention & Discipline Code	21
What is DASA?	22
What is Bullying?	23
No Retaliation	23
Mandated Reporting	23
APPENDIX	24
APPENDIX A: Who Can Answer My Questions	24
APPENDIX B: Important Notice of Additional Policies	25
La Cima Dignity for All scholar Act (DASA) Policy	25
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	25
PROCESS FOR SHARING CONCERNS & FINDING SOLUTIONS	26
LA CIMA FAMILY AND SCHOLAR CONTRACT	27

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to La Cima Charter School! This Scholar & Family Handbook is a reference document that outlines La Cima's most important academic, discipline, and safety policies. Additionally, school notices that are sent home communicating policy updates and changes are regarded as additions to our Handbook. Scholars and families must review all the topics contained in this Handbook and submit a Letter of Acknowledgement of receipt to the school. Please contact the Main Office with any specific policy questions or concerns about this material. At La Cima we have a growth and strengths-based mindset, so our policies and procedures will continually evolve and be conveyed in a positive and supportive manner. This Handbook is intended for our scholars and for their parents, guardians, or individuals with temporary or permanent custody.

OUR MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION at La Cima Elementary Charter School is to prepare our scholars for academic and life-long success through a rigorous and relevant academic program.

OUR VISION is to develop scholars who use their intellectual capacity, social capital and emotional strength of character to be personally successful and to act as effective change-makers in their communities.

OUR CARE PRINCIPLES

La Cima's character education program is rooted in the four C.A.R.E. principles: community, accountability, reconciliation and effective effort.

By teaching our scholars these principles, we ensure that we have a safe and caring environment in which every scholar can learn and grow and that we have a thriving and evolving character education program that supports the academic life of the school.

COMMUNITY

Together
we are
stronger



ACCOUNTABILITY

I am
responsible
for you and for
me



RECONCILIATION

I make peace
with my words
and my actions



EFFECTIVE EFFORT

I learn from
my actions and I
never give up.



HOURS OF OPERATION

La Cima operates from 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, our school day is 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., which gives our teachers time to meet, plan, and receive training. This weekly staff development time helps us improve our collective teaching skills and wider school programming.

Please see our website for the annual school calendar that explicates days off and breaks throughout the year. Automatic calls will be sent as reminders for days off from school.

OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Scholar-Centered, Inclusive Environment

La Cima welcomes and supports all learners. We offer inclusion classrooms in every grade and our teachers are trained to support scholars with disabilities and English language learners.

La Cima affirms and responds to the individualized experiences of our scholars and their families. Through ongoing professional development, teachers are equipped to understand the needs of individual scholars, use data-driven strategies to support diverse learning styles, and identify and address implicit bias, beliefs, and assumptions. To represent diverse perspectives, instruction and classroom libraries incorporate resources that are written or developed by racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse voices. In addition to our rigorous core curriculum, we support scholars' multiple intelligences through a thoughtfully-designed and rigorous specials program that includes courses like African Dance and drumming, art, and music.

Social Justice

At La Cima, we strive to inspire our scholars to be changemakers. Changemakers are tenacious and relentless in their pursuit of the greater good. Changemakers have the courage of their convictions and possess a clear sense of what is right and wrong. They understand that injustice should not be accepted

anywhere. They use a deep-rooted sense of empathy for others, identify a specific problem or opportunity to tackle, and give themselves permission to address challenges.

Kindergarten <i>Youth Visionaries</i>	First Grade <i>Science Firsts</i>	Second Grade <i>Climate and Justice Advocates</i>
Dasia Taylor Marley Dias	Franklin Chang Diaz	Helena Gualinga Thandiwe Abdullah
K-2 and 3-5 English as a New Language <i>Shapers of Society</i>	Third Grade <i>STEM and Sovereignty</i>	Fourth Grade <i>Pathfinder in Power</i>
Lauren Schroeder Hakeem Jeffries Leymah Gbowee	Winona LaDuke Tiera Guinn Fletcher	Ketanji Brown Jackson
Fifth Grade <i>Civic Creators</i>	African Dance & Drumming <i>Echo of the Ancestors</i>	Music <i>Voice of Justice</i>
Amanda Gorman Antonio Reynoso	Dudu N'Diaye Rose	Camilla Williams
Art <i>Visual Historian</i>	Physical Education <i>Pathmaker for Justice</i>	Science <i>Healing Innovator</i>
Jacob Lawrence	Jackie Robinson	Alice Ball

Each La Cima Classroom is named after a changemaker and aligns with our mission to have scholars embrace the spirit of their classroom namesake. Each year scholars participate in an in-depth research project about a changemaker of their choosing to share with the school community.

Constructivist Approach to Math and a Literacy Approach based on the Science of Reading

Every scholar brings a wealth of knowledge to La Cima. Our teachers use that knowledge to develop scholars' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This approach results in scholars' mastery of state standards and supports their growth as life-long learners. In math, La Cima uses a constructivist approach to cultivate scholars' mastery of mathematical concepts. In English language arts, our curriculum is based on the Science of Reading, including structured phonics, which empowers all scholars to read complex grade-level texts and master literacy standards, providing all scholars with an equitable outcome. Our curriculum builds deep knowledge by using content-rich, authentic texts on real-world topics in social studies, STEM, and literature. Scholars leverage their learning for social justice and environmental stewardship while building habits of character that help them contribute to a better world.

The La Cima Way— It Takes A Village to Develop A Changemaker

Scholars, families, and school staff all have a role in making schools safe and must cooperate with one another to achieve this goal. The manner in which scholars conduct themselves in school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining a safe and respectful school community.

Sample Schedule

Our academic program is rigorous, research-based, and collaborative. Although not all grades have the exact same schedule, please see below for an overview of a typical day at La Cima. If you would like to request a copy of your scholar's schedule, please ask your scholar's teacher.

Sample La Cima Charter School Daily Schedule

- **7:30–8:30 AM | Morning Arrival & Community Connection**
As scholars arrive, they enjoy a healthy breakfast, connect with peers, and check in one-on-one with teachers—starting the day grounded, nourished, and seen.
- **8:30–9:30 AM | CARE Circle**
In our CARE Circle, scholars engage in meaningful conversations rooted in La Cima's CARE principles—Community, Accountability, Restorative Justice, and Excellence—building habits of reflection, empathy, and leadership.
- **9:30–10:30 AM | English Language Arts (EL Curriculum)**
Through rich, high-quality texts and writing experiences, scholars develop strong reading comprehension, vocabulary, and communication skills that empower them to express their ideas and engage with the world.
- **10:30–11:30 AM | Science Discovery Lab**
From designing experiments to exploring ecosystems, matter, and forces of nature, scholars become scientists—curious, critical thinkers who learn by asking questions and testing ideas.
- **11:30 AM–12:30 PM | Creative & Movement Arts**
Whether it's Art, Physical Education, Music, or African Dance & Drumming, scholars nurture creativity, rhythm, expression, and movement as essential parts of a whole-child education.
- **12:30–1:30 PM | Lunch & Recess**
All scholars take a well-deserved break to eat lunch with their peers in our school cafeteria and enjoy fresh air and unstructured play in our schoolyard.
- **1:30–2:30 PM | Math Workshop (Into Math)**
Using real-world problems and hands-on strategies, scholars strengthen number sense and develop the critical thinking skills needed to tackle complex math challenges with confidence.
- **2:30–3:30 PM | Creative & Movement Arts**
Scholars return to their specialty subjects—Art, PE, Music, or African Dance & Drumming—to end the academic day with creativity, energy, and joy.
- **3:30–4:00 PM | CARE Reflection**
Scholars come back together in community to reflect on the day—celebrating how they lived out our CARE values and setting intentions for tomorrow.

Specials at La Cima

At La Cima, Specials classes serve as critical creative outlets for scholars to explore and develop passions and talents that enable them to create or express themselves artistically and musically. Every day, scholars have the chance to participate in two Specials periods. Specials classes available to our scholars may include: Art, Music, Piano, Physical Education, and African Dance/Drumming.

Field Lessons

Throughout the year, classes may go on field trips to spaces outside of the school building that provide meaningful learning experiences. In consideration of the many field lessons throughout the year, La Cima asks families to provide approval at the start of the year by signing a universal permission slip that covers all

day trips. In preparation for a field lesson, teachers will send home and post a notice for the upcoming trip. This notice will include an announcement of trip location, transportation method and note any trip specific notations (such as clothing considerations). In the case that you prefer your scholar to attend a field lesson, please contact your scholar's teacher. An alternative day will be planned for children remaining in the building.

On occasion, we may request a family member to join us as a chaperone. If you would like to attend a field lesson as a chaperone, please contact your teacher. Chaperones must attend our parent volunteer training opportunity to ensure fidelity. In order to keep all scholars safe, teachers may contact you to request that you attend a field lesson if we believe that your scholar would benefit behaviorally from your presence.

Homework Policy

Homework is an important component of the educational process. It is expected that the following objectives will be accomplished through regular and well-planned homework:

- Scholars will develop more self-direction and individual responsibility.
- Scholars will develop independent study skills.
- Scholars will become organized.
- Scholars will learn to budget their time.
- The learning process will be expanded through extensions not accomplished in the school setting.

Guidelines

Parents and scholars should expect homework each week on Mondays. Homework should be completed by the child so that their teacher can understand where they need more support.

Assigned homework that requires completion is part of each scholar's evaluation. Any homework assignment that is not turned in on time will receive a maximum of 50 percent credit. If a homework assignment is one week or more late, the assignment will be recorded in the teacher's grade book as a zero.

- Homework will be planned and assigned for specific instructional purposes related to classroom objectives.
- Guidelines have been established for the amount of time to be devoted to homework after school hours. As the school year progresses, the amount of homework assigned may increase depending on the maturity and ability of the scholars.
- Each scholar in grades 3-5 is issued an assignment book by the school.
- Parents are to sign the scholar home learning page each evening to signify that their child has completed the assignment.

Suggested Homework Guidelines

Grade	Minutes Per Day	Days per week
Kindergarten	15-30 minutes	5
First	25-40 minutes	5
Second	30-45 minutes	5
Third	30-60 minutes	5
Fourth	30-60 minutes	5
Fifth	60-90 minutes	5

Make-Up Work

Scholars have an obligation to complete assignments missed during illness or unexpected absence from school. In keeping with our belief that scholars should develop a sense of responsibility, we expect them, with their parents' help, to contact their teachers to secure missed assignments.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the scholar's teachers should be called, so necessary arrangements can be made to have assignments picked up. At the request of the parents, the teachers will provide assignments for a scholar who is absent two or more days. Parents must call before 8:00 a.m. on the day the homework is needed in order to allow the teachers adequate time to assemble the assignments. Parents may pick up the assignments after 3:45 p.m. on the date requested.

FAMILY & STAFF COMMUNICATION

All families will receive contact information for their scholar's teacher at the start of the school year. If a question or concerns arises, families can communicate with the scholar's teacher via email or phone between the hours of 7:30 am and 5:00 pm, but please note: teachers will not be able to make calls when they are teaching.

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a teacher or school administrator, please contact the Main Office at 718-443-2136 so that our administrative assistant can support you with scheduling.

School Messaging Services

All families are strongly encouraged to sign up for our school messenger service to receive regular school wide updates and communicate with your child's teacher. In addition to school notices that may be backpacked home with your child, families have two options to receive timely notifications and communicate with your child's teacher and our school leadership team.

Families will receive an invitation to create an Alma account. Alma, our scholar information system, will be used to send automated calls and text messages to families for general updates. Families may choose to opt out of receiving notifications, however it is strongly advised that all families create an Alma account. An Alma account also allows families to view report cards and other information about your child's progress throughout the year.

ClassDojo has been selected as the messenger service to share general updates, provide timely notifications and allow for one on one communication with all of your scholars teachers. At the start of the school year, your scholar will receive an invitation which will allow you to enroll in the class.

ClassDojo is accessible anywhere there is internet, through use of an application on your smartphone, tablet or website log in. Please note that by enrolling in this optional service using a smartphone, you may be subject to any additional fees and associated costs through your mobile carrier for data and SMS notifications.

ATTENDANCE

One of the greatest factors in your scholars' success is attendance. Absence, lateness, and early dismissals could have a serious impact on a scholar's educational progress and performance. Please keep in mind that every absence is a loss of approximately eight hours of instruction, which means even a couple absences a month could add up to a serious deficit in instruction.

Morning Arrival Policy

School doors on Monroe Avenue open every school day at 7:30 am and close at 7:55 am to ensure scholars arrive at school with time to eat breakfast and prepare their minds for the school day. Unless scholars are

authorized to walk independently via a written Pick-up/Drop-off Authorization Form, they must be dropped off directly to a La Cima staff member by an authorized adult. To ensure the safety of all scholars, no scholars are permitted to enter the building before 7:30 am.

Late Arrival

All scholars who arrive after 7:55 am will be considered late. After 7:55 am, scholars will have to enter through the entrance on Gates Avenue. All late scholars must be escorted inside the building by an adult (unless they are authorized to walk independently via a written Pick-up/Drop-off Authorization Form). All late scholars are signed in at the front desk, and receive a pass for classroom entry.

Families of scholars with excessive tardies will be required to have an in-person meeting with school administrators to discuss next steps to ensure they arrive on-time every day.

Early Dismissal Policy

Only authorized adults will be allowed to pick-up scholars. Please call in advance to ensure the scholar is ready once you arrive. Adults will need to enter through the main Gates Avenue entrance, with proper ID in order to sign-in with a school safety agent. They will then need to come to La Cima's front desk on the 3rd Floor to sign-out their scholar in the Early Dismissal log. Adults will wait in the main office waiting area while a La Cima staff member goes to the classroom to bring the scholar up to the front desk to meet the adult.

Dismissal Policy

Families are required to submit a written Pick-up/Drop-off Authorization Form indicating who is and is not allowed to pick up their scholar. Should any changes in authorization occur, families must contact the main office to update the Authorization Form. All exceptions must be communicated by the parent or guardian in writing to the school.

Scholars will be dismissed in the auditorium Monday through Thursday at 3:45 pm and dismissed indoors on Friday at 12:30 pm. In case of inclement weather, all scholars will be dismissed indoors.

Scholars Walking Home

Family members must fill out the Pick-up/ Drop-off Authorization Form checking the box that states scholars are permitted to walk home. Walking home is only an option for scholars in Grade 4 & 5, or scholars who have a sibling in grades 4 or 5. In this case, scholars will sign themselves out (and siblings, if such is the case) on class sign-out rosters during dismissal.

Late Pick-ups

After dismissal, our staff is preparing for the following day. Late pick-up can be very disruptive to this preparation. Please make every effort to pick up your scholar on-time every day. Late pick-ups will be logged daily and parents of scholars who have three or more late pick-ups in a month or six or more in a year will be required to have an in-person meeting with the Instructional Leadership and to discuss next steps to ensure scholars are picked up on time.

If the late pick-up pattern is excessive or if a parent is more than an hour late picking up his or her child, the school reserves the right to take the child to the local police precinct for safe supervision.

Absences

We understand that a scholar may be absent for illness or emergencies, but the goal is for every scholar to be in school every day. By the end of the year, a scholar with 90% attendance has missed one month of school by the end of the year. Scholars with less than 90% attendance are more likely to have lower test scores and not graduate from high school.

Every absence counts! "Excused" absences are still absences!

To have an absence marked “excused” a family member or guardian must provide written documentation explaining the absence. All absences, “excused” or “unexcused,” are still considered a loss of instructional time and, therefore, are counted as an absence.

<u>Excused Absences at La Cima</u>	<u>Unexcused Absences at La Cima</u>
Scholar illness, <i>if verified by a doctor’s note/medical documentation</i>	Routine doctor’s appointments
Death of a close family member	Parent/guardian illness
Court appearance that requires the child’s presence, <i>if verified by court documentation</i>	Difficulties with public transportation (e.g., missing the bus) or inclement weather (unless school is formally closed)
Observance of a religious holiday	Family vacation

Exams and Quizzes

If a scholar is absent, they must make up any exams, quizzes, interim assessments, or other tests on the day they return or a scheduled make-up day as determined by a La Cima staff member.

Tracking Tardies & Absences

Attendance is recorded daily. Given the importance of daily attendance for a child’s full growth and development, there will be consequences should attendance issues arise.

- Each absence and tardy will result in an automated or phone call from a staff member.
- If a scholar has five unexcused absences and the school is unable to reach the parent or guardian, the school will escalate outreach efforts. In certain circumstances, a report to the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (“State Central Register”) may be required, consistent with the school’s mandated report obligations under New York Social Services Law. *Please note that a report to the State Central Registry may result in a case being opened by the Administration for Children Services (“ACS”).*
- If a scholar accrues 10-15 unexcused absences, the scholar and their parent/guardian will be required to attend an attendance meeting with a school administrator to discuss supports and develop a plan for improvement.

Chronic Absenteeism and Reporting

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of enrolled school days, whether excused or unexcused.

If a scholar accumulates 20 unexcused absences during the school year and the parent or guardian has not taken steps to address the attendance concerns, the school will, as required by law, report suspected educational neglect to the State Central Registry. This report may result in a case being opened by ACS.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS			
1 or 2 days doesn't seem like much.			
If you miss:	That Equals:	Which is:	Over 13 years of schooling that's:
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days a year	4 weeks a year	1.5 years
1 day a week	40 days a year	8 weeks a year	Over 2.5 years of school
2 days a week	80 days a year	16 weeks a year	Over 5 years
3 days a week	120 days a year	24 weeks a year	Nearly 8 years

Please be mindful that even two absences a month can total up to 20 absences within one school year.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

La Cima will only close school in cases of extreme weather conditions. In such situations, we will follow the New York City Department of Education (DOE) closing. Please listen to local radio, watch local television stations, or check <https://www.schools.nyc.gov> for status updates. If New York City announces a delayed opening or a closing, La Cima will also be delayed or closed.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency Preparedness

Each year, the Safety Plan is revised for each school building. All staff members are trained each year on emergency procedures. Scholars are trained in the following drills, which describe what to do in the case of an emergency: evacuation, shelter-in, and lockdowns.

Evacuation & Relocation

In the case of an emergency during school hours, scholars are evacuated from the premises and there is no re-entry to the school building until immediate threat/event has passed or necessary actions are taken to eliminate all conditions that pose a safety or health hazard. There are primary and secondary relocation sites designated to La Cima and scholars will be directed there with the school leadership team, as well as all teachers and support staff. Authorities and families will be notified of emergency relocation sites.

In all cases of school cancellations, early dismissals, or the cancellation of after school programs, La Cima Charter School will follow the directive of the NYC Department of Education. All La Cima Charter School families will be notified via the school messaging service calling and texting system regarding the decision to alter the schedule for the day.

TRANSPORTATION & BUSSING

Transportation services are provided by New York City Department of Education Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) and are made available to scholars based on their eligibility and need for services.

OMNY Cards

All qualifying scholars will receive a free OMNY card at the start of each month to ensure that all scholars are able to attend school each and every day. OMNY cards allow for the tap and go system enabled throughout the city, replacing Metrocards. If you are in need of an OMNY card for your scholar, please contact the Main Office at 718-443-2136.

Bussing

Stop-to School Bussing is provided to scholars based on their grade and distance from home to school. Any Grades K – 2 scholar who lives between half a mile and three miles from the school, or any Grades 3 – 5 scholar who lives between one and three miles from the school is eligible to receive service. Scholars with specialized transportation included in their individual education plans (IEP) are also eligible. Lastly, on a case by case basis, scholars in temporary housing, foster care, and other exceptions may be eligible for service.

All bus routes and their included stops are determined by the Office of Pupil Transportation. If you are in need of an updated bus route, please contact our Main Office and we will provide you with an updated copy. Although we do not manage or control the bus service, we can support you in requesting the addition of an additional stop or route. Please note that because the bus company is managed and supervised by OPT, the process of adding a stop/route may take a long time.

Complaints about late pick-ups, drop-offs, driver behavior, or bus conditions should be reported to both our Main Office as well as the OPT Customer Support Hotline at 718-392-8855. When calling the Office of Pupil Transportation, please be prepared to provide La Cima's OPT Code (16564) and La Cima's School Code (84K649). Following your complaint, OPT will provide you with an incident number for your records.

In order for a scholar to participate in our bussing program, a parent/guardian is required to sign a bus contract that outlines guidelines for bus conduct and consequences for not adhering to said guidelines. Our expectations for behavior on the bus are *consistent with our CARE principles and expectations while in school*.

Bus Expectations for Families

1. There will be a two-minute grace period for authorized adults to arrive at their assigned bus stop to pick up scholars, before they are considered a no-show. If an authorized adult is not present for pick-up the scholar will be brought back to the school for the authorized adult to pick them up.
2. Families and scholars must speak respectfully to the bus driver and/or bus matron/monitor.
3. If a family decides they do not want their scholar(s) to ride the bus home on a particular day, they can call the Main Office directly and notify the front desk of this change by 11 am.
4. In the event that the bus is running late, families will give the bus a five-minute grace period before contacting OPT.
5. If families request to have a scholar removed from the bus permanently and then forfeits that decision, the family must reapply for bussing. This change may take some time. The scholar will not be permitted on the bus until the child's name appears on the roster through the Office of Pupil Transportation.

Bus Expectations for Scholars

1. Scholars may only be released to an adult who is listed on a scholar's written Drop-off/Pick-Up Authorization Form.
2. In order for a scholar in grades 4 and 5 to be allowed to walk off the bus alone, that scholar must have a written Drop-off/Pick-up Authorization Form that indicates walking is permitted.
3. Scholars will only be dropped off at assigned and designated bus stops.
4. Scholars must use appropriate indoor voices when speaking to their seat buddy on the bus.
5. Scholars must refrain from using obscene or inappropriate language on the bus.
6. Scholars must refrain from the following behaviors: hitting, kicking, scratching, punching, pushing, shoving or harassing other scholars on the bus.
7. Scholars must refrain from name calling, threats, intimidation, and other examples of verbal harassment towards other scholars on the bus.
8. Scholars are not permitted to have their cell phones out on the bus. Only when a scholar exits the bus will they be able to use their cell phone.

9. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
10. Scholars must stay in their seats at all times with their seat belts fastened.
11. Scholars must keep any writing materials inside their backpacks while on the bus.
12. If there is a bus matron/monitor present, scholars must follow their directions at all times.

Failure to comply with the aforementioned behavioral expectations may lead to the following:

- 1st warning = reminder to scholar and phone call home
- 2nd warning = written letter home to family
- 3rd warning = in-person meeting with administration

After three warnings, failure to comply with our behavioral expectations will be considered “violations.”

- 1st violation: Suspension from bus service for 1 day
 - *Parent/guardian is responsible for finding alternate transportation.*
- 2nd violation: Suspension from bus service for 1 week
 - *Parent/guardian is responsible for finding alternate transportation.*
- 3rd violation: Suspension from bus service indefinitely
 - *Parent/guardian is responsible for finding alternate transportation. Scholar is suspended from bus service until reinstated by a member of the school's administrative team.*

Any physical altercation may result in immediate suspension from the bus.

UNIFORMS

All scholars are required to wear a school uniform daily to ensure that all scholars exist in a calm and safe learning environment in which academics are prioritized. By wearing uniforms, we attempt to create a space free from the competitive nature that can come from materials goods such as clothing, shoes, and accessories.

Our School Uniform

- Uniform shirts must be royal blue cotton polo shirts (long or short sleeved) with collars and our school logo.
- Pants, skirts and other bottoms must be navy blue. Scholars are allowed to wear navy blue sweatpants with an elastic waistband.
- Sneakers and/or weather appropriate footwear are to be worn daily. To fully participate in Physical Education or recess activities, scholars must be in sneakers.
- Cold weather attire may include La Cima sweaters, vests and/or school sweatpants or sweat shirts. Scholars may wear rain/snow boots, however the ability to change into sneakers is encouraged.
- Wearing, carrying, and displaying inappropriate language or illicit activities/ items are prohibited.
- Hats or bandanas of any kind are not permitted.
- Makeup is not permitted.



Additional Guidelines

- Please label all clothing with your scholar's name to prevent them from being misplaced or lost.
- Scholars are not permitted to wear make-up in school, including lip gloss or tinted chapstick.
- During winter months, please dress scholars with warm coats, hats, and gloves, so they can play outside for recess.
- Minimize excessive and/or distracting accessories (large earrings, charm bracelets, etc.) as they present safety hazards or distractions from learning. Parents will be notified in the event an accessory item has been collected for return to the family.

Extra Clothing (Kindergarten)

- Kindergarteners should bring extra clothing, including uniform, underwear and socks, with every item labeled, in a plastic bag with the scholar's name, in the event of an accident.

HEALTHY FOOD POLICY

Our program is very active, and children need the necessary nutrition to maintain a high level of interest and energy throughout the day. La Cima takes food and nutrition very seriously to ensure our scholars are in the best state for learning and to establish a culture of wellness at school. A healthy breakfast, snack, and lunch will be provided for all scholars each day.

If you choose to provide breakfast, snack, or lunch for your scholar, we ask that this meal be eatable at room-temperature and that it contain nutritious and healthy food. We do not have the capacity to heat-up or refrigerate meals. Junk food or other unhealthy items will be sent back home unopened and the school will provide the scholar with a healthy school lunch.

Please see below for guidelines as to what food is permitted:

What to Eat	Prohibited Foods
- Water	- Soda (including diet soda)

- Fruit - Yogurt - Fresh Fruit - Applesauce - Cheese - Crackers - Vegetables	- Juice - Sports/Energy Drinks - Candy - Cookies - Chips - Cheetos - Takis - Animal Crackers
--	---

Nut Policy

La Cima is a nut-free school environment. If your child is bringing food from home please do not include any peanut or tree nut items.

If your scholar has a nut allergy or any other food-allergy, please alert our staff immediately with the appropriate medical documentation so we know how to best support your scholar.

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS

Birthday celebrations at La Cima are a celebration of the child. We would like the focus to be on the scholar and getting to know him/her in a more meaningful way on their special day. We all know that birthdays are important to every child and that kids like to celebrate with their classmates. Maintaining the classroom as our equitable learning space is a top priority. La Cima will honor each child on (or nearest) their birthday with a special recognition during our CARE circle. You can look forward to your child coming home with a special recognition from their class. Special family birthday celebrations are to be held outside of the school.

Families may not bring in cake, cookies, or any other food items to celebrate birthdays.

Scholars must be dressed in uniform every day, including on his/her birthday.

NURSING SERVICES & MEDICATION

A school nurse is present everyday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Our school nurse will give prescribed medicine to scholars with a Medication Administration Form on file and can monitor scholars with chronic health problems. If your scholar has a health condition and could benefit from taking prescribed medicine at school, please talk to your scholar's health care provider about your child's health action plan and provide La Cima with the required documentation.

Please note: Medication Administration Forms must be submitted each year to capture any updates and ensure scholars receive the appropriate medical care.

HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Immunization Requirements

To maintain a healthy learning environment, scholars are offered certain health services and are required to provide evidence of required immunizations.

Scholars will not be allowed to attend school if they have not received the required vaccines (see link below) unless:

- Once a scholar is in school, and if he/she is catching up on required immunizations: Scholars are “in-process” and getting up-to-date on required immunizations.
- A medical exemption form has been submitted. Please refer to the New York State Department of Health website for the most current information regarding minimum required immunizations and important details for each age/grade level for the applicable school year: <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools/> website: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv>. Please note the medical exemption forms must be submitted annually.
- As of July 13, 2019, non-medical vaccination exemptions including religious exemptions are no longer permitted.

Medication Administration

If a scholar requires medication while in school, the school must have a Medication Administration Form, completed by the scholar’s physician and on file with the school and school nurse. No scholar is allowed to bring medication to the school without the school’s full knowledge. All medication must be presented in its original container from the pharmacy.

Additionally, a parent must deliver all medication – medication should NEVER be sent with the scholar. The Medication Administration Form must be updated annually. Also, if there are any changes to the medication (including to the dosage of the medication) a new form must be completed and submitted, including an updated physician signature. We advise families to request multiple copies of the Medication Administration Form to bring with them to all regularly scheduled doctor’s appointments, in the event medications are updated. The Medication Administration Form requirement applies to all medication, including over the counter medication (e.g., Tylenol).

If a scholar needs to take medication during the school day, the scholar must have the authorization signed by his or her physician and a parent or guardian on file, giving the school nurse permission to administer the medication. The medication administration form requirement also applies to use of asthma inhalers. scholars (other than those who have been authorized to self-medicate, as described below) should go to the Main Office first to receive a pass to the Nurse for administration of medication. Children who may need inhalers or other rescue medication on an emergency basis may be permitted to carry the inhaler or medicine if the scholar understands the condition, the appropriate dosage and written permission has been granted by the child’s health care provider and parent. Please request a form for this approval if you believe that your child can self administer the inhaler or other emergency medication. Scholars are prohibited from carrying any over the counter medications including but not limited to:

- Tylenol
- Aleve
- Advil
- Benadryl

scholars should never carry or take medications outside of these procedures. scholars found in possession of over the counter or prescription drugs could face significant consequences.

SCHOOL PETS & THERAPY DOG

At La Cima, we believe in nurturing the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally. As part of this commitment, you may notice animals in our school building from time to time. These may include classroom pets or certified therapy dogs that support scholar well-being and provide unique learning experiences.

Classroom Pets

Some classrooms may have small animals such as fish, hamsters, or turtles to help scholars learn about science, responsibility, and empathy. Teachers ensure that these pets are well cared for and that all interactions are supervised. Families will be informed if a classroom has a pet, and scholars are never required to interact if they are uncomfortable.

Therapy Dogs

La Cima will host a certified therapy dog on campus as part of special programming to support social-emotional learning, reduce stress, and build community. Therapy dogs are specially trained, gentle, and supervised at all times while on school grounds. Interactions are always optional and monitored closely by staff.

If your child has allergies, a fear of animals, or any other concern related to animals at school, please let us know. We will make every effort to accommodate your child's needs and ensure they feel safe and supported.

If you have questions about our policy or would like more information, feel free to contact our main office.

Hatching Chicks, Insects, and Other Living Creatures

As part of our science curriculum, scholars may participate in a chick-hatching project. During this hands-on learning experience, fertilized eggs are incubated and monitored until the chicks hatch. This project teaches scholars about life cycles, responsibility, and observation skills in a memorable and developmentally appropriate way. Scholars are closely supervised when interacting with the chicks, and hygiene protocols are followed.

Additionally, when making connections to the life cycle or our CARE principles, insects, plants and other living creatures may be introduced to the classroom. Scholars will be supervised and hygiene protocols are followed.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

All school supplies will be provided for our scholars.

Because all supplies are provided, scholars do not need to bring anything other than their backpack, book baggies, and/or extra uniform with them to school. If you choose to donate school supplies, please send them into school with a note for the teacher.

If any of the following items are brought into school, scholars may be asked to place them into their backpack to be returned home:

- Basketballs or other sports equipment
- Makeup, including lip gloss or nail polish
- Fancy pens or pencils
- Toys, including figurines or fidget spinners
- Any electronic devices other than a basic watch, including iPads or other gaming devices
- Slime

PERSONAL ITEMS

The school will not accept responsibility for the personal items of scholars that are lost and/or broken at school. The school shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

We expect scholars to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education at home. Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for school, or interfering with scholars' educational focus will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents retrieve them.

LOST & FOUND

Our school's "lost and found" is in the Main Office. If a scholar misplaces an article of clothing or a personal item, this personal item may be taken to the "lost and found" for retrieval. During school hours, any scholar can ask a teacher to go to the "lost and found." Family members may also request time to look for an item in the "lost and found" barring that a member of La Cima's staff accompany them to look.

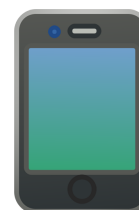
Where possible, please label personal belongings to assist the speedy return of lost/misplaced items.

Unclaimed items will be stored for 30 days. After this period, items may be donated to a charitable organization.

DISTRACTION - FREE POLICY

**** Effective Beginning School Year 2025-2026**

Pursuant to Education Law §2803, the School is required to adopt a policy restricting student use of **internet-enabled devices** during the entire school day, on school grounds. This includes smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, and any other devices capable of accessing the internet or social media. This law is part of the State's initiative to promote a focused and safe learning environment. You can learn more about the initiative by visiting the Governor's official page: [Ensuring Distraction Free Learning in Schools](#).



To comply with this law and minimize distractions:

- All internet-enabled devices must be turned in upon arrival each morning. Devices will be stored securely and returned at dismissal.
- The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

Parent/Guardian Communication

To reach your child during the school day, please:

- Call the Main Office: 718.443.2136
- Email: **Keth Apollon** at keth@lacimacs.org

Students may request to use the Main Office phone. Approval is at staff discretion, based on the reason and class schedule.

Device Access and Storage Procedures

Use of internet-enabled devices is prohibited during all parts of the School day, including classes, lunch, recess, and transitions, unless:

- Required by an **IEP or Section 504 Plan**,
- Approved for an **emergency or medical need**,
- Allowed for a **documented translation need**, or
- Permitted for **family caregiving responsibilities**, reviewed case-by-case.

Devices will be stored in locked, supervised storage. Students may not access them during the day without staff permission.

Students are discouraged from bringing non-essential personal electronics. If brought, they must also be stored during the school day.

Educational Use Exceptions

Device use may be permitted for educational purposes if:

- The device is registered with the school;
- A teacher authorizes its use for a specific activity and receives administrative approval;
- The student accesses the internet via the School network under the School's Computer Use Policy.

Devices must be silenced and stored immediately after approved use.

Policy Enforcement & Consequences

All school staff will support enforcement. Reminders will be provided throughout the year, especially after breaks.

Violations will result in the following:

1. **First offense** – Student may retrieve the device; parent is notified.
2. **Repeat offenses** – Parent must retrieve the device; continued violations may result in the school retaining the device for longer periods.
3. **Chronic non-compliance** – Additional consequences may apply per the Code of Conduct (e.g., detention, in-School suspension, or exclusion from extracurriculars).

The school will not impose suspension solely for unauthorized device use.

Discussions will be held with students and families about the purpose of the policy and strategies to support compliance.

Annual Reporting

By **September 1, 2026**, and annually thereafter, the school will publish a report on policy enforcement, including non-identifiable demographic data and analysis of any disparities. If disparities are found, a mitigation plan will be developed and published.

PHOTOGRAPHY & MEDIA

Families complete a photo release form as part of their scholar's registration and at the start of each school year. La Cima may use photos of scholars on our website, monthly newsletters, or social media to keep our community updated about our current events, learnings, and activities. If you wish to update this document at any point in the school year, please contact the Main Office.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology encompasses a variety of ever-changing tools. Scholars use the internet to access online educational resources, conduct research and practice using technology in a safe way.

Scholars are offered access to the La Cima network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the La Cima academic program. Computers, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by La Cima are the property of La Cima and are intended for school business and educational use.

The school reserves the right to prohibit usage by scholars who do not follow its guidelines. Families are responsible for their children's technology use when they are not at school. The school recommends that parents provide substantial guidance and oversight, even for older scholars.

Technology Use & Internet Safety

Scholars are to use the computer network responsibly. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and using the La Cima computer network and the school's technological resources.

- **Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP") Privacy:** The school and La Cima reserve the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using the La Cima network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any La Cima technology or transmissions originating within or around school property.
- **Bullying:** The school prohibits cyber-bullying involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to email, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal websites, on-line social directories and communities, video-posting sites, and online personal polling websites, for hostile behavior by an individual or group. Communications intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass scholars, staff members, or the school during or outside school hours and on or off school premises are strictly prohibited.
- **Materials and Language:** Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web-filtering is prohibited.
- **Software:** Scholars are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed and the scholar may lose access to a La Cima device. Downloading of non-work-related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission.
- **Copying/Plagiarism:** Scholars may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. All copyright laws must be followed.
- **Access:** Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Each User must log in with their La Cima assigned username and password. Scholars must not share passwords or log in on behalf of others. Scholars are responsible for logging off after use and must report any suspected compromise of their credentials to an instructor.
- **Data Protection:** Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files.
- **Liability:** While La Cima takes precautions to safeguard the security and integrity of data, the school makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it provides. La Cima is not responsible for any data loss or damage for any reason, including the intention or unintentional removal of files or web accounts by any user or loss due to equipment failure.

Student Privacy & Data Security

In accordance with New York State Education Law § 2-d and applicable federal privacy laws, the school is committed to protecting the privacy and security of student data and personally identifiable information ("PII"). La Cima does not sell, lease, or disclose student data for marketing or commercial purposes.

All educational technology tools and services used by the school are evaluated for compliance with applicable state and federal privacy and security requirements. Additionally, the school employs internet filtering, and security systems to restrict access to inappropriate content and to safeguard data integrity.

A copy of the school's Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security, which outlines how student data is protected and parents' rights under the law, is available on the school's website or upon request.

In the event of a data breach involving student PII, the school will notify affected individuals in accordance with Education Law and promptly report the incident to the New York State Education Department ("NYSED").

REPORT CARDS & CONFERENCES

La Cima's academic calendar is partitioned into quarters. Therefore, you can expect to receive report cards three times a year. In order to pick up your scholar's report card, we ask that you come into school for a "Scholar-Led Family Conference" so that we can share more detailed information about your scholar's academic progress. If you have questions or concerns regarding your scholar's progress at any other time during the year, you can contact your scholar's teacher to request more personalized information and/or to schedule an in-person appointment.

What is a scholar-led family conference?

A scholar-led family conference is a preplanned meeting in which scholars demonstrate responsibility for their academic performance by providing a review of their work for parents and teachers. The scholars lead the conference by presenting work samples and discussing their learning, strengths, weaknesses, and progress toward their goals.

Scholar-led conferences **differ** from the traditional parent/teacher conferences.

- Scholars participate in all stages of the conference. They prepare and organize work samples, use checklists to demonstrate new learning, and plan next steps.
- Scholars lead the conversation to show what they have learned. They receive feedback from their parents and teachers about strengths and goals for improvement.

Scholar-led conferences **benefit** scholars, parents, and teachers.

- Scholars take more ownership of their learning.
- Parents and scholars have open communication about school, after-school activities, and other important decisions in life.
- Teachers establish a stronger working relationship with parents and scholars.

Parents are always welcome to schedule a meeting with their child's teacher for additional discussions.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your scholar's progress at any other time during the year, you can contact your scholar's teacher to request more personalized information and/or to schedule an in-person appointment.

GRADING & CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

Grading System

Supporting our vision to better educate more children, the school has implemented grading practices that best match the needs of our scholars, families, and teachers, with the ultimate goal of supporting high-quality learning for all scholars. Teachers track scholars' academic performance on identified learning goals, with the ultimate goal of ensuring high levels of learning and proficiency on state accountability tests. We encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or talk with a member of the school's leadership team if you have questions or would like more detailed information related to the school's grading practices.

Academic Recognition

We believe that excellence in achievement should be recognized. Scholars are recognized for:

- Demonstrating high growth through their effort.
- High achievement on interim assessments.
- An exemplary attendance record.
- Demonstrating CARE values.
- Overall academic achievement at the close of the school year.

Scholar Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion, or Retention

The head of school is authorized to make initial grade placement of a scholar and to promote, accelerate or retain scholars after initial grade placement. After initial grade placement, a scholar is expected to progress

through the grades one year in each grade receiving the benefits of academic, social and physical growth usually accompanied with a full year of development. On occasion, it may be in the best interest of the scholar to have a new grade placement, be accelerated more than one grade, or be retained in the current grade. In this event, supporting documentation with interventions already offered to the scholar will be provided by the school. If a scholar's parent or teacher believes one of these grade changes should be considered, a written request for consideration should be provided to the head of school, including the reasons for such consideration. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a scholar rests solely with the head of school.

The head of school shall consider the following, when making such decisions:

- The education record of the scholar, including but not limited to a scholar's grades, standardized test scores, reading, speaking and math skills, the curriculum of each grade, the available teacher(s) skill(s) delivering the instruction and available programs.
- Attendance.
- Discipline.
- The physical, social, and emotional readiness of the scholar for the curriculum of each grade.
- The recommendation of the scholar's parents and teachers.
- The applicable laws governing these decisions.

The goal of placing, accelerating, promoting, or retaining a scholar is to enhance the opportunity for the scholar to achieve learning goals, meet state and school performance expectations, and to be prepared for high school, college, and career plans.

REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC TEACHERS

We do our best to ensure that all scholars are placed in a calm, safe classroom environment in which learning is paramount. To achieve this, we strategically place scholars with specific teachers and peers. We do not accept or accommodate requests for specific teachers or certain scholars. If you have a particular concern or extenuating circumstance, please call the Main Office and leave a message. A school administrator will follow up to discuss your concerns.

RE-ENROLLMENT & MIDDLE SCHOOL

At La Cima, we provide a K-5 education and hope that our scholars are able to remain enrolled from kindergarten up until fifth grade. Each spring, we will ask that you complete re-enrollment paperwork in order to ensure that your space for the following school year is secured. For our 5th graders, we provide individualized middle school counseling to provide guidance and support through the application process.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Our school works diligently to equitably meet a range of diverse learners' needs. Through a combination of support and special services, we serve scholars with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). At La Cima, the following services are available: Integrated Collaborative Teaching Services (ICT), Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), 12:1 Special Class, Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Speech-Language Therapy (SLT), counseling, hearing services, and/or one-on-one paraprofessional services. If you would like more information about these services, please contact the Main Office or your scholar's teacher.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tiered approach that includes ongoing progress monitoring and interventions for scholars. If a scholar is struggling academically but does not have an IEP, they may be a strong candidate for RtI or extra supports and progress monitoring.

English as a New Language (ENL) Program

Upon registration, parents are asked to fill out a Home Language Identification Survey. If the survey indicates that a language other than English is spoken at home, the student is interviewed and may be given the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL.)

The results of the NYSITELL determine whether a scholar qualifies as an English Language Learner (“ELL”) and is entitled to receive English as a New Language (“ENL”) services. At La Cima, ENL services are offered through push-in and/or a pull out model, depending on the student’s proficiency level and academic needs.

La Cima’s ENL Program focuses on development of English language skills in all four domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Instruction includes strategies through daily reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities to support oral language development, grammar and syntax, academic vocabulary, and content-area language needed for success in the mainstream classroom.

Each spring, all ELLs are required to take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to assess their English proficiency. Scholars continue to take the NYSESLAT annually until they achieve proficiency. After achieving proficiency, scholars are eligible to receive continued ENL supports for an additional two years.

Many factors influence how long it takes students to become proficient in English, including their age at the time of enrollment, prior educational background, and literacy in their home language. Research shows that social language typically develops within one to three years, while academic language (which is our focus) may take seven to ten years.

We continuously monitor and assess our scholars’ progress to ensure they are receiving the appropriate support based on their individual language development needs.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

What are Restorative Practices?

Our scholars, like ourselves, are in a constant state of learning and evolving. As adults, it is our responsibility to create a context in which children can learn academically, socially, and emotionally. Much of this learning happens in the face of conflict. Our children must have the capacity to identify the ways in which harm was caused in a conflict. If they are involved in a conflict, they need to engage with the resolution process. This is the emotional strength of character that a change-maker embodies. It is emotional intelligence and critical thinking that will allow them to navigate their world, hold themselves accountable for unjust acts, and act in a way to hold others accountable for acts of injustice. It is in these moments where the values behind the CARE principles- Community, Accountability, Reconciliation, and Effective Effort-really come to surface.

A restorative approach to discipline changes the fundamental questions that are asked when a behavioral incident occurs. Instead of asking who is to blame and how those engaged in the misbehavior will be punished, a restorative approach asks four key questions:

- What happened?
- Who was harmed or affected by the behavior?
- What needs to be done to make things right?
- How can people behave differently in the future?

Behavior Code Community Expectations (Code of Conduct)

Scholars, families, and school staff all have a role in making schools safe and must cooperate with one another to achieve this goal. The manner in which scholars conduct themselves in school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining a safe and respectful school community.

To promote positive scholar behavior, all members of the school community — scholars, staff, and families — must know and understand the standards of behavior which all scholars are expected to live up to, the supports and interventions that will be used to address misconduct, and the disciplinary responses if behavioral standards are not met.

Determining the Disciplinary Response

School officials consult the Behavior Code when determining which disciplinary measure to impose. In determining how to best address inappropriate conduct, it is necessary to evaluate the totality of the circumstances surrounding the conduct.

The following facts will be considered prior to determining the appropriate disciplinary measures:

- the scholar's age and maturity;
- the scholar's disciplinary record (including the nature of any prior misconduct, the number of prior instances of misconduct, and the disciplinary and guidance intervention measures applied for each);
- the nature, severity and scope of the behavior; the circumstances/context in which the conduct occurred;
- the frequency and duration of the behavior;
- the number of persons involved in the behavior;
- the social emotional status/needs of all persons involved in the behavior; the scholar's IEP (Individualized Education Plan), BIP (Behavioral Intervention Plan) and/or
- 504 Accommodation Plan, if applicable.

Support and interventions are an integral part of a comprehensive response to behavior.

Progressive Discipline

At La Cima, we take a progressive approach to discipline that focuses on incremental interventions that help the scholar to make appropriate shifts to their behaviors. At La Cima, discipline focuses on concurrent accountability and behavioral change. Our goal is prevention of a recurrence of negative behavior by helping scholars learn from their mistakes. Essential to the implementation of progressive discipline is assisting scholars who have engaged in unacceptable behavior to:

- understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it has caused;
- understand what they could have done differently in the same situation;
- take responsibility for their actions;
- be given the opportunity to learn prosocial strategies and skills to use in the future; and
- understand the progression of more stringent responses if the behavior reoccurs.

Every reasonable effort will be made to correct scholar behavior through counseling and other school-based interventions such as restorative practices. Support and interventions help us to identify any and all serious problems that scholars may be experiencing.

Appropriate disciplinary responses should emphasize prevention and effective intervention, foster resiliency, prevent disruption to scholars' education, and promote positive school culture. When a scholar's misconduct results in a placement out of the classroom, the school will consider, where appropriate, using the restorative circle process as an effective strategy to support a successful return to the scholar's regular program.

Where and When the Behavior Code Applies

The standards set forth in the Behavior Code apply to:

- behaviors in school during school hours;
- behaviors before and after school, while on school property;

- behaviors while traveling on vehicles funded by the NYC DOE and/or other chartered modes of transportation;
- behaviors at all school-sponsored events; and on other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the school community.
- electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, e-mailing, and social networking.

Progressive Ladder of Support & Disciplinary Responses

The ladder of support and disciplinary responses below illustrates a progressive response to inappropriate behavior. Scholar misbehavior is handled on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, implementation of appropriate interventions and disciplinary responses take into account a number of factors including the nature and severity of the misconduct.

The behaviors listed under each misconduct level are not exhaustive and therefore should not be construed as a limitation upon the authority of school officials to deal with other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school, the proper functioning of the educational process or the health and safety of scholars.

Scholar Intervention & Discipline Code

Please note the possible responses are examples and not an exhaustive list of possible responses.

Level 1 responses can be determined and administered by the classroom teacher.

<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Possible Responses to Level 1</i>
• Behaving in a manner that disrupts the educational process (e.g. making excessive noise in a classroom, library or hallway) • Exhibiting off-task behaviors • Using disrespectful, hurtful or unkind language • Failing to wear the required school uniform • Being late for school • Failing to be in one's assigned place • Wearing clothing, headgear (e.g., caps or hats), or other items that are unsafe or disruptive to the educational process	• Non-verbal redirection/correction • Verbal redirection/correction • Time -Out (in classroom) • Fix-it (repair the harm done) • Apology/Public Apology • Phone call home • Conflict resolution

Level 2 responses must be determined in collaboration with a member of school leadership

<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Possible Responses to Level 2</i> <i>Could include all level 1 responses in addition to the below</i>
• Repeated Level 1 behaviors • Using school computers, fax machines, telephones or other electronic equipment or devices without appropriate permission • Failing to cooperate or comply with directions of school personnel and volunteers • Using profane, obscene, vulgar, or lewd language, gestures, or behavior • Lying to, giving false information to, and/or misleading school personnel • Misusing property belonging to others • Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus • Bullying • Verbally aggressive/threatening behavior • Leaving class without permission • Taking items from community members without permission • Academic dishonesty	• Step Out to a buddy classroom for one period with grade level work • Alternative setting and or space for lunch and recess • Referral to Scholar Support Team • Restorative practices (e.g., circle or formal restorative conference) • Parent Conference • Incentives Based Behavior Chart or Behavior Contract • Written reflection or project • Community service project • In-school suspension (1-3 days) • Family Conference with a member of the Instructional Leadership Team or head of school • Family shadow for specified amount of time

- Physical behavior (play fighting or horseplay, non-impulsive hitting, kicking, spitting)

Level 3 responses must be finalized by the head of school or head of school designee a member of school leadership

Level 3	Possible Responses to Level 3 <i>Could include all level 1 and 2 responses in addition to the below</i>
- Leaving school premises without permission - DASA Violations: Bullying/Cyberbullying - Targeted, repeated harassment towards a community member - Fighting - on and off school property - Expressing intent to use a weapon - Possession, using, selling or sharing illegal items - Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact or touching someone in a private part of body - Tampering with the fire alarm - Weapons (knives, gun, etc.) - Destroying community property - Violation of technology/internet safety policy - Threatening to harm another community member	- Family conference with head of school - Law enforcement notification as necessary - Out of School Suspension - Alternative learning environment - Expulsion

Short Term Suspension Procedures

The Head of School may impose a short-term suspension for a period of one to nine school days. Prior to the suspension, the Head of School shall inform the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s) of the proposed disciplinary action and the basis for the decision. The student shall be provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegations and present their version of events in the presence of their parent(s) or guardian(s).

The Head of School shall promptly provide written notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the suspension decision. This notice will be delivered by personal delivery, express mail, or another method reasonably calculated to ensure receipt within 24 hours of the suspension decision. When possible, the school will also attempt to notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) by telephone.

The written notice shall:

- Describe the incident(s) that led to the suspension;
- State whether the suspension will be served in-school or out-of-school;
- Inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to request an informal conference with the Head of School;
- Be provided in the dominant language of the parent(s) or guardian(s), where practicable.

During the period of suspension, the school will ensure the provision of alternative instruction to support the student's continued academic progress. Instruction will begin within 24 hours of the suspension and will be provided through asynchronous learning opportunities or other educational methods as appropriate.

For more information on short term, long term and expulsion regulations, legal requirements and types of behaviors that may warrant consequences [please follow this link](#).

Long Term Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

A long-term suspension is defined as a suspension lasting **ten (10) or more school days**. Expulsion is defined as the permanent removal of a student from enrollment at the school. The Head of School may recommend

a long-term suspension or expulsion when a student's conduct is a serious violation of the school's Code of Conduct or presents a serious threat to the safety, well-being, or educational environment of the school community.

Upon determining that a student's behavior may warrant a long-term suspension or expulsion, the Head of School shall inform the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s) of the decision to impose a suspension and the intention to pursue a long-term disciplinary action. Additionally, the Head of School shall provide written notice of the suspension and hearing to the parent(s) or guardian(s).

The written notice shall include:

- A description of the incident(s) that led to the disciplinary action;
- The specific provisions of the school's Code of Conduct the student is alleged to have violated;
- A statement that a formal disciplinary hearing will be conducted, which may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion;
- The date, time, and location of the formal disciplinary hearing;
- Information regarding the student's rights at the hearing, including the right to be represented by counsel, present evidence, and cross-examine witnesses;
- Notification in the dominant language of the parent(s) or guardian(s), to the extent practicable.

Notice of the hearing will be sent via phone, email, and/or other effective communication methods, and the school shall document verbal or written confirmation of receipt and understanding from the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Disciplinary Hearing Procedures

The disciplinary hearing shall be conducted by a neutral and objective hearing officer not previously involved in the matter.

During the hearing:

- The student may be represented by counsel or another advocate;
- The student and/or their representative shall have the opportunity to present evidence, call witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school.

The hearing officer shall make a determination based on the evidence presented.

Following the hearing, if a long-term suspension or expulsion is imposed, the family will be notified in writing of the outcome and their right to appeal the decision to the school's Board of Trustees.

Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, La Cima implements the following disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and applicable federal and state regulations.

Short-Term Suspensions (Five School Days or Less)

If a student with a disability is subject to a suspension of five school days or less, the school shall provide the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s) with written notice within 24 hours of the incident. A follow-up phone call will be made, where practicable. The notice will include the basis for the suspension and inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to request an informal conference with the Head of School and relevant staff to discuss the incident and question any complaining witness.

Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)

Students whose IEPs include a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with that plan. If it is determined that the BIP is ineffective or that following the BIP would compromise the health and safety of the student or others, the matter will be referred immediately to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for review and possible revision of the student's IEP and BIP.

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)

Prior to any disciplinary action that would result in a disciplinary change in placement (i.e., removal for more than 10 consecutive school days or a pattern of removals totaling more than 10 days), the school will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR). The parent(s) or guardian(s) will receive prior written notice of the MDR meeting, which shall include:

- The purpose of the meeting;
- The names and roles of anticipated participants; and
- The parent's or guardian's right to invite relevant members of the multidisciplinary team.

The manifestation team will review all relevant information in the student's file, including the student's IEP, teacher observations, and information provided by the parent(s) or guardian(s). If the team determines:

1. The conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability:
 - The CSE will conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and implement or revise the student's BIP;
 - The student will return to their prior placement unless the parent or guardian agrees to a change of placement as part of the revised BIP.
2. The conduct was the result of the school's failure to implement the IEP:
 - The school will take immediate steps to remedy the deficiencies.
3. The conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability:
 - The school may apply the same disciplinary procedures as would be applied to a student without a disability, including long-term suspension or expulsion, while continuing to provide educational services in accordance with IDEA.

Alternative Instruction for Suspended or Expelled Students

In accordance with New York Education Law, the school will provide alternative instruction to students who are suspended or expelled. For students subject to suspension, the school will ensure the provision of at least two instructional hours per school day for the duration of the suspension. In cases of expulsion, the school will provide such instruction until the student is enrolled in another educational setting, as required by law.

Suspended or expelled students will be permitted to take any citywide or state-mandated examinations that occur during the suspension or expulsion period for which no make-up testing opportunity is provided by the relevant authority. Students will also be given an opportunity to make up school-based assessments and assignments that may impact academic progress.

The school will make reasonable arrangements with each student's parent or guardian to facilitate the delivery of instructional materials, the collection of completed work, and the provision of any necessary academic support. All alternative instruction materials will be aligned to grade-level standards and designed to support continued academic progress. Completion of such assignments may be required prior to a student's return to school.

For students with disabilities, the school will ensure that alternative instruction is provided in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. When determining appropriate services, the school will take

into account the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), or 504 Plan, as applicable.

Appeal Procedures

If a parent or student wishes to appeal a decision, they may do so by notifying the Chair of the Board of Trustees in writing within five (5) school days of the issuance of the written decision.

The Board of Trustees will designate a panel of three (3) members to hear the appeal. A hearing will be scheduled as soon as is practicable.

If the family is not satisfied with the Board's appeal decision and believes that the school has violated applicable law or the terms of its charter, the matter may be further appealed to the school's authorizer (see Process for Sharing Concerns & Finding Solutions).

Dignity For All Students Act (DASA)

What is DASA?

The Dignity for All Scholars Act (DASA), signed into law on September 13, 2010 and effective as of July 1, 2012, aims to ensure that all public school students learn in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, taunting, and intimidation, while promoting civility and respect in schools.

DASA prohibits bullying, harassment, discrimination, or cyberbullying against students by students and/or school employees on school property, or at a school function against scholars in school based on a person's actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National origin
- Ethnic group
- Sex
- Other markers of one's identity
- Religion
- Religious practice
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender (gender identity & expression)

School Responsibilities Under DASA

Schools are required to:

- Develop and implement policies that foster a school environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- Establish training programs that:
 - Raise awareness and sensitivity among staff to potential discrimination or harassment.
 - Enable staff to effectively prevent and respond to such behavior.
- Adopt non-discriminatory instructional and counseling methods.
- Ensure at least one staff member in each school is trained to handle human relations and DASA-related concerns.



Dignity Act Coordinator

To comply with DASA, La Cima has a designated Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC). The DAC is responsible for receiving, documenting, and investigating reports of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination as defined by DASA. Parents whose children have been subjected to such behavior or other students or staff who observe such behavior are encouraged and expected to report to the DAC.

The DAC also oversees completion of the Bullying Complaint Form and all related documentation. In addition to the DAC, all school leaders and staff trained in behavior or student support are equipped to address DASA-related concerns and ensure a supportive, non-discriminatory school environment.

For the 2025-2026 school year, the DAC is:

Tiffany Young, Guidance Counselor
Phone Number: (718) 443 - 2136
Email: tiffany@lacimacs.org

The name and contact information for La Cima's designated DAC will also be posted in a prominent location within the school building and on the school's website, as required by law.

Reporting Concerns

Any student, parent/guardian, or staff member who witnesses or becomes aware of bullying, harassment, or discrimination involving a scholar is encouraged and in some cases, required to report the incident to the school's Dignity Act Coordinator as soon as possible. Reports may be made verbally or in writing.

All reports will be handled in accordance with New York State law and the school's procedures.

What is Bullying?

The Elements of Bullying:

- *Imbalance of Power:* Scholars who bully others use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity, to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations even if they involve the same people.
- *Repetition:* Bullying behaviors generally happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Common Bullying Behaviors:

- *Verbal:* name-calling, teasing, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, and threatening to cause harm
- *Social/Relationship:* spreading rumors, excluding others on purpose, telling other scholars not to be friends with someone, and embarrassing someone in public
- *Physical:* hitting, punching, shoving, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, and taking or breaking someone's things
- *Cyber:* sending text messages, emails, or posting messages/pictures on social media to embarrass or hurt others

If you believe that an adult or scholar within the La Cima community is being harassed, discriminated against, or bullied, please inform a school administrator immediately by calling the Main Office at 718-443-2136.

Title IX Policy

La Cima is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and discrimination-free learning environment in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex-based discrimination — including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual violence — in all educational programs and activities, whether on campus or through distance learning.

This policy applies to all students, staff, authorized volunteers, and members of the School community. It covers conduct occurring on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and off-campus when the school has substantial control over the context and individuals involved.

La Cima strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual for reporting or participating in a Title IX process. Reports may be made to the School's Title IX Coordinator. All employees are mandated reporters under this policy.

For a full description of the School's Title IX grievance procedures, definitions, reporting requirements, and available supportive measures, please refer to the Title IX Policy in Appendix B of this Handbook.

Questions or reports may be directed to:

Capri Tennis

Email: capri@lacimacs.org | Phone: 718.443.2136

No Retaliation Policy

Our school strictly prohibits retaliation against any student, family member, or staff member who, in good faith, reports, participates in or supports the investigation of harassment, discrimination, or bullying.

As a school, we have protocols to follow in order to maintain the safety and security of all community members. We will follow such steps in order to restore any harm that has been caused and to push towards reconciling any harmed relationships. These steps may include speaking with other community members to learn more about their perspectives.

Mandated Reporting

La Cima cares deeply about the health, safety, and well-being of our scholars, families, and community. Under New York State law all school employees are required to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect when they have a reasonable belief that such abuse is occurring or has occurred.

McKinney- Vento Act

New York's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program provides support to ensure that homeless children and youth who live in temporary housing have equal access to the same free, appropriate, public education - including public preschool - provided to other New York children, with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and student performance standards. Some examples of temporary housing include:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other similar reason,
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds,
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters,
- Abandoned in hospitals,

- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping,
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory living in circumstances described above

Every school district, BOCES, and charter school is required to have an LEA liaison whose duties include the removal of barriers to the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth in school. Reach out to your student's Instructional Coach to be connected with La Cima's McKinney-Vento liaison.

PARENT, GUARDIAN, AND FAMILY INVESTMENT

Family Association

La Cima believes our families serve as key members of our overall school community. We encourage the participation of families in reviewing your scholar's academic progress, at conferences with teachers, but also in organizing, supporting, and volunteering for initiatives for our scholars and families. We welcome and encourage family participation in all aspects of school life, from reviewing your child's academic progress to supporting schoolwide initiatives.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

As a Title I school, we are committed to fostering strong partnerships with families to support the success of every student. We believe that families are essential members of our school community and play a vital role in student learning and achievement.

In accordance with Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), our Parent and Family Engagement Policy outlines our commitments, expectations, and strategies to engage parents in meaningful ways in their child's education.

Commitments Under ESSA

La Cima agrees to implement the following provisions:

- Operate parent and family engagement programs, activities, and procedures in meaningful consultation with parents of participating students.
- Develop and revise this policy in collaboration with parents and distribute it annually.
- Incorporate this policy into our school's Title I plan under Section 1112 of the ESEA.
- Provide full participation opportunities to all families, including those with limited English proficiency, disabilities, or migratory status.
- Ensure information, including school reports, is shared in a clear, accessible format and language that parents can understand, with translation or interpretation services provided upon request.
- Include parent feedback and comments in the Title I plan if the plan is not satisfactory to parents.

General Expectations

We will:

- Involve families in planning, reviewing, and improving Title I programs and this Parent and Family Engagement Policy;

- Provide timely information about Title I programs and parents' right to be involved;
- Foster regular, two-way communication between school and families via ClassDojo, email, phone, and conferences;
- Share academic expectations and strategies to support learning at home;
- Encourage families to participate in events, workshops, and schoolwide activities throughout the year;
- Maintain an open-door policy and welcome families as active partners in school decision-making.

Parental Involvement Definition

“Parental involvement” means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning, including:

- Assisting in their child’s learning;
- Being actively involved in their child’s education at school;
- Becoming full partners in school decision-making;
- Participating in school-related support, events, and committees.

Building Capacity for Engagement

To build the capacity for strong family engagement, La Cima will:

- Provide timely and clear information about academic programs and expectations;
- Support families in understanding academic standards and how to monitor their child’s progress;
- Offer materials and training on supporting academic achievement at home, including literacy and technology use;
- Educate staff on the importance of working with families as equal partners;
- Coordinate with early childhood education programs such as Pre-K and Head Start;
- Offer translated materials and interpretation support to the extent practicable.

School-Parent Compact

La Cima will maintain a jointly developed school-parent compact that outlines:

- The school’s responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction;
- Ways families can support their child’s learning (e.g., homework help, attendance, reading at home);

- The importance of ongoing communication and how the compact will be reviewed at conferences and family meetings.

Annual Evaluation and Improvement

Each year, we will evaluate this policy's effectiveness in improving academic quality and family participation by:

- Gathering input from families through surveys, events, and meetings;
- Identifying and addressing barriers to engagement (e.g., language, work schedules, accessibility);
- Using results to revise our strategies and policy accordingly;
- Publishing updated versions and distributing them to families annually.

Opportunities for Family Engagement

We encourage and value families as:

- **Teachers** – helping reinforce learning at home;
- **Supporters** – volunteering time and talent for school events;
- **Advocates** – ensuring student needs are met and voiced;
- **Decision-Makers** – shaping programs and policies.

Throughout the year, families will be invited to participate in:

- Academic events like the Science Fair and Changemaker Showcase;
- Fundraising efforts such as the Annual Book Fair;
- Recruitment drives through referrals;
- Family-led events such as Family Culture Day and Teacher Appreciation Week, organized by the Parent Association.

At the beginning of each school year, your child's teacher will send home additional information about how to get involved. We will also use **ClassDojo** and other communication platforms to regularly share updates and engagement opportunities.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Who Can Answer My Questions

I have a question about schoolwork, tests, class field trips, homework, and anything that takes place inside of the classroom. I want to know how I can best support my child's learning at home.	Classroom Teacher
I have a question about music, physical education, African drumming and dance, or art. I want to know more about a project, special field trip, or other issue within a particular specials elective class.	Specials Teacher
I have a question about accommodations being made to address my child's special learning needs, or questions about my child's services and supports.	Director of Special Populations
I have a question concerning scholar enrollment, the lottery, scholar records, school uniforms, transportation, or school lunch. I need to advise someone of my change of address/phone number or update my emergency contacts.	Main Office Staff (School Operations) Director of Operations
I have a question about the school's culture, discipline policy, behavioral expectations, suspensions or other disciplinary actions. I want to know how the school deals with bullying.	Guidance Counselor/ DASA Coordinator Dean of Culture and Belonging Instructional Leader
I would like to discuss an important or sensitive issue that I feel is affecting my child and family. I need help to find a support or program in the community for my family or me. I have a concern about my child's feelings or behavior and need to speak to someone other than my child's teacher.	Guidance Counselor
I have a question concerning school wide policies and operations including attendance, facilities, and security.	Director of Operations
I have a question concerning the school's curriculum or instructional approach, report cards, NYS ELA, Math Tests, or other school wide assessments. I have spoken to my child's teacher but still have a concern.	Instructional Coach Director of Special Populations Head of School
I have a question about overall performance and goals. I have spoken to the Instructional Coaches but still have questions.	Head of School

APPENDIX B: Important Notice of Additional Policies

La Cima Dignity for All scholar Act (DASA) Policy

La Cima maintains a safe and supportive environment for all community members; we abide by the New York State Dignity for All Students Act. That law seeks to “provide scholars with a safe and supportive environment from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying (including cyber bullying) on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.” Discrimination and harassment is prohibited by employees or scholars based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex.

Respect for All

All scholars have the right to attend schools that are safe, secure, and peaceful environments. La Cima recognizes that discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying, are detrimental to scholar learning and achievement. These behaviors interfere with the mission of the school to educate its scholars and disrupt the operation of the school. Such behavior affects not only the scholars who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

Bullying in schools has historically included actions shown to be motivated by a pupil’s actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, gender, gender identity and expression, weight, or other distinguishing personal characteristics, or based on association with any person identified in any of the above categories.

La Cima prohibits all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events. Discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying that takes place at locations outside of school grounds which can be reasonably expected to materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school or impinge on the rights of other scholars are prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

La Cima DASA Coordinator: Tiffany Young, Guidance Counselor
Phone Number: (718) 443 - 2136
Email: tiffany@lacimacs.org

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

La Cima Charter School is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all student education records, in accordance with federal law.

All student records are maintained in the school’s main office. Parents or eligible students may request to review these records by contacting the school secretary. A written request will be required, and the parent/guardian or eligible student must sign a log acknowledging the review.

No student information may be shared with outside individuals, agencies, or organizations without written parental consent, except where permitted by law, such as in response to a court order or subpoena. All external requests for student information must be referred to the school principal.

Your Rights Under FERPA

FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review education records

- Parents or eligible students may inspect their child’s education records by submitting a written request to the school principal. The school will provide access to the records within 45 days and notify the requester of the date and time.

2. The right to request an amendment to the records

- If a parent or eligible student believes information in the record is inaccurate or misleading, they may submit a written request for an amendment to the principal. The request must clearly identify the record to be changed and explain why it is inaccurate.
- If the school denies the request, the parent/eligible student will be notified of their right to a hearing and provided with further information on the hearing process.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information (PII)

- FERPA generally requires written consent before a school may disclose personally identifiable information from a student’s records. However, certain exceptions allow disclosure without consent, including:
 - To school officials with legitimate educational interests
 - To another school where the student is enrolling or seeking to enroll
 - In compliance with a court order or subpoena
 - In connection with financial aid applications
 - To authorized representatives of federal or state education authorities
- A school official is defined as:
 - An employee (e.g., teacher, administrator, counselor)
 - A school board member
 - A contractor or consultant (e.g., attorney, auditor, medical professional)
 - A parent or student serving on an official committee (e.g., disciplinary or grievance)
- A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs access to the record to fulfill their professional duties.

4. The right to file a complaint

- Parents and eligible students may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the school has violated FERPA requirements:

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

Directory Information Notice

Under FERPA, the school may disclose certain student information, known as directory information, without written consent, unless a parent or eligible student opts out in writing. Directory information under FERPA includes items such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance.

This information may be used in yearbooks, newsletters, websites, or school media unless parents/guardians submit a written opt-out request by September 15, 2025.

La Cima has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Grade level
- Dates of attendance
- Honors and awards received
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Photograph or video images used for school purposes

Opt-Out Process

Parents who do not want La Cima to disclose directory information from their child's records without prior written consent must submit a Directory Information Opt-Out Form to the school office no later than September 15, 2025.

All requests related to student records, including FERPA rights, opt-outs, and amendments, should be directed to:

Lori Riddick

Records Access Officer / Principal
La Cima Charter School
718.443.2136
lori@lacimacs.org

Title IX Policy

La Cima (the "School") is committed to providing a learning environment free from all forms of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") and all applicable New York State and New York City statutes, regulations and codes.

Title IX prohibits the school from discriminating on the basis of sex (including Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence) in all facets of its educational programs and activities, including distance learning.

This Policy applies equally to all of the School's students, employees, Authorized Volunteers, parents, and other members of the School community. This Policy applies to conduct "At School", at School events, and "Away From School" if/when the School has substantial control over the parties and the context in which the alleged misconduct occurred.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

La Cima does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran, genetic information, or marital status in the delivery of its education programs and activities, whether they take place on campus or through distance learning.

Pursuant to Title IX, this specific policy is limited in scope to instances of alleged discrimination *on the basis of sex*.¹ Alleged discrimination on bases other than sex fall under the School's anti-harassment policy. This policy of non-discrimination in its educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission considerations.

Scope

This policy does not limit the school's authority to address conduct that does not fit the definition of sexual harassment, but that violates other school policy/ies or the student code of conduct. Other conduct including harassment based on other protected categories, unlawful discrimination, hazing, or bullying, or other violations of the student code of conduct or the School's workplace rules, will be investigated and addressed under applicable school policy and law.

Key Provisions and Definitions

- **At School:** In a classroom, all school common areas, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on school property, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at a school bus stop, or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.
- **Authorized Volunteer:** Any person who 1) is not employed by the School, 2) does not receive any compensation from the School, 3) has undergone School-required criminal background checks, and 4) is permitted to provide services approved by the School to the community, including students, employees, and other partners.
- **Away from School:** Any location not defined above as "At School" but remaining within substantial control of the School.
- **Complainant:** Person who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute discrimination on the basis of sex and/or Sexual Harassment. For students under the age of majority, parents and legal guardians have the legal right to act on behalf of the student Complainant in Title IX matters.
- **Formal Complaint:** A document filed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator

¹ The decision in *State of Tennessee v. Cardona*, No. 2: 24-072-DCR (E.D. Ky. Jan. 9, 2025), President Trump's January 20, 2025 Executive Order and the Department of Education's February 4, 2025 "Dear Colleague" letter clarify that for purposes of Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex means discrimination on the basis of being a male or female.

alleging Sexual Harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the School investigate the allegation of discrimination on the basis of sex and/or Sexual Harassment. At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the Formal Complaint is filed. A document filed by a Complainant is a document or electronic submission that contains the Complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the Complainant is the person filing the Formal Complaint.

- **Respondent:** A person who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute discrimination on the basis of sex and/or Sexual Harassment. A Respondent can be another student, a teacher, an administrator, any other employee of the School, or a third party. Respondents will be presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
- **Sexual Assault:** Includes sexual misconduct that is attempted or perpetrated against a victim's will or when a victim cannot consent due to age, intellectual disability, or any other disability precluding consent. May involve actual or threatened force, weapons, coercion, intimidation, or pressure; unwanted touching; voyeurism; exhibitionism; exposure to pornography; and/or sharing private images without consent.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Includes, but is not limited to, degrading remarks, gestures, jokes, notes, graffiti, spreading rumors, indecent exposure, unwelcome touching, grabbing, pinching, or brushing against another in a sexual way. Unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the district on the Complainant's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (*quid pro quo* harassment); unwelcome sexual conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a Complainant equal access to the School's education program or activity (hostile environment); or Sexual Assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

Sexual Harassment of a Student by a School Employee

Sexual harassment of a student by a school employee includes, but is not limited to, both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually-motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- A school employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct, or
- The conduct is of the type that reasonable person would determine is so severe, persistent, pervasive, and objectionably offensive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or
- creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Sexual Harassment of a Student (Including Harassment by Another Student)

Includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is of the type that a reasonable person would determine is severe, persistent, pervasive, and objectionably offensive that it effectively denies a Complainant equal access the School's education program or activity; or Sexual Assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

Sexual Harassment of an Employee or Authorized Volunteer of School

The School adopts the definitions and conditions set forth in the School's employee sexual harassment policy as defined under governing New York law.

Sexual Violence: Includes, but is not limited to, isolated instances of sexual misconduct and/or aggression, Sexual Assault, and/or rape. Any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Perpetrators may be known or unknown.

Sexual Violence Perpetrated Against a Student

Sexual violence perpetrated against a student of the School, regardless of the perpetrator, includes, but is not limited to, both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually-motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- The student is caused to reasonably believe that he/she must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that a perpetrator will make an educational and/or School-related decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct.
- Conduct constituting "Sexual Violence" need not be repetitive, persistent, or pervasive such that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Sexual Violence Perpetrated Against a School Employee or Authorized Volunteer

The School adopts the definitions and conditions as defined under governing New York law.

Supportive Measures

Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services and/or accommodations offered, as appropriate and reasonably available, to individuals impacted by sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct. Supportive measures are available before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Supportive measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening any other party. They include measures designed to protect the safety of all parties and/or the School's educational environment, and/or to deter sexual misconduct.

Witness: An individual who may have seen conduct relevant to a Title IX formal complaint or a report of a potential Title IX violation, or who has other information related to a Title IX investigation.

Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator oversees the School's compliance with Title IX, including:

- Managing the grievance process for Title IX complaints
- Drafting and publicizing reporting procedures
- Overseeing prevention and response efforts
- Ensuring fair, prompt, and impartial complaint resolution
- Offering supportive measures to both parties with or without a formal complaint, considering the Complainant's preferences
- Identifying and addressing patterns or systemic issues
- Providing confidential written reports to the Head of School and Board of Trustees at least every four months (excluding pending matters if they act as Decision-Makers)
- Maintaining secure records of all reports and complaints
- Training employees, volunteers, and relevant community members on Title IX and related policies

The Title IX Coordinator shall understand and have knowledge of the Title IX requirements and the School's own policies and procedures on sex discrimination, anti-bullying, anti-retaliation, school place violence, and Sexual Harassment. The School shall require that the Title IX Coordinator, as well as Investigators and adjudicators, be free of any conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents, generally, or an individual Complainant or Respondent. Any training materials for Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, adjudicators, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment.

Each and every report or complaint filed with the School pursuant to Title IX or reasonably related to Title IX must be provided to the Title IX Coordinator to achieve his/her mission.

Effective upon adoption of this Policy by the Board of Trustees, the Title IX Coordinator shall be:

Designated Title IX Coordinator:

Capri Tennis
718.443.2136
capri@lacimacs.org

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence, including but not limited to Sexual Assault, are prohibited and will not be tolerated. The School expressly prohibits Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence At School of or by a student to another student; a student of or by a member of the staff; and/or of or by any other person who is any way associated with the School. This Policy also prohibits Sexual Harassment and/or Sexual Violence At School by and among school employees and Authorized Volunteers. To this end, the School commits its staff to the implementation of a comprehensive and preventive approach that addresses the underlying reasons for this behavior and helps to create a better school community that supports learning and teaching for students and adults.

Grievance Procedure

To facilitate the prompt and equitable resolution of any and all Title IX complaints, the School adopts the following grievance process. For the purpose of Title IX complaints and investigations, the School will apply a preponderance of the evidence standard of review. Complainants may choose to submit a written grievance to the School's Title IX Coordinator using the Title IX grievance form included as Appendix A of this Policy. The School shall respond to all Title IX complaints promptly and in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent, that is, in a way that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Grievance Process

1. Initiation of Grievance Process

- A formal grievance process is initiated when:
 - A Complainant submits a written statement alleging discrimination prohibited by Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator or
 - When the Title IX Coordinator receives a report of a suspected Title IX violation from another student, employee, volunteer, or other community member.

2. Investigation

- Upon the Title IX Coordinator's receipt of a grievance or other complaint pursuant to this policy, or the Title IX Coordinator's initiation of the grievance process, a Title IX Investigator, shall commence and conduct an investigation pursuant to the procedures set forth within this Policy. The Title IX Coordinator may serve as an Investigator, or may designate another trained Title IX Investigator from within or outside of the School to conduct investigations.
- The Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the investigation to all parties. The notice will include, among other things, a copy of this policy and a sufficiently detailed description of the allegations. The notice will specify the identities of the parties involved, the conduct allegedly in violation of Title IX, and the date and location of the incident(s), if known.

3. Determination

- Following an investigation (described in further detail under Section H below), a Decision Maker, who is neither the Title IX Coordinator nor Investigator, shall determine whether the Complainant was excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex with respect to any the School program or activity.

Hearings are not required under Title IX for complaints involving elementary and secondary school students, and there is no right to a hearing under the School's standard grievance procedure. If a party requests a hearing, the Title IX Coordinator will determine, in his/her sole discretion, whether to grant the request. The Title IX Coordinator's decision in this regard is not subject to appeal.

- After reviewing the Investigator's report and any submissions of the parties, and/or following a hearing, if such hearing is requested and granted, the Decision Maker shall prepare a written report setting forth his/her findings, conclusions, and actions to be taken, if any, and will determine with whom to share the report.
- The Title IX Coordinator shall, as necessary, take appropriate action(s) to ensure that the School implements any remedies called for in the decision and otherwise complies with Title IX in a manner that is prompt and equitable to the parties.

4. Appeals

- If any of the parties wish to appeal the decision(s) of the Decision Maker, that party must submit a written appeal to the Title IX Coordinator within ten (10) business days. Appeals will only be allowed for the following reasons:
 - Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter; or
 - New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; or
 - The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, hearing officer, or Decision-Maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual complaint or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Appellate Decision Maker shall conduct an initial threshold review to determine whether the appeal is timely and whether it alleges one or more of the permissible bases to appeal a Title IX decision. If the appeal is allowed, the parties will be notified in writing and will have the opportunity to submit a written statement addressing the issues raised on appeal. The Board of Trustees shall serve as School's Appellate Decision Maker.

The Board of Trustees shall issue a written report within ten (10) business days of the deadline for the submission of written statements by the parties. The written report shall include a notice to the parties of their further appellate rights.

To the extent possible, the School strives to complete all Title IX investigations in a manner that is reasonably timely under the circumstances.

Reporting, Investigation, and Response Procedures

Reporting Responsibilities

The Title IX Coordinator shall establish and prominently publicize to students, employees, volunteers, and parents procedures concerning how to report conduct believed to violate this Policy and how such reports will be acted on. Anyone who experiences and/or witnesses conduct that is or is reasonably believed to be in violation of this Policy, and/or anyone who has information that such actions have occurred may file a report.

Reporting:

All school employees *shall* report incidents of alleged violations of this Policy to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as they learn of or have actual knowledge of any conduct allegedly in violation of this Policy.

Employees shall report all relevant details that the Complainant shared or that the employee observed, including, but not limited to, the names of the alleged Respondent and Complainant (including individuals who have allegedly been subjected to sexual discrimination and/or harassment but may not wish to file a Complaint), the date, time, and location of the alleged conduct, and the circumstances surrounding the alleged conduct. A school employee's failure to report a violation of this Policy of which he or she has actual knowledge shall result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Students who witness alleged violations of this Policy, or parents whose children inform them of alleged violations of this Policy, shall report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Whether individuals who have been subjected to alleged Title IX misconduct choose to file a Complaint or not, they shall not be disciplined for failing to report an alleged violation of this Policy themselves. All reports from students or parents/guardians will be maintained in confidence to every extent possible.

Although the School cannot discipline or sanction parents or guardians who elect not to report violations of this Policy, the School **strongly encourages** parents or guardians who witness or receive information regarding a possible Title IX violation to contact the Title IX Coordinator as soon as practicable.

Confidentiality:

All reports will remain confidential, to every extent possible. The School may, however, have a legal obligation to share information received during an investigation. For example, La Cima is required to report known and suspected cases of child abuse to the Department of Children Youth and Families. The School may also have an obligation to report known or suspected violations of the law to law enforcement.

Retaliation Prohibited:

No individual who exercises their Title IX rights shall be subject to retaliation. Attempts and/or actions taken to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a Title IX investigation, proceeding, or hearing are prohibited under Title IX and this policy. Charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or Sexual Harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, also constitute impermissible retaliation. The School shall keep confidential the identity of Complainants, Respondents, and witnesses, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), or as required by law, or as necessary to carry out a Title IX proceeding. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Grievance Procedures in this Policy. By filing a Title IX complaint, no student, employee, volunteer or parent making such a report shall extinguish his or her right to file criminal or civil complaints concerning the same conduct.

Reports must be acted upon by those persons receiving the report and the Title IX Coordinator (upon receipt of a report), whether made orally or in writing. Knowingly filing false reports shall result in the taking of disciplinary measures.

Interim Supportive Measures

Upon receiving a credible report of an alleged violation of this Policy, the School will take all necessary measures to ensure the safety all parties (e.g., separate the Complainant(s) from the Respondent(s); provide alternative schedules to one or both parties; offer support services to parties and/or witnesses as necessary, etc.) and will provide the Complainant(s) and the Respondent(s) and their respective parent(s) or guardian(s) with regular updates as to the status of the investigation.

The School shall implement appropriate interim supportive measures on a case-by-case basis and shall not rely upon any fixed rules related to any such measures. Supportive measures shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity, protect student and employee safety, and deter sexual harassment. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of time or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, and other similar measures.

If/as appropriate, the School will provide Complainants with the contact information for available resources outside of the School, including but not limited to, victim assistance organizations, law enforcement, mental health services, legal assistance, and or counseling services.

Investigation Process

The Title IX Coordinator shall oversee all Title IX investigations at the School and may, in the Coordinator's discretion, serve as a Title IX Investigator. Depending on the nature of the alleged violation of this Policy, an investigation may include, but is not limited to conducting interviews with the Complainant and the Respondent; conducting interviews with witnesses; conducting interviews with the parent(s) or guardian(s) as necessary; reviewing law enforcement investigation documents, as applicable; reviewing student and personnel files; and gathering information from all other available outside sources.

A Title IX investigation can only commence once the Title IX Coordinator receives notice of the alleged violation of this Policy. Therefore, it is essential that school employees, students, parents, guardians, and/or Authorized Volunteers immediately report suspected misconduct as soon as practicable once they have actual knowledge about such misconduct.

When commencing an investigation that may lead to disciplinary action against a Respondent, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide written notice to the Respondent (and/or his/her parents/guardians) of the allegations constituting a potential violation of this Policy, including sufficient details with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. The written notice shall also include a description of the grievance process; a statement that the Respondent is presumed innocent until a determination of responsibility has been made; a notice of the Respondent's right to review evidence and right to an advisor; and the prohibition against false statements or providing false information during grievance process.

All investigations shall be conducted impartially and in an adequate, reliable, and impartial manner. The designated Title IX Investigator shall analyze and document the available evidence to support reliable decisions, interview and objectively evaluate the credibility of parties and witnesses, synthesize all available evidence—including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence—and take into account the unique and complex circumstances of each case. The investigation shall result in a written report summarizing the relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence.

Throughout the investigation, the Respondent and the Complainant shall be permitted to, at a minimum:

- Receive written notice in advance of any interview or hearing with sufficient time to prepare for meaningful participation;
- Have equal and timely access to all witness statements and other documents/reports gathered by the School during the investigation.
- Present relevant witnesses and evidence, including expert witnesses;
- Retain counsel, at the parties own expense;
- Request a hearing (available only at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator)
- If a hearing is granted, parties may cross-examine witnesses as necessary.

Information gathered during the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent possible. All evidence directly related to the allegations will be provided to the parties, or the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the parties and their advisors, as applicable, for inspection and review, and the parties will have ten (10) days to provide a written response to the Investigator. The Investigator will consider any such responses prior to issuing an Investigation Report.

After La Cima has sent the Investigation Report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the Decision Maker(s) must afford all parties ten (10) days to submit any written, relevant questions that they may wish to have asked of any party or witness. The Decision Maker shall review the parties' written questions, and if he/she deems a question to be irrelevant, that question shall not be transmitted to its intended recipient. In such instances, the Decision Maker will apprise the questioning party in writing of the reason(s) the question was deemed to be irrelevant. If relevant questions are submitted, the Decision Maker will convey those to the intended recipient(s), provide each questioning party with each response, and may allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Follow-up questioning is not available as a matter of right, but may be permitted at the discretion of the Decision Maker.

The Decision Maker shall make all determinations using a "preponderance of the evidence" standard. If allegations are found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary sanctions, subject to the School's due process procedures, shall be imposed. The School shall specifically inform the reporting party (and/or his/her parents/guardians) whether it found that the alleged conduct occurred, any individual remedies offered to the reporting party or any sanctions imposed on the responding party that directly relate to the reporting party, and other steps the school has taken to eliminate the hostile environment, if one was found to exist, and to prevent its recurrence, as appropriate.

Whenever conduct determined to meet the definitions of Sexual Violence and/or Sexual Harassment in this Policy also may have involved conduct that that may violate state or federal criminal law, the police or other necessary agency(ies) shall be notified.

Option for Informal Resolution

Where appropriate in light of the nature of the allegations and facts involved, the Title IX Coordinator may offer the parties the option to pursue an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. All parties must voluntarily agree to pursue informal resolution after receiving a full written disclosure of the allegations and their options for formal resolution. The School will not offer an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

Dismissal of Formal Complaint

The Title IX Coordinator will dismiss a formal complaint if the conduct alleged in the formal complaint: (i) would not constitute sexual harassment even if proved; (ii) did not occur on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; or (iii) took place outside of the United States.

The School may, in their discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.

If the Title IX Coordinator dismisses a formal complaint, all parties will be notified. A party may appeal the dismissal of a formal complaint by following the Appeals Process set forth in Section F(4) above. The complaint may also be referred for investigation and possible disciplinary action pursuant to other applicable School policies.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Students: Disciplinary sanctions any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics and school social events; loss of school bus transportation; assignment of additional school work or community service; and—depending on the extent of involvement in the prohibited activity—suspension or removal from school.

Employees: Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, suspension, termination, or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

Volunteers/ Parents: Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include but are not limited to, denial of access to school premises, school-related events, or school-sponsored events; suspension or termination of volunteer activities; or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

Prevention

The Title IX Coordinator shall ensure that students and staff are instructed on how to identify, prevent, and report violations of this Policy. The Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with the Superintendent/Head of School and the Board of Trustees, shall also ensure that the School's health program and counseling services include the appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and help them interact in a healthy manner. School staff shall model correct and courteous behavior to each other, to students, parents and to visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor shall not be accepted.

Enforcement Agencies

Nothing in this Policy is intended to prohibit or discourage individuals from contacting the applicable state and/or federal enforcement agencies with complaints or concerns, including but not limited to:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-1475
Telephone: 202-453-6020
FAX: 202-453-6021; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

33 Whitehall Street – 5th Floor
New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 1-800-669-4000
Fax: (212) 336-3790

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (commonly referred to as “504”) is a federal law that protects scholars and all Emblaze employees from discrimination based on disability. A disability may be a physical or mental impairment (such as an allergy or asthma or a learning disability) that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Section 504 assures that scholars with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to scholars without disabilities. If you believe that your child is experiencing discrimination or loss of educational opportunities due to a disability, please contact our 504 Coordinator, Brittney Baker, in person, by letter or email. The 504 Coordinator will arrange a 504 meeting to develop a health plan or another kind of 504 Plan. She will also explain your right to impartial review of a Section 504 Plan and procedures for filing a complaint, if your concerns are not resolved.

PROCESS FOR SHARING CONCERNS & FINDING SOLUTIONS

Formal Complaint

Section 2855 (4) of the NYS Charter Schools Act provides that parents (as well as any other individual) who believe that a charter school has violated a term of its charter or the law may complain formally to the school and seek relief. The law gives the power to hear those complaints to the school’s board of trustees in the first instance (though the board of trustees may delegate that power to, for example, the head of school or a committee of the board or a neutral third-party). The Board of Trustees then has 45 days to provide a response (may be written). Issues involving a violation of the law or charter may be resolved informally and you may wish to use this avenue before making a formal complaint, but the option of initiating a formal process can be enacted at any time. If, after making your complaint, you are unsatisfied with the school’s board of trustees’ determination and action (or does not respond within the time outlined in the formal complaint policy), you can make a formal complaint to the Board of Regents.

Contact information for the Board of Regents is available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/contact/>. Both the Institute and the Board of Regents can issue school remedial orders to remedy complaints. It is very important that before you use this formal complaint process (either with the school or afterwards with the school’s authorizer) that you determine positively that your complaint involves a violation of the charter or law. If it does not, this process is not the appropriate avenue for you to seek a solution to your problem.

Informal Complaint

Many types of complaints do not involve violations of law or the charter; rather, they are informal complaints. Where appropriate you may wish to use this more informal approach, which is likely to result in a resolution of the issue in a far more timely manner—and which is suited to dealing with issues that do not involve a violation of the charter or law.

LA CIMA FAMILY AND SCHOLAR CONTRACT

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Weekly Homework Expectations:

Main Home Learning Components – to be completed daily:

- Math Review/Place Value
- Writing: Short answer response questions
- Reading Passages and Response

Additional Home Learning Components for this week- to be completed daily:

- Independent Reading for 30 minutes – students will record the books they read daily and keep track of them in their weekly reading log.

Scholar Expectations:

- We expect that all scholars will complete homework daily.
- Scholars will use this time at home to extend their learning of ELA and Math concepts & skills at home
- Scholars will put effort and work independently while completing homework
- We expect that the entire packet will be completed before scholars return for the following week.

Parent/Family Expectations:

- We expect that every scholar has a family member to review their homework packet and check for completion
- We expect parents will sign to acknowledge that it has been reviewed.
- We expect that every scholar has a family member to read aloud to him/her daily and have a conversation about what they read in addition to the completion of this packet.

As a parent/guardian, I will:

- o Show respect and support for my child, the teachers, staff and the school.
- o Support the school's discipline policy.
- o Provide a quiet, well-lit place for study and supervise homework.
- o Attend ALL parent-teacher conferences.
- o Monitor my child's progress in meeting grade level academic goals in reading and mathematics.
- o Talk with my child each day about his or her school activities.
- o Monitor my child's TV viewing, cell phone usage, social media and keep it to a minimum
- o Ensure my child has a New York Public library card.
- o Read with my child for at least 15 minutes each day and let my child see me read.

As a scholar, I will:

- o Always try to do my best work.
- o Be kind and helpful to my classmates.
- o Follow La Cima CARE Principles
- o Show respect for myself, my school, and other people.
- o Obey classroom, school, and bus rules.
- o Come to school prepared with my homework and my supplies.

- o Believe that I can and will learn.
- o Spend at least 30 minutes each day studying or reading at home.
- o Talk with my parents each day about my school activities.
- o Ask for help from my caregiver or teacher when I need it.

Please sign below to confirm agreement with the expectations of this contract.

Name of scholar: _____

Parent signature

Date

Scholar signature

Date