

LIBERTY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL POLICIES AND HANDBOOK

Liberty Public Charter School

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INTRODUCTION

Liberty Public Charter School is a Harbor School and its mission and philosophy are based upon the Harbor School Method.

LIBERTY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Liberty Charter School's mission is to develop students who are competent, confident, productive and responsible young adults who possess the habits, skills and attitudes to succeed in life and be offered the invitation of a post-secondary education and satisfying employment.

LIBERTY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Liberty Public Charter School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place.

ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year. We are excited for the many opportunities your student(s) will have this year. Please take time to sit down with your student to familiarize yourselves with the Harbor School Method. Also, please review Liberty's policies; with particular attention given to the Attendance Policy and Student Appearance Policy.

We, along with the teachers and staff are dedicated to making this school one where students are growing and maturing both academically and socially. We will provide a safe and effective learning atmosphere for our students.

If you ever have a question, comment or concern, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Looking forward to a great year,
Rebecca Stallcop, Administrators

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNING BOARD

Rebecca Stallcop..... Administrator
Sheila Bryant..... Chairman, Governing Board
Robbie Hamblin.....Governing Board
Ted Hernandez.....Governing Board
Clyde Colbert..... Governing Board
Sherry Mancuso.....Governing Board
Alane McKnight..... Clerk of the Board

FACULTY

Kindergarten..... Joan Barnes
1st Grade..... Jackie Ecker
2nd Grade.....Cherie Edwards
3rd Grade..... Suzie Cass
4th Grade..... Ben Thomas
5th Grade..... Patti Ward
6th Grade.....Jill Linford/Matt McDaniel
7th Grade.....Paula Mikkelson
8th Grade..... Mark Wachsmuth/Kristel Cedergreen
Computer..... Amber Gunnell
Spanish
Science:
P.E.....Molly Beech
Music.....Bette Moore
Special Ed.....Erica Gerber

Welcome to the Harbor Method!

The philosophy of a Harbor School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place.

We believe that all children are capable of more than we imagine if we unlock their potential through high expectations, a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum, and dynamic character education.

Children must attain not only the knowledge and skills necessary for the 21st century, but also the work habits, the communication and problem solving habits that contribute to a democratic society.

The Harbor Method™

The Harbor School Method is a way of teaching, a way of learning and a way of schooling. It is whole school approach designed to educate children to be capable and caring graduates ready for the next level of their education. Harbor Schools create a setting focused on the development of knowledge and skills, as well as the development of attitudes and dispositions of children. It is grounded in core beliefs about children, how they learn and the responsibilities of the adults who shape their development. What makes Harbor schools unique are the manner in which competent and caring professionals, accelerated instruction, and the school environment work together to create a way of being as a school.

The Harbor Method was originally founded by Rebecca Stallcop, currently the principal of Liberty Charter School. Long before Liberty existed, Mrs. Stallcop and talented teachers brought their beliefs, knowledge and skills to bear to create a school where students learned more because they were taught more and where expectations for conduct were shared throughout the school. Mrs. Stallcop's passion remains focused on the preparation of future generations who can contribute to a democratic society as exemplars of learning, leading and citizenship.

The Harbor School Method incorporates the five key areas illustrated below. Each one is summarized in the following pages.

STUDENT LEARNING

Student Learning

Core Beliefs

- *Learning will accelerate when learners feel safe to discover, practice and improve.*
- *Work habits and dispositions are learned and are important to academic performance.*
- *Adults are the models from which children learn.*

Children learn in a social environment of schools. They learn in and out of the classroom. They learn by what they see, what they hear and what they do. The Harbor School Method is built on the belief that all students should know that their teachers have high expectations for their academic accomplishments and for their conduct.

Harbor educators intentionally design every aspect of school to provide clear and consistent expectations for students. This helps students know what is expected of them at school. The Harbor Method intentionally develops work habits in students that will serve them throughout their lives. Nurturing the development of students' intellectual, social, interpersonal and character growth is expected to be evident throughout the programs of a Harbor School. The goal of a Harbor School is to ultimately be career, work and college ready. Here are some of the core practices at your Harbor School:

- ***Students are deeply engaged in their work.*** Engagement is defined as the extent to which a student is *connected* to their work. How they do in school matters to them. The adults in the school continually help students develop a sense of personal accountability and responsibility for their performance.
- ***Students demonstrate exemplary work habits.*** Because students understand expectations early and expectations are consistent throughout the school, they are able to develop work habits that serve them.
- ***Students contribute to a caring and kind community with pride for their school.*** We expect students to understand how their conduct influences others and their school. They learn "Rules and Reasons." Teachers use stories to teach and shape student conduct.
- ***Students participate in service learning.*** Service learning is integrated in the instruction and in the school to enrich a student's experience and to teach civic and personal responsibility. Students learn service begins in their homes and their schools.

SCHOOL CULTURE

<p style="text-align: center;">School Culture</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Core Beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Kindness is fundamental to safety in a community.</i> • <i>The time to fix behaviors is when they are not broken.</i>

School cultures teach. They teach through the expectations set for and by the people working in them, both children and adults. They teach through the visible and invisible ways that people work together. They teach through the ways in which people treat one another.

Harbor schools intentionally create a culture that lives what it believes. School cultures teach children and adults directly and indirectly. Everything that occurs within a school culture shapes behavior of people. We are intentional about shaping that behavior.

Harbor Schools focus on safety by creating an environment of trust. They come to know that the adults care about them and for them. If there is a problem, the adults will handle it. A focus on kindness and a zero tolerance policy for teasing, taunting, bullying, and negative peer pressure creates a positive, supportive and constructive environment for children to learn and grow.

Students learn how to demonstrate respect for others and how to earn it. Personal responsibility is built into classroom and school wide activities.

Core practices of Harbor school culture include:

- **Conduct expectations are taught at the beginning of a school year.** Students learn early that their conduct in school creates the foundation for their conduct after they leave school. They are taught expectations, hear examples and observe the modeling from adults. Consequences occur naturally and always with an explicit lesson.
- **Students are expected to walk, without talking, in lines** from kindergarten through eighth grade. This is an example of proactive expectations minimizing opportunities for misconduct and distractions in hallways.
- **Students learn that there is zero tolerance for bullying.** Instead there are opportunities

for them to learn how to demonstrate kindness to others, creating a sense of security.

- **Respect and responsibility are taught.** Respect for property, people and the quality of their work are emphasized in a school using the Harbor Method.
- **Students know they will be recognized for their successes,** not only in what they know and can do academically, but also in their effort and attitude.

INSTRUCTIONAL FIDELITY

Program and instructional consistency is a signature feature of Harbor Schools. Three key elements distinguish a Harbor school's approach to academic learning from other schools.

One - Faculty and staff who decide to work in a Harbor School commit to adopting the beliefs that ground the schools' philosophy. Their teaching, leading and working habits emerge from those beliefs.

Two - Faculty and staff use an accelerated curriculum, proven teaching strategies and student management practices that support the intellectual as well as the social, emotional and character development of children.

Three - Instructional fidelity is defined as all teachers and school associates consistently implementing Harbor philosophy and practices within the school. The consistency of structure, expectations and instruction accelerates learning.

This feature brings benefits to student learning because they know what to expect from grade to grade, class to class, adult to adult. Students learn the instructional routines in early grades which accelerate their ability to focus on new information, skill development and thinking skills. The core instructional methodology is consistent across grades yet implemented with the unique creativity and talents of each teacher.

Core practices of Harbor Method include:

- **Teachers teach an accelerated curriculum.** There are grade level and above grade level concepts and skills everyday on *concept boards*, usually the whiteboards in the classroom. These concepts boards have clearly defined content and skills, chunked in small learning increments that are taught to all students each day. Concepts and skills are repeated so that students have multiple opportunities to learn and practice.
- **Teachers use multi-sensory learning experiences.** Teachers have students repeat rhymes, perform skits and use a variety of modalities to assist students in learning specific skills.
- **All content areas are venues for character development.** Harbor is an integrated approach. Learning acceptable work habits, character traits and dispositions are integrated throughout the day.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

School Leadership

Core Beliefs

- *Principals and school boards are accountable for the quality and performance of the school.*
- *Leaders create the conditions for adults and students to be successful.*
- *Leaders connect parents and community to the school and its mission.*

The quality of a school, the quality of teaching and the confidence of parents rest on the performance of the school's leaders. The ability of a Harbor School to carry out its mission depends heavily upon the strength of its governing board. An effective board provides strategic direction for the school, chooses and nurtures strong school leaders, and ensures the school's financial and legal soundness. For a charter school to succeed, it must form a board that is committed to the school's mission, possesses substantial leadership skills and expertise, sets policy that guides the school's work, and evaluates both the school and itself with an eye toward continuous improvement.

The principal's primary responsibility in a Harbor School is to create the conditions in the school community that support the Harbor core practices. The principal must protect teaching time, monitor quality instruction and be present throughout all student activities. You will see the principal every morning as students get dropped off and picked up at the end of the day. Principals in Harbor Schools are extremely visible to the student population. They are in classrooms every day, in hallways, in lunchroom, and on playgrounds. They use all of these venues to interact with students and use natural opportunities to teach, model and acknowledge student successes. Core practices of school leadership include:

- **Principals act as stewards of the educational process.** They understand their responsibility as guardian of trust of students, parent and staff. They work to ensure that parents have confidence in the school as a place where students can experience success in learning.
- **Principals are present, visible and actively monitor the learning environments.** Since principals supervise lunch time, arrival and dismissal, they are visible and use this time to chat with parents and to interact with students. Paper work and other management responsibilities are performed before and after the instructional day.
- **Boards and principals work to establish proactive communication and positive relationships with parents.** A charter school board and principal make communication a management priority. Contributions of parents' time, talents and energies are a valuable asset to enhance the school's capacity to meet the educational needs of its children in extraordinary ways.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent Engagement

Core Beliefs

- *Educators regard and engage parents as their children's first teachers.*
- *Parents contribute to building the excellence of a school.*

Harbor schools depend on the support and engagement of parents. Most of the schools began with a small group of interested, committed and dedicated parents who wanted a Harbor education for their children. Harbor educators remember that and cultivate strong parental engagement. The school actively works to earn parents' trust and confidence to provide a safe and productive learning environment.

Parents need to have sufficient understanding of the Harbor Method. Your understanding of Harbor practices is essential for you to support your child's education. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in various ways to enhance the program's effectiveness.

Core practices of Harbor Schools include:

- **Parents can expect the principal to protect instructional time.** Interruptions are kept to a minimum. Your child's instructional time is the highest value in a Harbor school. Emergencies are an exception. All other communication with the principal and with teachers is done before or after school.
- **Harbor practices are designed to develop work ethic, positive character attributes as well as academic assets.** We encourage parents to support their children in their homework and to reinforce personal responsibility in your child.
- **There is a high expectation for student attendance.** The reason for this is to instill a sense of high value and respect for their time at school. We believe that this is a foundation for a habit of work that will serve them beyond school. For this reason, parents are asked to plan family trips and vacations around the school calendar.
- **Leadership, teachers and parents share a mutual purpose.** That purpose is a successful educational experience for your child. That mutual purpose provides the foundation for problem solving as issues arise. Parents are encouraged to contact the principal to clarify facts regarding any issue that arises. Harbor schools attempt to minimize stories or gossip and maximize facts and mutual problem solving. Always begin with the principal to obtain the facts as issues inevitably arise.

The habits we form from childhood make no small difference, but rather they make all the difference

Aristotle

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY POLICY

At Liberty Public Charter School regular attendance and punctuality are a vital part of a student's education. Teachers implement a high level of direct teaching and interactive learning and both students and teachers are held accountable to complete a set of standards and benchmarks. These teaching techniques do not allow students to simply make up concepts missed and as a result, regular attendance is critical to each student's success. In accordance with our charter, Liberty Public Charter School has a 96% attendance standard. **Every effort and commitment should be made by students, parents and administration to ensure that students are in attendance and punctual every day.** A year-round school calendar is provided well in advance to allow families to schedule activities during breaks. Students are expected to attend classes regularly.

TARDY POLICY

All students arriving more than 5 minutes late must report to the office to ensure accurate records and lunch counts. Students arriving more than 5 minutes late need an adult to sign them in at the office. Students leaving and returning during the school day must be signed in and out by an adult.

Each time a student is **tardy three (3) times in 1 semester**, the student will also be treated as having 1 unexcused absence.

ABSENCE POLICY

Excused absences – The Administration and Governing Board recognize that there are special circumstances when a student may need to participate in another event or activity rather than attend class. An absence will be considered “excused” if the student could not attend class because he/she is ill, or is attending a funeral or wedding of an immediate family member (parent, sibling, or grandparent), and the student's parent/guardian provides reasonable evidence that this was the cause of the absence. However, the cumulative affect of regular class attendance is critical to the learning experience that Liberty Public Charter School offers, which the student misses even when the absence is excused. Students with excused daily absences of 9 per semester or 12 per school year may be required to meet with the Governing Board.

Unexcused absences – absences due to non-school related activities, club or family events, trips or vacations, and any absences not reported to the school by a parent/guardian within two school days of the student's return to school. Parents should schedule doctor, dentist and orthodontist appointments after school hours or during breaks. Absences for non-emergency or routine dental, medical and orthodontic appointments are considered unexcused. Off-campus lunches with parents, family or friends are unexcused.

Sanctions

A student receiving two (2) or more unexcused absences in a semester will not be eligible to receive Citizen of the Week or Citizen of the Month. Any student in 6th through 8th grade receiving three (3) unexcused absences in a semester will have the grade he or she would

otherwise receive reduced by one full letter grade. Any student receiving five (5) unexcused absences or a total of nine (9) excused and unexcused combined absences in a semester will lose his or her seat in the school.

EXPULSION

A student will be expelled only after the Liberty Governing Board has given written notice to the parent/guardian of the student, stating the grounds for the proposed expulsion, and specifying a time and place where the parent/guardian of the student may appear to contest the proposed action of the Board. This notice shall also state that the student has the right to be represented by counsel, to produce witnesses, and to submit evidence on his/her behalf, and to cross examine any adult witnesses who may appear against him/her. The Governing Board for Liberty Public Charter School will regularly review and adopt policies describing sanctions, including the expulsion of the student that would be appropriate unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as a student being absent for all or any part of the school day, without the approval of the parent, guardian or school authorities. This includes students who are on the campus, but not in their assigned classroom. Truancies accrue for the entire year.

ABSENCE VERIFICATION

When a student has not arrived by 9:00 a.m., and no contact from a parent has been received, a school representative will attempt to contact parent/guardian. To have an absence excused, a parent/guardian must call or send a signed note stating the reason for the absence upon the student's return to school. A doctor's note is recommended for extended absences due to medical reasons. Three (3) or more consecutive absences may require a note from a physician. **If appropriate notification has not been received within 2 days of student's return to school, the absence may be considered an unexcused absence.** Parents whose work schedule prevents them from contacting the school during the normal school hours are strongly urged to send a note or leave a message after hours.

DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Students are expected to be respectful and kind to fellow students, staff and visitors at all times, exhibit good work skills, and use appropriate language. Students are expected to follow school rules and policies throughout the school day, at all times on the Liberty Public Charter School campus and while involved in any event associated with the school. School rules and policies apply to transportation to and from events as well.

STUDENT APPEARANCE

In an effort to maintain a safe and orderly school environment for students, the following dress guidelines have been established. It is the opinion of the administration and the governing board that student attire has a direct effect upon the educational environment and upon the individual student's ability to function at an optimum level.

Appropriate clothing for class or any school activity must be reasonable, safe, clean, and non-revealing. An individual's dress and personal appearance should reflect a sensitivity and respect for others as well as what would be considered appropriate in a casual-professional work environment. Therefore, the following guidelines are to be followed by students of Liberty Public Charter School:

- **Students will NOT wear makeup at Liberty Public Charter School. However, blemish corrector and CLEAR lip gloss are allowed.**
- Midriffs, cleavage and underclothing must be concealed at all times.
 - Pants are to be worn at the waist covering underwear.
 - Shirts and tops must go over the shoulders, i.e. no tube tops, single shoulder tops or halter tops. Straps must be a minimum of 3 fingers wide (no spaghetti straps or “muscle man” shirts).
 - Tops must cover cleavage (Neckline should be higher than the straight line from underarm to underarm).
 - Shirts and tops must reach below the belt line to cover the stomach.
 - Tops must conceal undergarments, e.g. no bra straps showing and no sheer or see-through tops.
- Shorts and skirts must reach at least mid-thigh and be as long as the tip of the middle finger.
- Footwear must be worn at all times for health and safety. Flip flops may be worn before fall break and after spring break. Students will refrain from wearing gang attire of any kind. Garments that advertise inappropriate or illegal substances or clothing items with suggestive or obscene statements are prohibited.
- Hats, bandanas, stocking caps and hairnets are prohibited.
- Hair color will be within the natural hair color spectrum (brown, black, blonde or auburn).
- Facial piercing will be limited to small studs in the nose only.
- No facial rings of any kind will be allowed.
- Earrings are acceptable with the exception of ear gauges. **EAR GAUGES ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**
- Temporary and permanent tattoos must be concealed during school hours. (Medical tattoos may be allowed with approval by the administrator).
- Pajamas and loungewear are not allowed.
- Leggings are not considered pants, therefore skirts or tops worn over leggings must reach mid-thigh and as long as the tip of the middle finger.

The administrator or his or her designee may determine whether clothing is too revealing or inappropriate and whether it has a direct effect upon the educational environment and upon the individual student's ability to function at an optimum level. Students wearing attire deemed inappropriate by LCS staff or Administrator will be provided alternative clothing to cover up (i.e. large t-shirts or sweatpants). This clothing must be laundered and returned to the school the following day.

Required dress for student participation in activities that are in any way representative of the individual school or community shall be outlined by the respective sponsor and administration.

WEAPONS POLICY

Absolutely no weapons of any sort or anything that resembles a weapon are allowed. This includes toy weapons. on Liberty Charter School property or at school sponsored activities at any time under any circumstances. Any student who brings a weapon to school property and/or school sponsored activities is in violation of the Gun-Free Schools Act and Idaho Code 18-3302D, and shall be expelled for a period of no less than 1 year (12 months). A recommendation will be made to the Governing Board for extended suspension or expulsion

Consequences: The school district takes a position of addressing each case individually in regard to the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students. The minimum consequence for student's possession, use or distribution of weapons may include (upon discretion of Administrator):

- Confiscation of the weapon
- Notification of Police
- Notification of parents/guardians
- Suspension
- Hearing with the Governing Board

Application to Instructional Equipment/Tools: While the school wishes to address each case individually, it takes a firm position on the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students. Such a position is not meant to interfere with instruction or the use of appropriate equipment and tools by students. Such equipment and tools, when properly possessed, used and stored, shall not be considered in violation. However, when authorized instructional and work equipment and tools are used in a potentially dangerous or threatening manner, such possession and use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

Administrative Discretion: The superintendent may use discretion in determining whether, under the circumstances, a course of action other than the minimum consequences specified above is warranted. If so, other appropriate action may be taken, including consideration of a recommendation for lesser discipline.

FIGHTING (BATTERY)

Liberty Charter School's philosophy "*is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place*". Fighting is diametrically opposed to "low threat". A fight is described as follows: Pushing, shoving, kicking, pulling or physically connecting in an aggressive manner with another student. Parents will be notified of any fight (battery). The consequences for a fight are as follows.

1st Fight (Battery):

- Parents will be notified by phone.
- If deemed necessary, the authorities (police) will be notified.
- Three day in-school suspension.

2nd Fight (Battery):

- Parents will be notified by phone.

- The Liberty Charter School Board will be notified and may require a meeting with the student and parents.
- Authorities (police) will be notified.
- Suspension, duration to be determined by the Board.

3rd Fight (Battery):

- Parents will be notified by phone.
- Authorities (police) will be notified.
- The Liberty Charter School Board will be notified and will conduct an Expulsion hearing with the student and parents.

DRUG POLICY

Liberty Charter School adheres to the policies as described in the Safe & Drug Free Schools Act as described by the Idaho State Department of Education and enforces a “no tolerance” drug policy. A student is in violation of school policy if he/she is involved with drug paraphernalia, controlled substances, or drugs, on any school premises or at any school sponsored activity. All incidences or suspected incidences of possession or distribution of controlled substances, over-the-counter, or prescription medication will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Any student requiring over-the-counter or prescription medication must leave it with the VCHS secretary in the office as described on page 18 under Administering Medication. If there is probable cause that a student is in possession of drugs, all property is subject to be searched.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT UPDATE

Liberty Charter School will maintain an educational environment in which bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Bullying is the repeated aggressive behavior of frightening of others with an apparent intent to dominate. Bullying may include, but not be limited to, physical (hitting, pushing, or attacks on property; verbal (name-calling, obscene gestures, malicious teasing, or electronic threats); or indirect attacks (intentional exclusions from groups, anonymous hurtful notes, or spreading false rumors). Bullying often occurs without provocation. Bullying is not playful teasing between relatively equal individuals.

Bullying may include: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member. Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Bullying or cyber bullying behaviors have the effect of:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.

How to report bullying:

A student can report a complaint of cyber bullying, orally or in writing, to the administrator or a staff member. If a parent initiates the complaint, the administrator/designee will follow-up with

the student. Information will be gathered by the administrator/designee to determine if the alleged bullying or cyber bullying conduct occurred. After gathering the information, the administrator will determine the need for further investigation or the appropriate intervention, including contacting parents and disciplinary actions, to ensure that the conduct ceases.

A violation of this Policy will subject the offending student to appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with the school's discipline policy, which may include suspension, expulsion, or notification to the appropriate authorities. Bullying incidents which occur off school grounds but have a negative affect on the learning environment and culture at Liberty may be addressed at school by the administrator using appropriate disciplinary measures.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of Liberty Public Charter School to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any Liberty Public employee to harass a student or for any student to harass another student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted or unwelcomed verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's right to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in a comfortable and supportive educational atmosphere.

It is the expressed purpose of this policy to see that no student is subjected to language or harassment that makes him/her feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Students who believe they are being harassed should report the situation to a teacher, or the administrator immediately. Disciplinary action for violation of this policy may involve up to and include suspension and/or expulsion. Liberty Public Charter School officials will follow appropriate state and federal laws, and refer to the following Idaho Codes as appropriate.

LANGUAGE

Students will refrain from swearing or using foul language at all times. Students will speak kindly and respectfully to staff and fellow students. Students speaking inappropriately, disrespectfully or unkindly will be assigned detention and an incident report will be completed. Repeated incidences may require an appearance before the Governing Board.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

Drug Free School Policy

Liberty Public Charter School will comply with *I.C. 33-210*. In harmony with the federal regulations established by the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, Liberty Public Charter School is committed to the concept of having a drug free student environment. It is our intent that programs and activities be planned and carried out by the professional staff that will enable the school to achieve this goal.

The primary focus of our program shall be educational in nature, with instruction geared to discourage student experimentation of any mood altering substance. A companion focus of this program shall be aimed to assist students who have made unacceptable choice regarding any

controlled substance. A necessary part of the latter focus is an attitude among teachers and other staff members that one of our responsibilities is to assist those students who need help in overcoming their potentially addictive behaviors. We believe that it is possible to have a totally drug free environment in the school setting. If a student cannot, or will not, commit to responsible behavior to help achieve this goal, several sanctions may be imposed as a disciplinary measure. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parent or guardian contacted.
- Referral to assistance, such as counselors and/or health professionals.
- Referral to an outside agency for chemical dependency assessment and/or treatment.
- Suspension from school.
- Expulsion from school.

Referral Policy

When there is reasonable cause to believe that a student illegally uses, sells, distributes, or possesses drug paraphernalia, drugs, alcohol, or other mood-altering substances in school, or on adjacent to school property, or at school functions, the student will be subject to the disciplinary procedures contained in this regulation.

As used in this policy, reasonable cause shall mean the existence of specific observable evidence or behaviors that can be described.

1. Observable behaviors may include chronic attendance problems, erratic behavior, drop in grades, or motor coordination problems. Possession of alcoholic beverages, drugs or drug paraphernalia is also considered as evidence.
2. Evidence shall include, but not be limited to, smell of alcohol, or other mood-altering substances, impaired speech, impaired coordination or other recognizable characteristics unusual for the particular students.

Offenses for elementary students shall be cumulative from grades K-5 and offenses for secondary students shall be cumulative from grades 6 - 8.

Procedures

Liberty Public Charter School will send staff to training to identify drug, alcohol, and mood-altering substance use. Staff will refer such information to the Administrator through appropriate procedures. To develop reasonable cause for taking action the following procedures may be indicated.

1. Documented behaviors or indicators of drug, alcohol or mood-altering substance use.
2. Possession of alcohol or other illegal drugs
3. All procedures are to be performed with discretion and documented.
4. Refusal to submit to a request to any of the procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Elementary Disciplinary Procedure

1. First Offense for Use or Possession (Grades K-5)

- a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. Student will be suspended for 5 days.
 - c. Suspension may be modified if the student participates in and follows the recommendations of an assessment by a certified drug/alcohol agency. A release of information would also be required.
 - i. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
 - ii. If the student does not complete the recommendations of the assessment, then the remainder of the 5-day suspension will go into effect.
2. Second Offense for Use or Possession (K-5)
 - a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. Governing Board may be petitioned for expulsion of student.
 - c. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted
 - d. Child Protection Services (C.P.S.) may be contacted.
 3. Third Offense for Use or Possession (K-5)
 - a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. The student shall be suspended and the Governing Board will be petitioned for expulsion of the student.
 - c. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
 - d. Child Protection Services (C.P.S.) will be contacted.
 4. First Offense for Selling or Delivering (Grades K-5)
 - a. Parent or Guardian will be contacted.
 - b. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
 - c. The student will be suspended and the Governing Board will be petitioned for expulsion of the student.
 - d. C.P.S. may be contacted.

Secondary Discipline Procedure

1. First Offense for Use or Possession (Grades 6-8)
 - a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted
 - c. Student shall be suspended for 5 days.
 - i. Suspension may be modified if the student participates in and follows the recommendations of an assessment by a certified drug/alcohol agency. A release of information to the school district will also be required.
2. Second Offense for Use or Possession (Grades 6-8)
 - a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
 - c. School Board may be petitioned for expulsion of the student.
3. Third Offense for Use or Possession (Grades 6-8)
 - a. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - b. The student will be suspended and the School Board will be petitioned for expulsion.

- c. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
4. First Offense for Selling and/or Delivering Alcohol or Drugs (Grades 6-8)
- a. Law Enforcement Agency shall be contacted.
 - b. Parent or guardian will be contacted.
 - c. The student shall be suspended and the School Board petitioned for expulsion.

Search and Seizure Philosophy

In order to maintain a quality educational atmosphere, preserve discipline and good order, and promote the safety and security of students and employees, all school property, including, but not limited to, buildings, equipment, buses, grounds, and other physical settings and equipment of Liberty Public Charter School is under the direct jurisdiction and exclusive control of the Governing Board and subject to search by members of the administrative staff. Therefore, students are advised that it is the policy of this school that members of the administrative staff have the authority to search all school property, including student desks, areas designated by the school for storage of students' personal property, and all other school property over which the school has control at any time, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Members of the administrative staff also have the authority to search the personal property of students when reasonable under the circumstances. This authority to search school property, or personal property of the student when appropriate, is extended to members of the teaching staff who accompany students on out-of-town activities for school-related purposes at school expense.

Enforcement Procedures

Any student exhibiting inappropriate behavior that suggests "using" or "being under the influence" of controlled substances will be immediately escorted by an employee to the administrative office for interviewing and observation. Except in the case of an emergency, the student will not be left unattended and will not be allowed to leave the school premises.

The Principal or designee will refer the student to the law enforcement agency after a trained staff member, upon observing and/or interviewing the student, reasonably suspects that the student is using or under the influence of a controlled substance. All employees will cooperate fully with any law enforcement investigation of a violation of this policy, including but not limited to providing access to student desks, any other area designated by the school for storage of students' personal property, and other school property, and providing oral and/or written statements regarding the relevant events.

The Principal and/or any other employee having observed the student's behavior will document his or her observations of the student; the documentation will be provided to the law enforcement agent, and a copy will be placed in the student's discipline record.

The procedures to enforce this policy are as follows:

1. Suspension/Expulsion: Students who violate this policy will be suspended by the Principal. Suspension for the first offense of this policy will be for three to five (3-5) days, unless extraordinary circumstances exist. The time period for suspension for the second or third offense will be determined at the discretion of the Principal and/or Governing Board. The Principal will

determine whether or not the suspension will be served in school or out of school. If deemed appropriate by the Principal, he or she may request that the board expel a student who has violated this policy for a second or third offense.

2. Referral to Law Enforcement: The student will be referred to the law enforcement agency Search and Seizure: A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable cause to believe that the student is in possession of drug paraphernalia or drugs, including alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances. Any evidence of a violation of the law or this policy may be seized by the Principal or designee. Student desks and any areas designated by the school for storage of students' personal property are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of personal property.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGARISM, CHEATING

Liberty Public Charter School considers cheating or academic dishonesty to be a serious violation of school rules and has adopted procedures (below) to deal with students who have committed any of the following:

- Receive or provide information during a test.
- Receive or provide information on tests during an earlier period.
- Use unauthorized material on tests.
- Use ideas or written material from other sources, i.e., students, professional writers, Internet notes, study guides without acknowledging the source in their own writing.
- Use or copy another student's homework when not authorized by the teacher to do so.
- Allow other students to use their work on assignments.

First Offense – Student is given a zero on the compromised work. Parents will be notified.

Second Offense – Student will receive a zero and will be referred to administration for further disciplinary action including the possibility of suspension or expulsion.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Liberty Public Charter School recognizes that students are entitled to attend a free public school and that even temporary denial of that right may occur only after careful attention designed to protect the individual rights of students. However, the school is also responsible for providing a safe learning environment which protects the safety of all students, volunteers, and personnel.

The Idaho Legislature has empowered public schools to provide temporary suspension and for expulsion of individual students when circumstances demonstrate that such action is necessary for the protection of the rights of other students, necessary for the orderly operation of the school process, and/or necessary for the protection of the safety of other students.

Suspension and/or expulsion of students with disabilities will be handled in compliance with federal law and following the Idaho Department of Education Special Education Manual as outlined in the Liberty Policy regarding discipline for students with disabilities.

Suspension

Authority to temporarily suspend students has been delegated by the Idaho legislature to the principal/superintendent of the school. No person other than the principal/superintendent or the Governing Board may suspend a student from Liberty Public Charter School.

Grounds for suspension may include the following:

- A student may be suspended for disciplinary reasons, or for other conduct that is disruptive and detrimental to the instructional process of the school, or to the health and safety of other students and the general climate of the school.
- A student may also be suspended when, in the judgment of the principal/superintendent, the suspension is necessary to protect the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other students of the school.

Period of suspension

The Governing Board or the principal/superintendent may temporarily suspend any pupil for disciplinary reasons, including student harassment, intimidation or bullying, or for other conduct disruptive of good order or of the instructional effectiveness of the school. A temporary suspension by the principal/superintendent shall not exceed five (5) school days in length; and the Governing Board may extend the temporary suspension an additional ten (10) school days. Provided, that on a finding by the Governing Board that immediate return to school attendance by the temporarily suspended student would be detrimental to other students' health, welfare or safety, the Governing Board may extend the temporary suspension for an additional five (5) school days.

Procedure for suspension:

1. Prior to suspension, steps will be taken to ensure compliance with all applicable policies and procedures;
2. Prior to suspension, unless an emergency exists, the principal/superintendent shall grant the student an informal hearing on the reasons for the suspension;
3. The student shall be given opportunity to challenge the reasons for the suspension and explain the circumstances surrounding the event;
4. If the student is suspended, a complete explanation will be given orally and in writing to the student regarding the terms or conditions required to lift the suspension;
5. Written notice describing the reasons for the suspension shall be delivered or mailed to the parent or guardian;
6. The Governing Board shall receive a copy of the written notice delivered to the parent or guardian.

Expulsion

Only the Governing Board may expel a student. If a Special Education or Special Services student accumulates, or is likely to accumulate, more than ten (10) days of suspension in a school year, the student's multidisciplinary team must be convened to determine if the current program and placement are appropriate and if the behavior is related to the student's disability. Based on this determination, multidisciplinary team shall make needed modifications to the student's IEP.

Grounds for Expulsion:

A student may be expelled only for the following reasons:

- When the student is a habitual truant;
- When the student is incorrigible;
- When the student's conduct is such as to be continually disruptive to the instructional effectiveness of the school;
- When the student carries a deadly or dangerous weapon concealed or on or about his or her person while on the property of the school;
- When the student's presence in the school is detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of other students or staff.

Procedure for Expulsion:

Formal Hearing: When events or circumstances are such that a student faces expulsion from school, the following will occur:

1. The student and the parents or guardian shall be notified of:
 - a. The grounds of the proposed expulsion, and the date, time and place where a full and fair hearing of the expulsion will be held;
 - b. The right to be represented by legal counsel;
 - c. The right to confront and cross-examine adult witnesses who testify against him/her and to submit evidence on his/her own behalf.
2. The student and the parent or guardian shall be provided a written copy of the charges.
3. Expelled students within the age of compulsory attendance fall under the purview of the Juvenile Corrections Act, and an authorized representative of the Governing Board shall, within five (5) days, give a written notice of the expulsion to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

HOMEWORK POLICY

The education of today's youth must be considered a team effort involving parents, students and teachers. Research shows that the most successful students, regardless of family income or ethnic background are those who have regularly structured homework time. Homework allows additional practice and reflection, reinforces skills, and provides practical application and time for additional research. Homework helps establish a basis for independent and life-long learning while the discipline of nightly homework creates a habit that will be beneficial throughout life.

- Homework assignments are required and will apply to the student's grade.
- Late assignments will be awarded a lower grade.
- Benchmark assignments must be completed to receive credit.
- Assignments more than one day late may or may not be accepted at the teacher's discretion.
- Homework due during an unexcused absence will receive a failing grade at the teacher's discretion.

(Teachers will establish specific policies for their classes and will share those with their students.)

It is not our intention that parents teach their students; however, parental support and encouragement are essential for many students to be successful. The following have proven beneficial to both parents and students:

- Establish with your student that homework is a priority.
- Establish a regular homework schedule.
- Discuss, read and review assignments periodically.
- Listen to rehearsals of presentations.
- Review and discuss grades on completed assignments.

BUS RULES AND CONSEQUENCES

The following is a complete list of bus safety rules.

1. Before Boarding the Bus:

- a. Be on time at the bus stop. The bus is not permitted to wait.
- b. Stand on the sidewalk at the bus stop. If there is no sidewalk, stand on or near the curb. Stay off the street!
- c. On dark or cloudy days, wear bright clothing.

2. Boarding the Bus:

- a. Stay in line and board the bus quickly.
- b. Help other students; do not crowd or push anyone.
- c. Use the hand rail when going up the bus steps.
- d. Find a seat and stay in it. If needed, share the seat with another student.

3. While Riding the Bus:

- a. Talk quietly. Talking loudly is never permitted.
- b. Do what the bus driver says. The bus driver has complete authority over students riding the bus.
- c. Stay seated. When on the bus, students must stay seated for safety reasons. Turning around or standing is never permitted. Windows may be opened, but students must never lean out the windows or put arms out the window.
- d. Keep the bus clean. By keeping feet off the seat-back and putting all garbage in cans students will help make the bus safe. The Student will be responsible for any vandalism that is incurred.
- e. Keep books and other personal belongings on your lap. Throwing of any material in or out of the bus is never permitted and will result in immediate suspension from the bus..
- f. Know the use of the Emergency Exit. Keep aisles clean and clear at all times in case of an emergency. The back emergency door is to be used only in the case of an emergency.

4. Getting Off the Bus:

- a. Remain seated until the bus has completely stopped.
- b. Cross the road in front of the bus, following the instructions of the driver. Do not walk out into the road between parked cars.

- c. Walk facing traffic. When leaving the bus stop, always walk on the curb facing oncoming cars. Stay on sidewalks whenever possible. Do not cross the street unless necessary.

Students need to take care of three general parts of their body while riding the school bus.

1. Mouth – Do not talk at a noise level that is distracting to the bus driver or use bad language on the bus.
2. Hands and Feet – Keep hands and feet to yourself. Does not push, hit, kick or throw things. Hands and/or feet must never be put out the window.
3. Bottom – Stay in your seat. Turning around or kneeling in your seat, or standing is not allowed.

If the student can assume responsibility the three areas listed above and can show respect for self, other students, and the bus driver, citation will not be necessary. In the event a student violates a bus rule, the following consequences will be imposed (For students with disabilities, disciplinary procedures for bus behavior will also comply with all applicable federal and state laws and will follow the procedures outlined in the Idaho Department of Education Special Education Manual):

- 1st offense: Warning; telephone call to parents and a copy of the driver's report.
- 2nd offense: Suspension of bus riding privileges for ten (10) school days. Parents will receive a telephone call from the school and a copy of the bus citation.
- 3rd offense: Suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the calendar school year.

Riding the bus is a privilege. The bus drivers report can cause suspension of any student from riding the bus. Liberty Public Charter School and/or Brown Bus Co., reserves the right to suspend bus riding privileges at any time in the case of severe misbehavior.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

Students are not permitted to carry prescription or non-prescription medications at any time. If a student must take medication during the school day, these guidelines will be followed:

1. All medications will be left with the secretary.
2. The parent/guardian must submit a written request to the school if the medication is to be given during school hours. Specific directions for administering the medication and the parent/guardian's signature must be received before any medication is given to the student. In the case of prescription medications, the physician's signature is also required.
3. The medication must be in the original container and the student's name and directions for administering the medication must be written on the container.
4. It is the student's responsibility to come to the secretary at the appropriate time to take his/her medication, unless the student has a disability and is unable to do so.

5. Non-prescription medication, such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cough drops and anti-itch cream, can be provided to students with parental permission. A parent note can be on file to allow the medication to be provided as needed to the student or by parent signature on the enrollment form.

6. Emergency medication (Asthma inhalers and Epi-pens) should be in student possession as required by a physician. The Authorization For Self-Administered Asthma/Emergency Medication form must be on file with Liberty to ensure proper administration of emergency medication.

MORNING AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Liberty Public Charter School will not provide supervision on school grounds for students in grades K through 6 before 7:55 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m. Therefore, students should arrive after 7:55 a.m. and be picked up prior to 3:00 p.m. Grades 7 through 8 will not be supervised before 7:15 a.m. or after 2:15 p.m. Parents are expected to make appropriate arrangements to ensure the safety of their children.

COMPUTER, INTERNET & E-MAIL USE

Computer usage is allowed for school-related, educational or assignment-based use only. Students may not use computers to play computer games, visit chat rooms, instant message or use social networking tools such as *twitter*, *myspace.com* or *facebook.com* at any time. E-mail access is allowed with specific instructor permission only. E-mail access for non-school related reasons is not allowed at any time. Student and parent/guardian will review and sign computer/internet guidelines at the time of registration. Computer usage is frequently monitored. Computer use at Liberty Public Charter is a privilege and not a right. Abuse of the computer will result in restriction of use.

HEADPHONES / MP3 PLAYERS

Students are not allowed to wear headphones or listen to MP3 players at any time, except when identified as an accommodation on a student's IEP. Headphones or MP3 players seen at school will be taken until after school. Students who consistently abuse this policy will have their headphones/MP3 player taken away and the confiscated item will only be returned to the parents or guardian.

CELL PHONES

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during school hours. Cell phones that are out during school hours will be taken by the Administrator:

1. First infraction – phone taken for the day.
2. Second infraction – phone turned in to the Administrator at the beginning of the school day and returned to student at the end of the school day for one month.
3. Third infraction – meeting with parents and cell phone possession is restricted on school property.

ATHLETICS (Applies to Grades 6-8)

Student athletes must maintain a minimum grade of a "C" in every class, and meet all requirements on the Sports Eligibility Form to be eligible to participate in any sport/athletic event. Students will be required to have a Sports Eligibility Form signed by all teachers each

week while participating in sports. Athletes with discipline write-ups will not be allowed to play for a period determined by the Administrator.

SPORTS DUAL ENROLLMENT (with the Nampa School District)

1. Liberty Public Charter School will contract with the Nampa School District, or other appropriate public school district for dual enrollment for extracurricular sports for students in grades 6 through 8.
2. Nampa School District students have priority when cuts are made.
3. **Liberty students are responsible for fees** that are set by the appropriate school district for non-school district students if they exceed the amount designated for this purpose in Liberty's annual budget
4. Applications are available in the Liberty office, and must be signed by the Administrator of Liberty Public Charter School prior to submittal at the Nampa School District administrative office.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS

All school-sponsored out-of-town trips taken for the purpose of participation in any educational endeavor shall be chaperoned by a member of the teaching or administrative staff. A student, who is not an active participant in the event, but has a reasonable purpose for attending may accompany the group with advance approval by the administrator. Organizations that plan to attend out-of-town events when it is necessary to leave during the school hours must receive written administrative approval. Any educational trips, which are not sponsored by the school, must have prior written approval from the Administrator for the absence to be excused. Students participating in school activities where buses are used for transportation may not go or return by private means without administrator approval. All baggage and personal effects may be opened and searched by school personnel before or during the trip.

GYMNASIUM

Use of the gymnasium and equipment outside of regular school hours must be supervised by an adult and approved by the Administrator. Use of the gymnasium during lunchtime is prohibited, unless approved by the Administrator.

SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

All school equipment is off limits during non-class hours unless instructor gives prior written permission.

CAMPUS VISITS

Liberty Public Charter School visitors are required to check in at the front office. Students who wish to bring visitors and guest speakers to the school should proceed through the appropriate teacher and get permission of the administrator or designee prior to the visit. Parents that wish to speak with students during school hours are asked to proceed through the school secretary. Parents that need to speak with teachers are asked to set an appointment in advance. Parents of students may volunteer in the classroom, but are asked to respect classroom procedures and speak with student or teachers outside of class time.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Liberty Public Charter School provides a variety of wholesome lunches to students in grades 1-8. Lunch prices will be set annually. Reduced/Free lunches are available. Applications are included in family enrollment packets. Lunch fees will be collected daily during morning attendance or may be paid directly to lunchroom staff. Parents are encouraged to maintain a balance on their students' accounts.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES / SNOW DAYS

In the event of heavy snowfall or freezing rain, which makes road conditions unsafe for school buses to operate, the following procedures will be followed:

The Administrator will notify radio stations and local TV stations of any school closure or late start. The stations typically begin announcing closure information at approximately 6:15 a.m. On late start days, all buses can run up to 60-90 minutes late.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Any student leaving Liberty Public Charter School for any reason during the school year should do the following:

1. Provide a **written** request, including the date of withdrawal, from the parent/guardian to the secretary stating that the student is withdrawing from school and the reason for withdrawal.

Withdrawal grades will be available within 3 school days following the exit interview.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Liberty Public Charter School is not responsible for accidents involving students while attending school, or school-sponsored extra-curricular activities. Students are covered when they ride the school buses. Students are protected while traveling on chartered buses or regularly-scheduled common carriers by the liability of those carriers. Liberty Public Charter School does not assume any financial responsibility for medical or hospital expense incurred because of athletic injuries. Athletics are voluntary programs in which the student may participate if he/she so desires; but he/she does so at his/her risk of injury.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Seventh and eighth grade students are required to perform 30 hours of community service, cumulatively during their combined 7th and 8th grades years. They are responsible for logging their hours and providing proof of their hours served. They must have signatures of an adult involved in the activity (not a parent).

REPORT CARDS

Students will receive a formal copy of quarter, and semester grade reports. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent/Teacher Conferences at the end of 1st and 3rd quarters to pick up Progress Reports and meet with teachers about their student's progress and participation. Semester report cards will be sent home with students or mailed to parents. Weekly or monthly progress notes will be sent home with students if teachers or parents feel it is necessary. Parents will be notified a minimum of 2 weeks prior to grade reports if a student is failing a class.

DELIVERY OF ITEMS BY OUTSIDE VENDORS

Students are not to disrupt the school day by ordering and arranging for the delivery of items from outside vendors, such as food, flowers, balloons, and similar items. Parents are asked to have such orders delivered to the student's homes; otherwise, items delivered to the school will be kept at the front office until the end of the school day.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Halloween

There is no formal observation of Halloween at Liberty Public Charter School. Masks and costumes are not permitted.

Valentine's Day

Individual teachers will inform students concerning the classroom exchange of valentines. Class lists are provided, and children who choose to exchange valentines must include everyone on the list, so that each child receives the same number.

Birthdays

Student birthdays will be celebrated monthly with one, end-of-the-month classroom recognition event. Summer birthdays will be recognized in May.

VISITORS

All visitors, including parents, must report to the front office prior to entering a classroom.

LIBRARY USE

Students are allowed to check out two books at a time. Books must be returned before the end of each semester, or replacement fines will be issued. Fines may also be issued for damage or excessive wear on a book

TEXTBOOK/MATERIALS USE

Books or class materials must be returned before the end of each year, or replacement fines will be issued. Fines may also be issued for damage or excessive wear on a book or materials.

CLOSED CAMPUS

The campus is closed during all hours of school. Students are to arrive and stay for their entire school day. No student may go to a vehicle or leave school without permission from parents, notification of the teacher, and following proper sign-out procedures. Students are not allowed to leave campus at lunch unless accompanied by a parent/guardian after sign-out procedures have been followed. Leaving campus without checking out is treated as an unexcused absence and/or truancy.

CALENDAR 2011-2012

TBD

Receipt of Liberty Public Charter School Handbook

I have read and understand the Liberty Public Charter School student/parent handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date