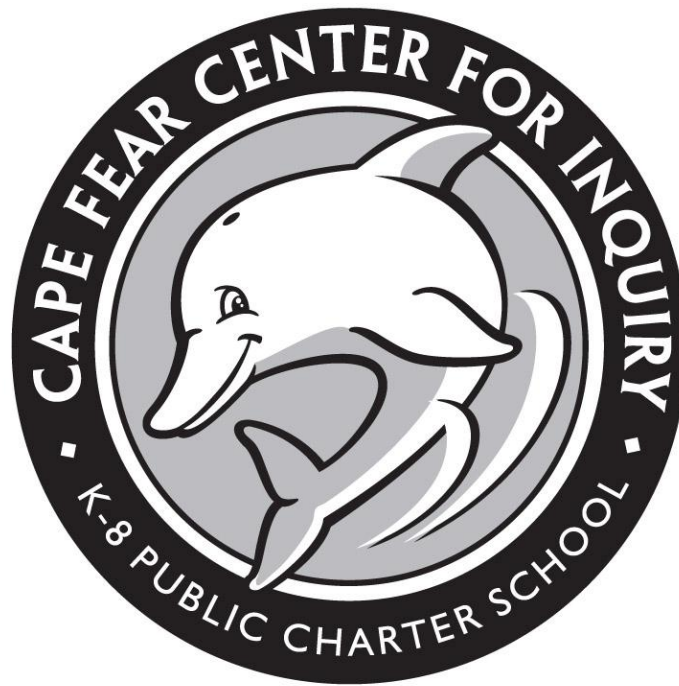


2011 - 2012  
Handbook for  
Students and Parents



2525 Wonder Way  
Wilmington, NC 28401  
910-362-0000  
[www.cfci.net](http://www.cfci.net)

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry  
Parent & Student Handbook

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Please see the CFCI calendar at our web site [www.cfc.net](http://www.cfc.net)

## **General Information**

### **Mission Statement** (CFCI POLICY #210)

Founders of the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry are committed to promoting students' abilities to think and create in personally meaningful ways. A high level of personal and collegial accountability will be maintained through an integrated inquiry-based curriculum that is academically challenging and situated within the context of a safe and encouraging environment.

### **CFCI Focus** (CFCI POLICY #215)

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry is committed to promoting students' abilities to think and create in personally meaningful ways through an integrated, inquiry-based curriculum in a nurturing environment.

### **Vision Statement** (CFCI POLICY #220)

Our school exists because we love and value children. Children and learning are the heart of what our school is all about. We base our purpose and daily decisions on our greatest priority—the well-being of our students.

At CFCI, we believe that the whole child is more important than any single factor. We recognize physical, intellectual, emotional and social development as integral parts of each child's growth and learning process.

Therefore, we:

- focus on student inquiry because we believe that all children have an innate sense of wonder.
- design and provide hands-on, integrated and exciting learning experiences—through classroom and field experiences—because children learn best when they are actively engaged in making personally meaningful connections.
- are committed to a small student-teacher ratio because this is the best way to create communities of learners.
- nurture our students to be independent, lifelong learners by increasing responsibility for their learning,
- appreciate diversity among learners because we value the uniqueness of each child.
- aggressively prepare our students to become effective communicators, critical thinkers and creative problem solvers because problem solving is a natural part of everyday life.
- implement a comprehensive social curriculum because children learn best in a safe and caring environment where every child is respected and valued.

- rely on mutual support of home, school and community. Communication and family involvement are vital to ensuring student growth. We agree that nurturing and educating children are monumental tasks that require the collaborative efforts of the entire school community.

**Inquiry** (CFCI POLICY #225)

CFCI's teaching methods do not look like those of traditional schools. CFCI teachers and administration work to implement new methods such as inquiry-based instruction, alternative assessment techniques, and providing student choices, as well as other innovative initiatives. We ask that parents support us in making our school of choice different and innovative.

Inquiry-based learning is a meaningful process. In this process:

STUDENTS are actively exploring interests and taking ownership of their learning through

- asking questions
- working together
- thinking and problem solving
- reflecting and sharing new understandings

While TEACHERS are creating a safe environment by

- accepting mistakes
- respecting students' ideas
- sharing leadership with students

And are guiding student learning by

- knowing students well enough to address individual needs and interests
- helping students make new connections
- nurturing a sense of wonder
- encouraging students to create their own understanding

**Who We Are/Non-Negotiables** (CFCI POLICY #230)

The faculty at CFCI came together during the 2003-2004 school year to create the following statements about who we are. They support the mission and vision and further clarify the fundamental beliefs of our school community.

- We foster inquiry-based teaching and learning, creativity, and personal growth for all members of the school community.
- Children are the heart of the school and all decisions take into consideration their individual physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs.
- Learning is a continuous process, enhanced by experience. We will always be "becoming."
- Because we have a unique opportunity to be professional decision-makers, our professional responsibility and accountability are paramount.
- Learning is joyous.
- All members of our learning community are encouraged and expected to continue learning.

- We work to create a community in which we foster open communication in order to grow professionally and to resolve conflict.
- We actively seek to show that our students are learning and we are able to explain our teaching and the inquiry process. We are accountable to our students and their parents, each other as faculty members, the Board of Directors, the larger professional community, the State of North Carolina (DPI) and the local community at-large.
- We are a unified group of diverse thinkers.
- We are expected to be involved in decisions that affect our school and our classrooms.
- We are creative as problem solvers and teachers.
- We promote the care and respect of others

### **School Mascot and School Colors**

Our school mascot is the dolphin named Riptide. Our school colors are navy blue, teal and silver.

### **Teacher/Staff Directory**

Joanne Brinkley	Kindergarten
Beth Carter	Kindergarten
Sam Deprisco	1 <sup>st</sup> grade
Rene Lemons	1 <sup>st</sup> grade
Suzy Boyko	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade
Michele Hair	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade
Harden Barker	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade
Julie Sartorius	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade
Amanda Benton	4 <sup>th</sup> grade
Lori Winner	4 <sup>th</sup> grade
Nancy Kachadurian	5 <sup>th</sup> grade
Cyndi O'Brien	5 <sup>th</sup> grade
Tara Adams	6 <sup>th</sup> grade English language arts/humanities
Jon Hartman	6 <sup>th</sup> grade math and science
Lisa Brackney	7 <sup>th</sup> grade English language arts /humanities
Jackie Anderson	7 <sup>th</sup> grade math and science
Indira Grimes	8 <sup>th</sup> grade math and science
Holly Konrady	8 <sup>th</sup> grade English language arts /humanities
Evelyn Albright	Exceptional Children
Lori Benazzi	Exceptional Children
Pauline Piner	Exceptional Children
Pam O'Dell	Administrative Assistant
Sara Johnson	Office Assistant
Joanne Cress	Technology Teacher
Sharon Moore	Music Teacher
Michael Rheel	PE Teacher
Missy Ritchie	Art Teacher
Ingrid Stenzel	Spanish Teacher
Anna Mallard	Guidance Counselor

Brian Corrigan	Director
Lori Underwood	Curriculum Coordinator
Nancy Johnsen	EC Coordinator
Kathy Rettig	Business Operations Coordinator
Michael Zentmeyer	Human Resource Coordinator

## **Student Attendance** (CFCI POLICY #405)

### **General Requirements**

The foundation of our school is experience driven, inquiry learning that primarily happen at school or on school field trips. Students must be present to be full members of the learning community. We expect parents to support the mission and vision of our school by limiting their child's absences to the greatest extent possible. There is no substitute for the uninterrupted personal contact between teachers and students in the classroom environment where learning experiences are carefully planned and taught by teachers. The primary responsibility for school attendance rests with students and parents. CFCI has the responsibility for properly recording absenteeism and tardiness, notifying parents when needed, and discouraging excessive absences in accordance with state law. G.S. 115C-307 (f)

### **Lawful, Excused Absences**

Pursuant to state law G.S. 115C-378 and the rules and regulations of the N. C. Department of Public Instruction, School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual, the following shall constitute a lawful excused absence, provided satisfactory evidence is given to the appropriate school official:

1. **Illness or injury:** An illness or injury which prevents the child from being physically able to attend school.
2. **Quarantine:** When isolation of the child is ordered by the local health officers or the State Board of Health.
3. **Death in the immediate family of the child:** Defined to include, but not necessarily limited to, grandparents, parents, brothers, and sisters.
4. **Medical or dental appointments:** When approved by the appropriate school official in advance, except in the cases of an emergency.
5. **Court or administrative proceedings:** Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the child is party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
6. **Religious observances:** When the tenets of a religion to which a child or his parents adhere require or suggest the observance of a religious event unless the religious observance or the cumulative effect of the religious observance is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the child.
7. **Immediate demands of the farm or home:** When it is demonstrated that the needs of the farm or home require the presence of the child to perform work and when it is demonstrated that assistance to meet this need is not otherwise available and cannot be secured.
8. **Educational opportunity:** When the absence clearly is to take advantage of a valid education opportunity, such as travel. Approval for such an absence

must be granted five days prior to the absence by the Director and the teacher. An inquiry project related to the educational opportunity may be required.

9. **Absence related to deployment activities:** - A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting said parent or legal guardian. ( G.S. 115c-407.5 Article V (E) )

### **Unexcused Absences**

Absences for reasons other than those listed above may be deemed unexcused.

The Director and his/her staff shall take appropriate action to prevent excessive absences and/or provide counseling for students with a history of excessive absences. Parents must be notified of their child's excessive absences, and the teacher and/or counselor shall then work with the student and his family to analyze the causes and to determine the steps to eliminate the problem.

**A written note excusing the absence must be brought or e-mailed ([podell@cfc.net](mailto:podell@cfc.net)) to the front office within 48 hours of the student's return to school. Failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as unexcused.**

### **Rule of Procedure in Law Enforcement**

G.S. 115C-378 provides that "every parent, guardian, or other person in the state having charge or control of a child **between the ages of 7 and 16 years** shall cause such child to attend school continually for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session."

The law also purports that students under the age of seven **who are already enrolled in public school** must abide by the compulsory attendance law unless the parent withdraws the student from school.

Teachers may consider student's number of absences in the computation of the student's grades.

The school will notify parents of excessive absences under the following conditions:

1. After the **third** unexcused absence,
  - a. The Director or his designee shall notify the parent/guardian within a 24-hour period and shall request an immediate conference with the teacher and school counselor.
  - b. If unable to contact the parent/guardian, the Director shall refer the matter to the school counselor or his designee for immediate investigation.
2. After the **sixth** unexcused absence, the Director shall notify, by mail, the parent/guardian of the student's excessive number of unexcused absences from school that she/he may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of CFCI and will request a conference with the parent/guardian, teacher, counselor, and Director.
  - a. Notification of the parent shall be mailed and shall state that the parent of any student between the ages of 7 and 16 years of age may be prosecuted under the General Compulsory Attendance Law if these absences cannot be justified under established policies (see G.S. 115C-378).

- b. A copy of the notice will be directed to the counselor or appropriate central office school personnel who will work with the student and family to remedy the problem (see G.S. 115C-378). If warranted, the counselor or Director may take legal action.
3. After the **eighth** unexcused absence, the Director shall notify the parent/guardian of the student's excessive number of unexcused absences from school and will request that the parent and student attend a meeting with the CFCI Attendance Council. The CFCI Attendance Council shall be comprised of a faculty school board member, the student's teacher, the school counselor, the Director, and other members at the discretion of the Council.  
The Council will outline the consequences of continued attendance violations, answer the families' questions and provide any additional pertinent or requested information. The student, parents and Council will enter into an attendance contract which includes an individualized case plan. The CFCI guidance counselor will meet with the family biweekly to monitor the student's progress, remove barriers from achieving the attendance goals and to update the contract as needed. The Council has the authority to change Unexcused Absences to Excused Absences upon presentation of appropriate documentation.
4. After the **ninth** unexcused absence, the Director shall notify the parent/guardian of the student's excessive number of unexcused absences from school and may request that the parent attend a meeting of the Judicial Advisory Council in New Hanover County. The JAC is comprised of school social workers, counselors, a county judge, the District Attorney, DSS officials, and CFCI representatives.
5. After the **tenth** unexcused absence, the Director must review any report or investigation prepared under G.S. 115C-381 and must confer with the student and his/her parent, guardian, or custodian, if possible, to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the Director determines that a parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Director shall notify the district attorney by filing a criminal report at the magistrate's office and notify the Department of Social Services in the county where the child resides.

#### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES:**

The Attendance Council will meet when a student reaches 20 total absences (excused or unexcused) to prepare the parent for possible retention of the student. The Director or designee will inform the parent of the time and date of this meeting. A recommendation will be made to the teacher and the Director about possible retention of the student by the Attendance Council.

#### **Tardy Policy**

Because CFCI is a school of choice and does not provide transportation, parents have made the personal commitment to bring their children to school on time. The responsibility of arriving to school on time rests solely with the parent/guardian. At CFCI, we believe that building a strong community in the classroom enhances learning and teaches children to care about others and the world around them. This belief

is a cornerstone of our school's philosophy. Because one of the primary ways we build community is through morning meetings, we expect all children to arrive at school on time every day. Students are tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:15 a.m. If a child arrives at school after 8:15 a.m., a parent must come into the building to sign him/her in at the front office.

**Oversleeping, car trouble, and traffic delays are not considered excused tardies. THE ONLY EXCUSED TARDY IS A SITUATION WHERE THE STUDENT HAD A DOCTORS OR DENTAL APPOINTMENT IN THE MORNING.**

### **Excessive Tardy Procedure**

- After the **fifth** unexcused tardy, the office assistant shall contact the parent/guardian to determine the cause of the tardiness. The teacher may make a referral to the school counselor to develop resources to help the student arrive on time to school.
- After the **seventh** unexcused tardy the Director shall notify the family that they are not complying with the mission and vision of CFCI. A meeting with the Director and/or school counselor will be requested.
- After the **twelfth** unexcused tardy the Director shall notify the parent/guardian of the date and time that the Attendance Council will meet and decide a course of action which could lead to the reporting of the parent to outside agencies.

### **Early Check Outs**

Just as absent or tardy students cannot fully participate in the learning community, students who are checked out early miss valuable classroom time. Parents should consult the school calendar and make doctor's and other appointments after school or on teacher workdays when possible.

Students checked out for the day before 11:30 am are absent for that day.

When a student is being checked out, the parent must sign the child out in the front office. The school will not honor requests that the child wait in the front office at a specific time or meet their parent in the parking lot. Students will not be released to siblings less than 18 years of age. Parents should allow time for following the procedure above.

### **Student Release**

Each student must have on file a list of people to whom they may be released from school. Though it may cause an occasional inconvenience, this policy is essential for each child's safety. If students are to ride with someone not on his or her list of people to whom they may be released, a signed note **MUST** be sent by a parent giving permission. Students will not be allowed to use the telephone to arrange transportation during the school day.

## **Transportation**

### **Transportation Plan** (CFCI CHARTER)

When the founders of CFCI set priorities in how resources would be utilized, they chose to emphasize quality teachers and safe facilities over providing an elaborate transportation system for students. That means the school does not provide buses or vans for transportation. All parents are asked to provide transportation to and from school. Neighborhood car pools are encouraged. According to NC Charter School Law (§ 115C-238.29A), each charter school “shall develop a transportation plan so that transportation is not a barrier to any student who resides in the local school administrative unit in which the school is located.” CFCI’s transportation plan is to provide a means for parents to generate their own carpool connections if transportation is an issue. A student’s parent(s) or legal guardian is ultimately responsible for transportation to and from CFCI.

### **Arrival at School**

Students should arrive at school by 8:10 am. Classes begin morning activities at 8:15 and students need time to unpack and get ready for the day. Early morning care is available from 7:30 am to 8:00 am on an as needed basis. Students should not be on campus prior to 7:30 am because there is no one available to supervise them and the building is not open before 7:30. **All cars must enter and exit through the Wonder Way entrance.**

#### **Walk up**

- *Parents can park at the APT Church and walk up to the main building to drop off their children in the morning. Please stay on the sidewalk and follow the orders of the crossing guard. Parents please hold your children’s hands and be in control of your children at the crossing.*

#### **Car line**

- Enter only on Wellington to Wonder Way. DO NOT enter through the Shipyard Blvd entrance. This entrance is for emergency vehicles and staff ONLY.
- Stacking will be single file on Wonder Way keeping to the right. Please do not block the church driveway or the Willie Stargell driveway.

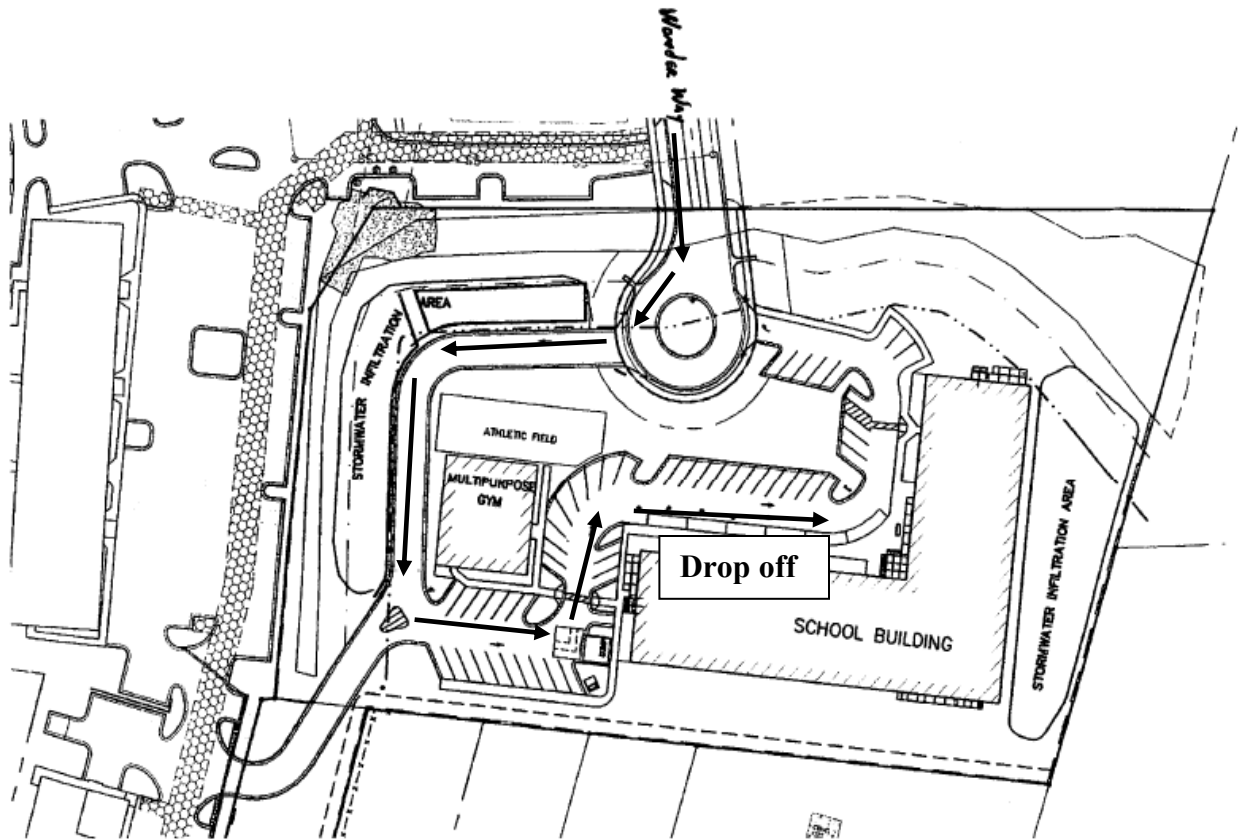
#### **Morning Arrival**

- Once your vehicle enters the CFCI drive way, stay right.
- Enter the coned off area to the right once you reach the building pulling up to the elbow of the school building.
- Your student(s) should exit their vehicles quickly and proceed to the main entrance of the school.
- Please continue back out to Wonder Way to exit the campus.

#### **Bicyclist**

- *Use the sidewalk while on CFCI property at all times*
- *Lock bicycle on the bike rack.*

## Morning Drop Off

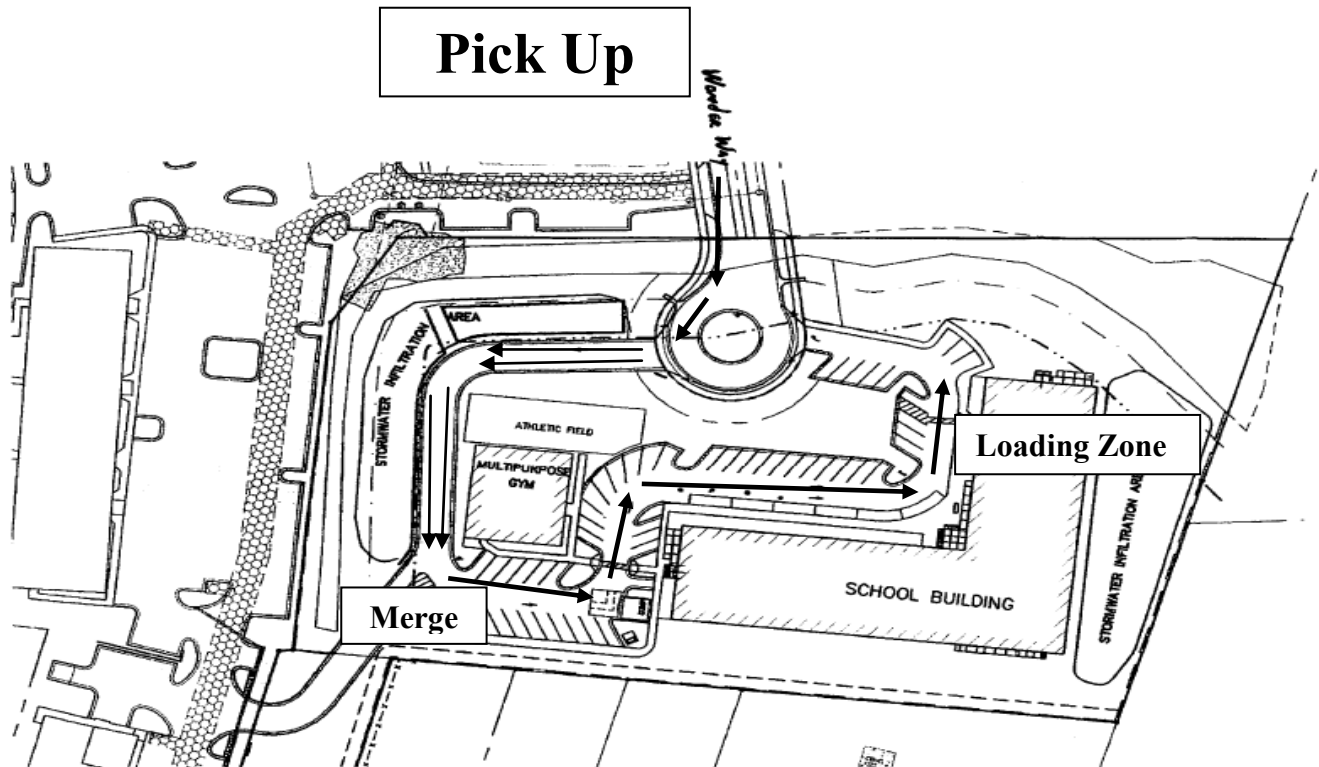


### After School Pickup

- *Walkers and bikers will be dismissed at 2:55pm. Walkers will be dismissed to the multipurpose building and bikers must go immediately to their bikes and leave the campus*
- **All students K-8 will be dismissed at 3:00pm.**
- Once your vehicle enters the CFCI drive way, both lanes will be stacked.
- A staff member will be at the island turn across from the back entrance (Shipyard driveway) calling student's out with a radio.
- Please stay to the left after the island to let the after school vans in. The vans will pull up to the school in the coned off area.
- Once cars pass the turn at the main entrance of the building, please move in to the loading area that will be coned off.
- Children are to enter their cars **ONLY** by the orange cones. Students should not get into their cars outside of this zone—it is a safety hazard.
- Please do not call to your child or blow the horn.

- For safety, please have your student enter the car from the passenger side only. Having student walk around cars to the driver side presents a potential hazard.
- If your child does not come when called, you may be asked to pull forward to a holding area or to the back of the car line.

All students K-8 will dismiss at 3:00pm. Parents are expected to pick up their child(ren) within 15 minutes of the dismissal time. It is the parents' responsibility to communicate the expectations above to any other individuals who may pick up their child.



Dismissal is not a time for parents to conference with teachers. The teachers are trying to make sure that every child gets home safely. It's a busy time of the day and the teacher cannot give parents his/her full attention. Please contact your child's teacher to arrange a time to have a parent conference. Remember: you may have "just a quick question," but if several other parents do this also, the teacher's ability to take care of the students is seriously diminished. Be respectful of the teachers' need to focus on the students at dismissal.

### Walk Up

*Parents can park at the APT Church and walk up to the multipurpose building to collect their children at dismissal. Please stay on the sidewalk and follow the orders of the crossing guard. Parents please hold your children's hands and be in control of your children at the crossing.*

### **After School Vans**

If your child will be riding a van to an after school care provider, it is your responsibility to call the van service if your child will not be riding that day.

### **Behavior Expectations, Procedures and Social Curriculum**

#### **Social Curriculum and Behavioral Expectations** (CFCI POLICY #410)

Treating others with respect and being responsible for one's own actions are the goals of the social curriculum at CFCI. We want our students to learn how to interact in a supportive, cooperative learning environment. Through the social curriculum, students internalize rules and procedures and develop self-control and self-confidence. Students are taught and encouraged to learn the principles of cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and compassion.

Each class begins the day with Morning Meeting, during which students build the class community through establishing expectations, participating in team-building activities and learning about the above-mentioned values.

Students create rules and procedures with teacher guidance to help our classrooms function safely and productively. We teach them the skills they will need in order to function as caring, self-responsible citizens by discussing, modeling and practicing appropriate ways to interact.

However, we understand students sometimes test behavioral boundaries. The step by step procedure that follows is the structure that teachers may follow. However, specific circumstances, needs of the student, repetition of situations or other issues might necessitate deviation from the process.

#### *Proactive strategies*

Proactive strategies are designed to allow students to develop self-control and community within the classroom. All teachers use them on a daily basis.

*Circle of Power and Respect/Morning Meeting.* Circle of Power and Respect (CPR) is a daily opportunity for students to meet with their homeroom groups to develop community. It is based on democratic, group-centered principles and provides students a safe space where they can build trust and relationships. CPR may include a greeting, an opportunity for sharing, a game or activity, and news. Students sit in a circle and all members of the group are expected to participate appropriately.

*Hopes and Dreams and the Social Contract.* Each student is invited to create hopes and dreams for his/her school year. These goals are used to create a social contract within the community. Students are asked to consider what expectations they should have of themselves and others in order to achieve their goals. The social contract is posted in each classroom. These expectations take the place of a traditional rule system where the teacher hands out expectations at the beginning of the year. Because students take part in

creating the contract, they have a stake in its success. These expectations form the basis of all other expectations and procedures in the classroom throughout the year.

Other proactive strategies include modeling, procedures, using proactive teacher language, and continuing the sense of community throughout the day.

### *Reactive Strategies*

At times, each of us will make mistakes and/or break the social contract. These events are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. However, students who do not follow the social contract or take advantage of opportunities to gain self-control may face discipline procedures in accordance with the CFCI discipline policy. Serious behavior issues, such as hitting or sexual harassment, will be dealt with using CFCI school policy.

*Loss of privilege.* Students who misuse materials, time, or relationships may lose the privilege of having those materials, time, or relationships. For example, a student who is off-task when working with a group may need to work alone until s/he can be on task in a group.

*Take a Break.* The Take a Break (TAB) chair in each classroom is used when students have broken an element of the social contract. Students are asked to sit in the TAB chair to regain self control. This is not a punishment; rather, it is a chance for the student to reflect and regroup before rejoining the group.

*Buddy Room.* At times, students may need a longer opportunity to reflect and regroup than the TAB chair allows. In this case, a student will be sent to the Buddy Room, a designated classroom. While in the Buddy Room, the student will complete a Fix-It form that allows him/her to reflect on the event leading up to the Buddy Room and how s/he will fix the problem upon returning to the class.

Each of these strategies is intended to give the student an opportunity to regain self-control before the teacher steps in with additional external discipline. Students who are unable to use TAB or the Buddy Room successfully may lose these privileges for a time.

Most often, students who are given the opportunity to regroup will do so. However, if students are unable to get on track after being given appropriate opportunities, they need to leave the community until the following day. The child's teacher will call the parent(s) to come pick him/her up from school. The student will remain in an appropriate, supervised location until the parent arrives. Having a child go home recognizes the important role parents have in supervising their child's behavior. If the student is sent home before 11:30am, the consequence will be documented as a suspension from school due to the fact that they did not complete a legal day of school. If a student is sent home after 11:30am the consequence will be recorded as a NIPP (Now in Parents' Possession.) This is not an official suspension from school, as the student will return the next morning with a clean slate.

Students who continue to have challenges may be placed on a behavior contract, may have social conferences with teachers and/or parents, or may be asked to make an Apology of Action.

Parents are partners in upholding our social curriculum at CFCI. If a student is “NIPPed” and the parent is called and does not respond to the call to make arrangements for pick-up within one hour of the call, then the student may not return to school the next day and it will be recorded as a suspension.

### **Comprehensive Student Discipline Program** (CFCI POLICY #420)

Good discipline in the school is extremely important to the educational program. Without good discipline, the school cannot discharge its primary responsibility in the development of citizenship and inquiry thought process. Without good discipline, students cannot realize their greatest opportunities for growth. In maintaining discipline, teachers must be able to proceed with the assurance that support will be forthcoming from the Director and the Board of Directors. The following guides to good discipline are recommended:

1. Good discipline is usually positive rather than negative in nature. It consists of keeping students interested and engaged in learning rather than punishing them for doing things that are antisocial.
2. Good discipline is always fair, dignified, and in good temper.
3. Conferences with teachers, parents, and the director should be effectively employed to bring about acceptable classroom behavior.

Teachers shall have the power to make and enforce with suitable penalties, all rules necessary for the proper management of their classes and appropriate behavior of their students. They shall utilize every resource to give guidance to their students and shall refer only extreme cases of discipline to the Director. Disorderly students shall be dealt with in a manner which allows other students to learn in an atmosphere that is safe, conducive to the learning process and free from unnecessary disruptions. All discipline procedures must conform to the requirements of state law.

### **Reportable Offenses**

CFCI is obligated by law (North Carolina General Statute 115C-288) to report the following incidents to the State Board of Education. The director may choose to contact law enforcement authorities. The definitions will be available at the front office.

<b>Arson</b>	<b>Explosives, Fireworks, and Foul</b>
<b>Assault</b>	<b>Substances</b>
<b>Assault resulting in serious injury</b>	<b>Extortion</b>
<b>Battery</b>	<b>Forgery</b>
<b>*Bullying</b>	<b>Gambling</b>
<b>Dangerous Weapon</b>	<b>Harassment</b>
<b>Discrimination</b>	<b>Hazing</b>
<b>Disability Harassment</b>	<b>Indecent Exposure</b>
<b>Disruption of the Learning</b>	<b>Insubordination</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Littering</b>
<b>Drugs, Alcoholic Beverages, etc.</b>	<b>Neglecting Responsibility</b>
	<b>Obscenity</b>

**Persistent Disobedience**  
**Possession or Using Weapons**  
**Rape**  
**Sexual Assault**  
**Sexual Harassment**  
**Sexual Misconduct**  
**Sexual Offense**

**Smoking or Using Tobacco Products**  
**Throwing Stones or Other Missiles**  
**Theft**  
**Trespass**  
**Truancy**  
**Vandalism**

\*Bullying is a series of deliberate and hurtful actions inflicted by one or more students who are perceived to be or are actually stronger, more confident, and/or more aggressive than the target, or who simply outnumber the target. Bullying may be: 1) physical, 2) verbal, 3) social/relational, and/or 4) sexual harassment. Social/relational bullying consists of indirect, covert attempts to affect the target's reputation or social standing. It may or may not include "cyber bullying," which is the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, and defamatory personal polling web (such as "Face Book" or "My Space") sites to intentionally harm others. Bullying is to be reported to North Carolina State Disciplinary Data Collection after repeated, deliberate acts (e.g. threats, shoving, chasing, pinching, etc.) are observed or reported over time. Bullying does not have to be reported in conjunction with any other act. A teacher or the director may deem a student to be bullying simply because of the repetitiveness of the harassment of another student, especially after warnings to stop the behavior. Reporting bullying is a State Board requirement.

## **PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

(CFCI POLICY #255/257)

The CFCI Board of Directors acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The board will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying in any of its educational or employment activities.

### **A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES**

#### **1. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying:**

Students, school system employees, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying. Students are expected to comply with the behavior standards established by board policy and the student code of conduct. Employees are expected to comply with board policy and school regulations. Volunteers and visitors on school property also are expected to comply with board policy and established school rules and procedures.

Any violation of this policy is serious, and school officials shall promptly take appropriate action. Students will be disciplined in accordance with the school's student behavior management plan (CFCI Board policy 410 and 420). Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, the student will be subject to appropriate consequences and remedial actions ranging from positive behavioral interventions up to, and including, expulsion.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, dismissal. Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate.

When considering if a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, school administrators should consider the nature and severity of the misconduct to determine whether a classroom or school-wide response is necessary. Such classroom or school-wide responses may include staff training, harassment and bullying prevention programs and other measures deemed appropriate by the director to address the behavior.

## 2. Retaliation

The board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy.

After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable federal, state or local laws, policies and regulations, the director shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

## B. APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying by students, employees, volunteers, and visitors. "Visitors" includes persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school. This policy applies to behavior that takes place:

1. in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;
2. on any vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
4. at any time or place when the individual is subject to the authority of school personnel; and
5. at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

## C. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any act or failure to act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, ideology, physical characteristics or disability. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.

### 2. Harassment and Bullying

a. Harassment or bullying behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication that:

- (1) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or

(2) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

"Hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as harassment or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment or bullying. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident, if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, behavior described above that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic or motivated by an individual's association with a person who has or is perceived to have a differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment or bullying. It is possible for harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, to occur in various situations. For example, harassment may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

b. Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- (1) submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic progress or completion of a school-related activity;
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or in the case of a student, submission to or rejection of such conduct is used in evaluating the student's performance within a course of study or other school-related activity; or
- (3) such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work or performance or a student's educational performance, limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or environment, or creating an abusive, intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment.

Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

c. Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

#### D. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT OR BULLYING

Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying. All reports should be made in accordance with policy 257 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure, and reported to one of the school officials identified in that policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.

#### E. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

The board directs the Director to establish training and other programs that are designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of the school community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan.

As funds are available, the board will provide additional training for students, employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students regarding the board's efforts to address discrimination, harassment and bullying and will create programs to address these issues. The training or programs should (1) provide examples of behavior that constitutes discrimination, harassment or bullying; (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of discrimination, harassment or bullying; and (3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, on field trips, and on cell phones and the Internet.

#### F. NOTICE

The Director is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying. This policy must be posted on the school website, and copies of the policy must be readily available in the director's office. Notice of this policy must

appear in all student and employee handbooks and in any school system publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for students and employees.

#### **DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The board takes seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed in violation of policy 255, Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying also should report such violations to one of the school officials listed in subsection C.1. of this policy. Reports may be made anonymously.

##### **A. DEFINITIONS**

###### **1. Alleged Perpetrator**

The alleged perpetrator is the individual alleged to have discriminated against, harassed or bullied the complainant.

###### **2. Complaint**

A complaint is an oral or written notification made by a person who believes he or she is the victim of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying.

###### **3. Complainant**

The complainant is the individual complaining of being discriminated against, harassed or bullied.

###### **4. Days**

Days are the working days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, vacation days or holidays, as set forth in the school calendar. In counting days, the first day will be the first full working day following receipt of the complaint. When a complaint is submitted on or after May 1, time limits will consist of all weekdays (Monday–Friday) so that the matter may be resolved before the close of the school term or as soon thereafter as possible.

###### **5. Investigative Report**

The investigative report is a written account of the findings of the investigation conducted in response to a complaint.

###### **6. Investigator**

The investigator is the school official responsible for investigating and responding to the complaint.

###### **7. Report**

A report is an oral or written notification that an individual, other than the reporter, is a suspected perpetrator or victim of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying.

##### **B. REPORTING BY EMPLOYEES OR OTHER THIRD PARTIES**

###### **1. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees**

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed or bullied in

violation of policy 255 must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection C.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## 2. Reporting by Other Third Parties

All members of the school community including students, parents, volunteers and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

## 3. Anonymous Reporting

Reports of discrimination, harassment or bullying may be made anonymously but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

## 4. Investigation of Reports

Reports of discrimination, harassment or bullying shall be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and school officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

# C. COMPLAINTS BROUGHT BY ALLEGED VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT OR BULLYING

## 1. Filing a Complaint

Any individual, who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed or bullied is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to any of the following

- a. the Director
- b. an immediate supervisor if the individual making the complaint is an employee;
- c. the Human Resources Coordinator if the alleged perpetrator or alleged victim is an employee of the school
- d. any member of the Administrative Team

## 2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint

A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

## 3. Informal Resolution

The board acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation, and the board encourages the use of such procedures to the extent possible. If an informal process is used, the Director or other designated personnel must (1) notify the complainant that he or she has the option to request formal procedures at any time and (2) make a copy of this policy and other relevant policies available to the complainant. In those circumstances in which informal procedures fail or are inappropriate or in which the complainant requests formal procedures, the complaints will be investigated

promptly, impartially and thoroughly according to the procedures outlined in the remainder of this policy.

#### D. PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT OR BULLYING

##### 1. Initiating the Investigation

- a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying pursuant to subsection C.1. shall immediately notify the appropriate investigator who shall respond to the complaint and investigate. The investigator of a complaint is determined as follows:
  - i. If the alleged incident occurred under the jurisdiction of the Director, the investigator is the Director or designee, unless the alleged perpetrator is the Director, or a member of the board. If the alleged perpetrator is any other employee, the Director or designee shall conduct the investigation in consultation with the Human Resources Coordinator or designee.
  - ii. If the alleged perpetrator is the Director, the Human Resources Coordinator shall bring the matter to the Executive Committee of the board who will serve as investigator.
  - iii. If the alleged perpetrator is a member of the board, the Executive Committee is the investigator. If the alleged perpetrator is a member of the Executive Committee, that person shall be excused from the investigation.
- b. The investigator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and inquire as to whether the complainant would like to suggest a course of corrective action.
- c. Written documentation of all reports and complaints, as well as the school's response, must be maintained in accordance with standard administrative procedures.
- d. Failure to investigate and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment or bullying shall result in disciplinary action.

##### 2. Conducting the Investigation

- a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of policy 255. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); and (3) any other individuals, including other possible victims, who may have relevant information.
- b. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately. Any requests by the complainant for confidentiality shall be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the school. Any complaints withdrawn to protect confidentiality must be recorded in accordance with standard administrative procedures.
- c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment or bullying, giving consideration to all factual

information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances.

### 3. Investigative Report

- a. The investigator shall submit a written investigative report to the Director.
- b. The investigator shall notify the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:
  - i. reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment or bullying and prevent it from recurring;
  - ii. as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment or bullying on the complainant; and
  - iii. as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint.
- c. Information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be given to the complainant unless the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant).
- d. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as described in policy 255. If the corrective steps involve actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the Director will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.
- e. Each alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or board policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences will be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with board policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with board policy and law. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude school officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment or bullying.

### 4. Appeal of Investigative Report

- a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the investigative report, he or she may appeal the decision to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors in accordance with the procedure described in subsection E.4.b below. The appeal must be submitted in writing within five days of receiving the investigative report. The Executive Committee may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary or take any other steps it determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The Executive Committee shall provide a written response

within 30 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed.

- b. If the Executive Committee was the investigator, the complainant may appeal to the Board of Directors within five days of receiving the Executive Committee's response. The board will review the documents, direct that further investigation be conducted if necessary and take any other steps that the board determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. Upon request of the complainant, the board will hold a hearing in closed session. The board will provide a written response within 30 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

#### E. TIMELINESS OF PROCESS

The number of days indicated at each step of the process should be considered a maximum. Every effort should be made to expedite the process.

If any school official charged with investigating the complaint or reviewing the investigation fails at any step in the process to communicate a decision within the specified time limit, the complainant will be entitled to appeal the complaint to the next step unless the official has notified the complainant of the delay and the reason for the delay, such as the complexity of the investigation, review or report. The school official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the complainant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of any legal rights are not permitted. Failure by the complainant at any step in the process to appeal a complaint to the next step within the specified time limit will be considered acceptance of the decision at that step, unless the complainant has notified the investigator of a delay and the reason for the delay and the investigator has consented in writing to the delay.

#### F. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the board or by an employee of the school against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy, unless the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The board and school officials will consider requests to hear complaints from a group, but the board and officials have the discretion to hear and respond to complainants individually.
4. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with school system officials.
5. Should, in the judgment of the director designee, the investigation or processing of a complaint require that an employee be absent from regular work assignments, such absences shall be excused without loss of pay or benefits. This shall not prevent the director or designee from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation.

#### G. RECORDS

Records will be maintained as required by standard administrative procedures.

Location of Misconduct:

All rules governing student misconduct shall apply to any incident that is

1. On school grounds during, before and after regular school hours
2. On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used for a function or by any school group
3. Off school grounds at a school activity, function or event
4. During the transporting of students to include the period of time before boarding the car/bus, in the car/bus and getting off the car/bus, or in the proximity of the car/bus stop when under the supervision of the driver
5. Off school grounds but which may affect the school climate or have a direct and immediate effect on the general welfare of the school.

**Weapons, Violence and School Safety** (CFCI POLICY #422)

The Cape Fear Center of Inquiry Board of Directors believes that students and staff are entitled to learn and work in a school environment free of violence, threats and disruptive behavior. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with Board Policies, reasonable unwritten behavior expectations, and applicable state and federal laws.

School staff is required to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct by students to the Director or his/her designee for investigation and appropriate action.

Prohibited Conduct:

Students, staff and all other persons are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct in accordance with General Provisions, Section B:

1. Possession and/or use of articles commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person except when used in an approved instructional activity. Examples of such articles include but are not limited to firearms, BB guns, pellet guns, any other kind of gun, ammunition, explosives, cross-bows, brass knuckles, switchblades, knives, chains, clubs, Kung Fu stars and nun chucks;
2. Use of any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict bodily harm and /or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person. Examples of such articles include but not limited to bats, belts, picks, pencils, compasses, objects capable of ignition (e.g., matches, lighters), files, tools of an sort, and replicas of weapons (including toys);
3. Violent or threatening behavior including but not limiting to fighting, assault and/or battery, taking hostages, threats to commit violence against persons or property (e.g., verbal or written death threats, threats of bodily harm, bomb threats);
4. Verbal or written statements (including those made on or with the use of technological devices, (e.g., computers, text phones) which threaten, intimidate, or harass others, which tend to incite violence and/or disrupt the school program;
5. Willful and malicious damage to school or personal property;
6. Stealing or attempting to steal school or personal property;
7. Lewd, indecent or obscene acts or expressions of any kind;
8. Violations of CFCI drug/alcohol and tobacco policies;

9. Violations of state or federal laws; and
10. Any other conduct that may be harmful to persons or property.

Disciplinary Action:

The Director or his/her designee shall suspend and/or recommend expulsion of students who violate this policy based upon facts of each case and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. The disciplinary action set forth below, apply to all students who are at least 13 years of age. If a student under the age of 13 commits any of the misconduct 1-10 above, the disciplinary action taken against the student, if any, is left to the discretion of the Director or his/her designee.

- A. #1 and #2 - Possession of a firearm and making of a false bomb report or bomb hoax results in Mandatory Suspension for 365 Days.
- B. #1 and #2 - Possession of any other weapon will be investigated by the Director and will result in a 5 day to 365 day suspension.
- C. #3 - Violent physical behavior of any kind will result in a 5 day to 365 day suspension depending on the severity as determined by the Director.
- D. #3, #4, #9 and #10- Violent/harmful/threatening behavior of any kind will result in a 1 day to 365 day suspension depending on the severity as determined by the Director.
- E. #5 and #6 – Consequence will be determined by the Director and based on financial seriousness of violation.
- F. #7 – Inappropriate behavior will result in a 1 to 10 day suspension as determined by the Director.
- G. #8 – please refer to the CFCI drug/alcohol and tobacco policies.
- H. #9 and #10 will be left at the discretion of the Director or his/her designee

**Drug Tobacco and Alcohol Use by Students** (CFCI POLICY #424)

The Board of Directors for CFCI and the CFCI Community recognizes chemical use as a major health problem for today's youth and views chemical dependency as a treatable disease.

Definition of chemical – Any substance which, when taken into the body in any form, is known to cause changes in mental, physical, or behavioral patterns. "Chemical" shall include but not be limited to prescription drugs, look-a-like drugs, drug paraphernalia, non-prescription drugs, tobacco products, alcohol, hydrocarbons, and aerosols.

Please refer to Policy #460 (Medication) in regards to students taking prescription and non-prescription drugs. **"Students are not to have in their possession any kind of medication (including over the counter medication) while on the school grounds."**

Chemical Use and Abuse by Students:

Student health problems are primarily the responsibility of the parents and guardians. However, the school and community share in that responsibility because chemical health problems often affect learning and development.

The Board of Directors views the welfare and safety of the student body to be of paramount importance. It recognizes that using punitive measures as the sole means of addressing the problem of chemical use usually masks rather than eliminates it. In so far

as applicable statutes allow, all contacts with involved individuals will be treated in strictest confidence and the medical records of students involved with chemical use will be subject to the same school policies as other medical and school records. ***Students do not get a clean slate every year when it comes to the Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Policy. The offenses are collective throughout the student's whole time of attendance at CFCI.***

Prohibited Conduct:

The exchange, possession, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or any other illegal substance including tobacco is prohibited while participating in or attending school events held at or away from school. This prohibition applies to fake substances or facsimiles thereof.

Disciplinary Action Procedures:

Type One Offense: Possession/Use

A. First Offense

- a. Confiscate, verify and seek medical attention as necessary.
- b. Director or his/her designee meets with student.
- c. Director or his/her designee notifies and meets with parent/guardian.
- d. Student will be dismissed from school in the supervision of parent/guardian.
- e. Disciplinary action will be 5 days out of school suspension.
- f. Notification of the police at the Director's discretion.
- g. Student meets with guidance counselor who will make referral to appropriate services as necessary.

B. Second Offense

- a. Confiscate, verify and seek medical attention as necessary.
- b. Director or his/her designee meets with student and notifies the parent/guardian.
- c. Director or his/her designee notifies the police.
- d. Student will be dismissed from school in the supervision of the police or parent/guardian (this decision will be made by the police).
- e. 10 day out of school suspension and the student must be assessed by a community based licensed substance abuse counselor at the expense of the parent/guardian.
- f. Student shall follow recommendation(s) of counselor.
- g. If student is not assessed within 10 school days, a meeting with the parent/guardian and student and the Director or his/her designee shall occur prior to the return to school. Note: If parents do not seek assistance for the student, DSS will be notified.
- h. If the offense is for tobacco, the student will participate in 5 smoking cessation classes at the expense of the parent/guardian and not have to be assessed by a substance abuse counselor.

C. Third and Subsequent Offense

- a. Confiscate, verify and seek medical attention as necessary.
- b. Director or his/her designee meets with student and notifies the parent/guardian.
- c. Director or his/her designee notifies the police.

- d. Student will be dismissed from school in the supervision of the police or parent/guardian (this decision will be made by the police).
- e. Suspended until next Board of Directors meeting where the Board of Directors will consider expulsion

Type Two Offense: Furnishing/Selling

A. First Offense

- a. Confiscate substance.
- b. Director or his/her designee meets with student and notifies the parent/guardian.
- c. Director or his/her designee notifies the police.
- d. Student will be dismissed from school in the supervision of the police or parent/guardian (this decision will be made by the police).
- e. 10 day out of school suspension and the student must be assessed by a community based licensed substance abuse counselor at the expense of the parent/guardian.

B. Second Offense

- a. Confiscate substance.
- b. Director or his/her designee meets with student and notifies the parent/guardian.
- c. Director or his/her designee notifies the police.
- d. Student will be dismissed from school in the supervision of the police or parent/guardian (this decision will be made by the police).
- e. Suspended until next Board of Directors meeting where the Board of Directors will consider expulsion.

Role of the School Staff:

1. Any staff member who has reasonable basis to suspect any student of possession, use or selling a prohibited substance has the responsibility to:
  - a. Take immediate action to secure the health and safety of the involved student(s);
  - b. Report the case immediately to the administration.
2. Voluntary Referral – Any staff member who is approached by a student who is seeking help shall maintain confidentiality of the student and refer her/him to the school counselor. A staff member may respond to student seeking help with a chemical issue without being compelled to use the information in a disciplinary manner.

**Corporal Punishment** (CFCI POLICY #426)

The CFCI Board of Directors prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any form. For the purpose of this policy, corporal punishment shall be defined as any kind of physical punishment inflicted upon the body of the student. Any employee shall be responsible for notifying the Director of any observed or suspected incidence of corporal punishment.

School personnel may use reasonable force to control behavior or to remove a person from the scene in those situations when necessary, such as:

1. To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others.

2. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within the control of a student.
3. For self-defense.
4. For the protection of persons or property
5. To maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a school- related activity on or off school property.

LEGAL REF: NCGS 115C-390-392

**Academic Integrity** (CFCI Board Policy # 415)

At CFCI, the inquiry model is used so that students learn through hands-on and group activities in the context of a social curriculum described in the book, Teaching Children to Care. As part of the inquiry model, CFCI students are expected, beginning in the earliest grades, to conduct research and present their findings. While there are appropriate times for collaborative group activities, at other times the student's work is expected to be independent. In all learning activities, students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity. Academic integrity is when students make the correct decision when faced with the choice to cheat, copy, or represent others' work as their own. The purpose of this policy is to distinguish academic integrity from academic dishonesty, and to outline the consequences when expectations are not met.

Academic integrity is important because it:

- teaches students to value honesty and to trust themselves to complete the work assigned themselves;
- allows students to build skills and competencies that cannot be developed through cheating;
- leads to a sense of confidence, competence, esteem, and accomplishment;
- supports our social curriculum.

Teachers at CFCI value honesty in academic pursuits and teach skills like summarizing, paraphrasing, citing sources, and using quotations to encourage academic integrity.

Violations of the academic integrity policy include cheating, plagiarizing, copying, and otherwise attempting to pass off the work of others as your own.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- looking at another student's answers or using a "cheat sheet" during a test;
- providing answers on a test or homework assignment to other students;
- allowing another person, such as a parent or tutor, to complete an assignment for a student;
- using material word for word from a website or book without using quotation marks and citing the source;
- using essays or papers for sale online;
- encouraging others to commit academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty will be addressed by teachers in consultation, as necessary, with the Director. Factors such as severity, frequency, age of student, and impact on course / other students will be considered. Consequences for academic dishonesty may include:

- losing all or partial credit for an assignment;
- having to redo an assignment for partial or no credit;
- loss of privileges;
- suspension.

The CFCI Board of Directors and faculty believe strongly in academic integrity and expect all students to adhere to this policy.

### **Dress Code**

At CFCI students work and play hard. They often sit and work on the carpet. For these reasons it is important that students come to school in easy-care clothes and safe shoes. A student who wears shoes which are inappropriate for play on our playground (clogs, slides, and flip-flops or other shoes without backs) will not be allowed to participate in active play. For health and safety reasons, children will only be allowed to participate in physical education and on the playground during recess and break time if they are wearing tennis shoes. Students must be dressed comfortably for the season and temperature. Students must wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes on the days they will be participating in physical education classes. Apparel should not advertise violence, tobacco or alcohol use, nor contain sexual content or profanity. Hats and sunglasses are only to be worn outside the building. Sleeveless shirts must have straps at least three fingers wide. Underwear must not be visible under any circumstances. Midriffs are to be covered. Skirts and shorts must be longer than the student's index finger when the arm is extended at the side of the body. Students must be able to sit on the floor when wearing skirts. The intent of these specifications is to avoid distractions to the educational process. If a child's attire is deemed to be inappropriate, the parent(s) will be called to bring suitable clothing. All decisions regarding the appropriateness of clothing items is at the discretion of the teacher.

### **Cell Phones**

All student cell phones shall be turned off and put away (out of sight) during school hours. Student cell phones are not to be used in the building during school hours for any reason. Cell phones will be confiscated by staff if a student is found using one during school hours.

### **Electronic Equipment**

CFCI is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged electronic equipment brought to school by a student. If a teacher deems that a student is using a piece of electronic equipment inappropriately or at an inappropriate time, the teacher has the right to confiscate the electronic equipment. Students who choose to use their own laptops must comply with the CFCI Computer Use Policy.

### **Playground Expectations** (CFCI POLICY #620)

Students should:

- Put equipment away unless another student has asked to use it
- Use equipment for its intended purpose
- Put trash in trashcans and pick up trash when they see it
- Stay inside the fenced area
- Stay off the fences around the air units
- HAVE FUN!

Students should not:

- Move or stand on the picnic tables

- Lean on or hang on the fences
- Go outside of the fence unattended
- Shake, move, or climb on the basketball goal
- Play with or near the storage equipment
- Play on the patio area around classroom doors

Faculty should:

- Discuss and enforce playground expectations with their class
- Take out trashcans during each recess
- Monitor play to ensure equipment is used for intended purpose
- Put away teacher directed equipment in locked storage
- Survey the playground to make sure students have cleaned up trash and put away equipment
- Keep storage containers locked at all times
- ALWAYS BE ALERT TO STUDENTS!

Parents should:

- Reinforce good playground behavior with their child
- Understand and support CFCI policy that because of liability, students are not permitted on the playground before or after school hours or at any time without the supervision of their teacher or their teacher's designee

### **CFCI Internet and E-Mail Rules** (CFCI POLICY #812)

Internet access and Electronic Mail (E-Mail) are now available to students and teachers in CFCI. We believe the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. To gain access to the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission and must sign and return the User Agreement and Parent Permission Form.

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet could contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people.

While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages; but ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

To that end, the CFCI supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.

The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network service is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required. Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Individual users of the CFCI computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. It is presumed that users will comply with CFCI standards and will honor the agreements they have signed. Beyond the clarification of such standards, CFCI is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, or controlling the communications of individuals utilizing the network.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on CFCI servers would be private.

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. During school, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.

Students are permitted to access personal email accounts only for appropriate school related activities. Teachers are to monitor any such access to insure compliance with this rule.

Individual users of the Internet are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. The following are not permitted:

- Accessing any sites with adult content and/or discussions
- Sending e-mail that is offensive and/or inappropriate (if you have any doubts, let your teacher read first)
- Using computers in any way to cause problems for others. For example, Writing that is hurtful to others; deleting, destroying or changing the work of others; and/or anything that an adult has warned you about.

In the event a student engages in any of the above referenced activities, his/her access privileges will be revoked and other disciplinary measures may result.

- Student could lose computer privileges permanently for the rest of the year or for a period of time that the teacher or director determines the offense earns.
- Student will be financially responsible for any damages that they do to equipment, physically, or electronically.

**Student Discipline and Liability:**

It is essential that computers and networks be protected from misuse and abuse by users so they can serve their instructional purpose. Engaging in behavior that damages communications equipment and/or programs or interferes with use of these resources by others will not be tolerated.

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Abusive or objectionable language
2. Malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user
3. Transmission of material in violation of any US or state regulation
4. Use for commercial purposes or political lobbying
5. Violation of Copyright laws
6. Plagiarism

More serious violations include

7. Deletion or alteration of any network files or configurations
8. Planting a virus on a network
9. Running software designed to access passwords
10. Perform any act, which leads to significant damage to network operations.

Students who are found to have committed any of the above violations or other prohibited computer related actions will be subject to consequences possibly including suspension of computer privileges and suspension from school. The teacher and Director or designee will confer to determine the specific circumstances and consequences on a case by case basis.

If abuse of computers, peripherals or networks causes damage, which is permanent or requires repair or replacement, the student will be liable for any charges and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

## **Educational Information and Services**

### **Placement Policy** (CFCI POLICY #320)

The current and prospective teachers decide on class placement for all students. All information available will be considered in making classroom placements for each child. Parents who wish to have input regarding their child's placement should discuss concerns with their child's teacher; however, requests specifically for a certain teacher will not be honored. Written requests to address specific educational needs should be provided to the Director. Tentative class placements will be made by the end of July. Students who have been home schooled or do not have standardized test scores from their previous schools are required to meet with the appropriate teachers and/or complete testing before being placed in a class. Final determination is made by the Director in accordance with G.S. 115C-288

### **Specialist information**

At CFCI we offer several different specials classes. Spanish, music, art, technology and PE are offered at all grade levels. Sixth through eighth graders are offered band and chorus as well as the fifth grade if the budget allows. These classes follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

### **Curriculum**

As a public charter school, CFCI uses the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as a guideline for our curriculum. The NCSCOS objectives are a foundation for instruction and through inquiry, classes and individuals may go beyond these expectations. For

information on specific grade level objectives visit [www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org) and choose “curriculum.”

### **Looping**

In order to promote the development of close classroom communities, CFCI, whenever possible, arranges looping—that is, a teacher staying with one group of students for two school years. This allows teachers to know their students better and to more easily individualize instruction. Classroom dynamics, teacher strengths and individual student needs will be considerations in making decisions about looping. Current grade loops are K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. Middle grades teachers do not typically loop.

### **Sex Education** (CFCI POLICY #360)

The Board of Directors believes that the parent or guardian should make decisions concerning the student’s participation in a sex education program. In accordance with NC General Statutes and regulations, a focused program of sex education will be offered to students in select grades 5-8. Parents or guardians may review the instructional materials, discuss the goals/objectives with the teachers/school counselor/administrators, and obtain other information to assist them in deciding whether to consent to their child’s participation in the program. Prior to placement in the sex education program, the school must receive written permission from the parent or guardian. Any student without written consent on file at the school will not participate in the sex education program.

### **Field Studies/Field Trips/Scholarship Fund** (CFCI POLICY #340)

Children learn best through experience. Field study is an excellent way to provide these experiences. Each teacher will arrange for appropriate field studies that support and expand learning at each grade level.

Students should attend all field study events/field trips if at all possible, as field studies serve as valuable foundations for inquiry-based learning. If a student does not go on a field trip, he/she will complete work related to the field study in another classroom at school. Every precaution will be taken to ensure student safety. Parents should understand that unknown risks may also exist.

#### **PERMISSION SLIPS:**

All students must have a signed permission form and the appropriate funds to participate in a field trip by the deadline set by the teacher(s).

Parents must sign permission forms AND send in appropriate car seat or booster seat if their child is younger than eight (8) years old, or weighs less than 80 pounds.

#### **TRANSPORTATION:**

Parent volunteer drivers or charter buses will provide transportation for field studies. If the field trip is over 100 miles away there must be a parent meeting for the purpose of deciding by consensus whether a bus will be chartered (at the cost of the parents) or parent drivers will be used. Any time parent drivers are used the following must be adhered to.

#### **PARENT DRIVERS/CHAPERONES MUST:**

- Have complete understanding that since the field trip is an extension of the classroom and for students' safety, the teacher(s) has ultimate control of all decisions pertaining to the field trip.
- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Make certain that there is one working seat belt for each rider in the car.
- Make certain that each child in the car who is younger than eight years old, or who weighs less than 80 pounds is in an appropriate booster or car seat.
- Transport students ONLY to and from the field trip site. They may only deviate from the sites designated on the field trip form in the event of an emergency with the teacher's permission. It is the driver's responsibility to notify the teacher if an unexpected event transpires.
- Try their best to stay with the group (convoy).
- Stop at only designated stops preplanned by the teacher. The stops may be planned so that there are several food/rest opportunities at the same exit. A time and meeting point should be set to continue the convoy.
- Provide information on a "Field Trip Driver Information" form that includes the car insurance company and policy #, and license tag for the cars that may be used on the trip. Provide a copy of a current driver's license and have proof of current liability insurance. If a driver's form is not on file with the teacher, then that driver will not be assigned as a field trip chaperone.
- Make certain that their vehicles are registered, insured, and in good working order.
- Not smoke or use profanity any time during the field trip.
- Adhere to all speed limits and driving laws.
- Not use cell phones while driving unless it is to communicate with the teacher pertaining to the trip.
- May not bring school-aged siblings on a field trip. Parents may bring pre-school children, but may not be the solo chaperone for a group of students because they cannot give full attention to their preschooler and the students; these parents may drive, but another parent or teacher needs to be present in the car to chaperone the students.

\*For the safety of all students, chaperones participation is at the teacher's discretion.\*  
 If the teacher believes that these mandates were not followed, the teacher must document such on an incident report and provide the report to the parent/chaperone and to the Director. The teacher and/or director may deem a parent ineligible to serve as a chaperone or driver for future trips based on information provided in an incident report. The Corporation for Inquiry (CFCI) is not liable for any damage done to your car during the course of a field trip. CFCI reserves the right to review a driver's driving record if it is deemed prudent and is in the interest of student safety.

All field trips must start and finish at the CFCI school building. Students who do not start the trip from the CFCI school building but show up at the field trip site will be considered absent/unexcused and will NOT be allowed to participate with the class at the field trip site.

CFCI highly discourages parents from signing their students out from a field trip. Signing students out at this time jeopardizes available car seats for the class's return trip to the CFCI school building. All sign out (except for emergency situations) must be prearranged in writing with the teacher prior to the permission slip deadline.

*CROSSING COUNTY LINES:*

Students who are to attend a field trip which includes sites OUTSIDE New Hanover County must have a form signed by a parent and notarized by a notary in order to participate. The front office staff will kindly notarize field trip permission slips after 8:30am during school hours.

*EXPECTATIONS:*

Appropriate behavior is required on field studies by all students and chaperones. Inappropriate behavior by students will be addressed by having parents pick up their child from the field study experience. Students who are sent home from a field trip for inappropriate behavior may also lose the privilege of attending the next field trip opportunity, and/or may be suspended for the following school day.

*COSTS:*

Any money collected for field trips is to be turned in to the Business Operations Coordinator daily in accordance with Policy 750: Handling Cash.

As is noted on the bottom of the back side of the Field Trip Permission Form, CFCI has scholarship funds to assist with field trip fees for those students who would qualify for free/reduced lunch. If parents need an application, they should see the teacher. If parents would like to donate to this fund, they may submit a check payable to "CFCI" and indicate "scholarship fund" in the memo line. All donations are tax deductible. Checks should be given to the Business Operations Coordinator on the day received.

**Assessment**

Students at CFCI are constantly being assessed for their understanding through formal and informal means. Each teacher is expected to report data on their students' progress as a class to the Board.

Informal methods of assessment may include:

- observations by teacher or other faculty members
- running records (anecdotal notes about the student)
- samples of student work

Formal assessments may include:

- portfolios
- reading assessments
- tests
- project rubrics and feedback
- quarterly report cards and narratives

**Portfolios**

Portfolios are collections of student work that are student-chosen and teacher-guided. Typically, a class will discuss what items should be included in the portfolio. Many

teachers develop guidelines based on the standard course of study to help students choose evidence that meets these expectations.

Portfolios are used to guide *student-led conferences*. These are held twice a year, generally after the first and third quarters. It is an expectation at CFCI that all parents attend student led conferences. During the conference, your child will share with you what s/he has accomplished during the quarter. In many classes, students will actually perform tasks for parents so that they can see what's expected of the kids in the class.

*Teacher completed assessments* are sent home at least twice a year, although most teachers send home progress reports and other checklists more frequently. These are generally based on the goals of the Standard Course of Study. Teachers look at the students' performance and growth to create a checklist and/or a narrative.

As a North Carolina public school, CFCI participates in the *End of Grade and End of Course testing program*. Students in grades 3-8 take reading and math tests annually. Eighth graders who elect to take Algebra also take an Algebra End of Course test. In addition, there are writing tests at grades 4 and 7. Grade 8 students take a computer skills test and a science EOG. Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be given a social studies field test, with an EOG for this test added in 2007-08.

### **Student Support Information**

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)** – The use of a process based on a child's response to scientific research-based interventions. Following the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004, states were given the option to determine eligibility categories (limited to Specific Learning Disabilities in the state of NC) through a process that would determine a student's response to appropriately selected scientific research-based interventions as a part of the comprehensive evaluation process. In addition, research supports that when all children receive the interventions they need in order to learn at their own optimal level early in their education, that the referral rate for special education services later on is significantly reduced.

**Tier I** – Documented meeting between regular education teacher(s) and parents; follow up actions to include:

- a. Hearing/Vision screening
- b. Determined and implemented research-based interventions
- c. Progress monitoring data collected
- d. Documentation of the effectiveness of parent and teacher interventions
- e. Summary of parent conference(s); documentation of attempts to  
conference with the parent(s); and
- f. Review of existing data to include decide to remain at Tier I or go to

Tier II

**Tier II** – Documented meeting between regular education teacher(s), other building specialists (i.e.: EC Coordinator, Speech/Language Pathologist, as needed) and the parents

- a. Analysis of Tier I scientific research-based intervention(s)

- b. Documented modifications or discontinuation of the intervention(s) or the implementation of another scientific research-based intervention
- c. Progress monitoring data reviewed
- d. Documented parent and teacher assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention(s) and
- e. Summary of the conference(s) with the parent(s) and other school staff.

**Tier III** - Documented meeting between regular education teacher(s), EC Coordinator and other building specialists (i.e.: Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, reading specialist, behavioral specialist as needed) and the parents; known as the problem-solving team

- a. Analysis of Tier II scientific research-based intervention(s)
- b. Documented modifications or discontinuation of the intervention(s) or the implementation of another scientific research-based intervention
- c. Progress monitoring data reviewed
- d. Documented parent, staff and problem-solving team assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention(s)
- e. Summary of the conference(s) with the parent(s), school staff, and the problem-solving team
- f. Speech language screening
- g. Social developmental history completed by the parent; and
- h. Observation by an independent observer (this may be the psychologist) for the purpose of intervention and to inform instruction

**Tier IV** - Documented meeting between regular education teacher(s), EC Coordinator and other building specialists (i.e.: Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, reading specialist, behavioral specialist as needed) and the parents; known as the problem-solving team

- a. Analysis of Tier III scientific research-based intervention(s)
- b. Documented modifications or discontinuation of the intervention(s) or the implementation of another scientific research-based intervention
- c. Summary of conference(s) with parents, school staff and the problem-solving team
- d. Meeting Determination –
  - Option 1 – Modify Tier III intervention (frequency, intensity, duration, or content) and implement the modifications; or
  - Option 2 – Complete referral for special education. If Option 2 is chosen, receipt of the completed referral for special education by school personnel begins the 90 day timeline and requires that informed parent consent for evaluation be obtained

#### **504 Procedures**

Some students' needs are not best met through an IEP, but through the designation known as 504. Students who are identified as needing a 504 usually have health-related issues which impact their academic progress, but which do not warrant an IEP. Some

examples of these health-related issues are (but are not limited to): ADHD; Diabetes, severe allergies, physical handicaps or disabilities such as CP, sickle-cell anemia, hearing or vision-impairment, asthma, and other chronic illnesses.

A teacher who has a student with one or more of the above-mentioned conditions may feel it would be advantageous for the student to utilize a 504 plan in order to receive special modifications and adaptations in the classroom or in testing situations. In these cases, the teacher should refer the student to the 504 Coordinator to set up a meeting with the parents and the student's teacher(s).

When a student qualifies as needing a 504, there are also legal obligations placed upon the school and teacher. Section 504 is a Civil Rights statute, and comes under the auspices of the Office of Civil Rights. The federal government does NOT provide additional funding to assist schools in serving students who are identified as 504.

At CFCI, a regular education teacher or Curriculum Coordinator is appointed the 504 Coordinator. At the beginning of each school year, the 504 Coordinator, in coordination with the EC Coordinator, reviews all of the students' files that are identified as 504. This teacher then provides copies of the 504 accommodation plans to all regular education teachers designated to teach these students for the current academic year.

At the point of the annual review, the classroom teacher needs to contact the parents and set a meeting to review the modifications and adaptations which are in place for that student and to then determine if the strategies/modifications are working well or whether there should be changes made to the 504 for the following year. The 504 Coordinator is to be included in these meetings and is responsible for the maintenance of the 504 files.

Parents or teachers may also request a meeting to review/revise a 504 document more frequently than the yearly re-evaluation, but a meeting MUST be held once a year for the school to remain in compliance with the Section 504 guidelines.

### **Exceptional Children's Program**

The Exceptional Children's Program at CFCI is served by certified Exceptional Children's staff. The EC Coordinator acts as the liaison between the Department of Public Instruction and the school to maintain compliance with all NC EC Policies and Procedures. Additional responsibilities include the supervision of all student EC services, contract personnel, academic and behavioral supports, maintenance of student records and files and staff development/training. EC teachers are scheduled by the EC Coordinator to meet the needs of students K-8. All work to provide the needed instruction and supports outlined in each student's IEP. Support services are contracted on a regular basis. They include a School Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, and a Physical Therapist. A collaborative team approach is utilized to service and meet each student's individual needs. The EC department provides direct services to each exceptional child and also works closely with the regular education teachers to support the success of the students through effective instructional practices, assessment and accommodations to ensure each student's access to the N.C.

Standard Course of Study. The EC program is driven by the students' Individual Education Plans as well as the team recommendations as to what is best for each particular child. As a school model, CFCI includes the children into the regular classrooms setting to the greatest extent possible. The practice of maintaining students in the least restrictive environment appropriate for each child's needs is followed. Information to address student progress toward mastery or non-mastery of goals, as outlined in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), is provided at the same time students general education classroom progress reports are sent.

### **Homework**

Children need time to participate in extra-curricular activities and families need time to be together. However, children may be given tasks to reinforce understanding of current material for completion at home. Children and parents are encouraged to explore and learn together designing projects, investigating topics of interest, enjoying cultural opportunities and reading together. Parents are also encouraged to support student's class work by discussing their student's day. In keeping with developmental expectations, middle grade students will be expected to complete more homework than students in grades K-5. Students who enroll in Algebra must sign a homework contract.

### **Retention Procedure** (REFER TO CFCI POLICY #330)

(Attendance concerns will follow attendance policy and that team will speak with parent about possible retention and document those conversations as well)

#### Step 1-

- As soon as an academic concern is noted a plan should be put into place. (many will come from previous year)
  - (See PEP form or RTI Tier 1 form. Teachers may also use their own plans initially for more minor situations and if it escalates that information can be transferred to Tier 1, etc.)
  - PEPs are basically used in LEP and 504 situations. Most of your concerns will constitute Tier 1 interventions and behavior plans.
- Parents should be notified about interventions put in place.
  - If starting Tier 1 parent should be at meeting.
  - If 504, EC or LEP mandatory meetings will be taking place anyway

#### Step 2-

- Before Christmas break...notify Director and share documentation with the names of potential retainees.
- MANDATORY parent meeting concerning possible retention must take place before **LAST FRIDAY IN January**. This is just after the middle of the year. Assessments, interventions, phone calls, emails and other meetings have taken place AND BEEN DOCUMENTED. This is a formalized possible retention meeting.
- With RtI, the student will more than likely have progressed into Tier II. This means, interventions have been put in place and documented with fidelity. The

interventions are not working, therefore the child is progressing through the tiers. (Remember, RtI is both academic and behavioral)

Step 3-

- MANDATORY parent meeting concerning probable retention must take place again before **the last Friday in March.** (just after the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter).
- If previous interventions have not worked, changes are made and documented. RTI plan continues with support team.
- **The first Friday in April** - Probable retentions to director with documentation up to this point

Step 4-

- MANDATORY final meeting **after EOGs.**
- Meet with director prior to parent meeting for final decision (by now teachers will know if parent supports retention or not)

The final retention decision is made by the director. (North Carolina General Statute 115C-288)

### **Extracurricular Activities**

CFCI has developed a list of guidelines for extracurricular activities. Any and all extracurricular activities are subject to the established procedures.

Any parent interested in starting an extracurricular group should find a faculty member willing to sponsor him/her. The faculty member can help the parent set up the program and make certain that it meets the guidelines. A faculty member or other school employee must be present at any event, practice, or session conducted as part of any extracurricular activity.

### **Student and Parent Information**

#### **Visitors**

All visitors are welcome at CFCI. Please enter the building through the main front door and proceed to the front office. All visitors must sign in, state their reason for visit and receive a visitor's badge at the front office that must be worn while in the building. An ID maybe requested before a visitor is allowed into the school building. Please remember that parents should not visit classrooms during dismissal times. (See dismissal section for further details.) Parents should also remember that class time is NOT a time to hold a parent conference. If parents want to volunteer in the classroom, they're welcome. If a conference is needed, parents should call the teacher to set up an appropriate time free of distraction where both parent and teacher can focus on the child.

#### **Student and Parent Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of each student at CFCI to respect others, our school building and our learning materials. Students are also expected to be active learners, asking questions and fully participating in classroom activities. In addition, it is the parents' responsibility to support the mission of CFCI, to nurture their child's learning, and to participate in their child's class in whatever way they can. This support includes bringing children to school

on time and ready to learn, talking about the day's activities with their child, and extending what students are learning beyond the classroom. Parents are also expected to uphold the principles of our social curriculum by being respectful of our learning community on campus and on field studies.

We strongly encourage parents to thoroughly read and understand the CFCI handbook. In addition, since each teacher will have rules and procedures for his/her classroom, parents are expected to become familiar with these as well.

### **COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT**

1. Take responsibility for your own feelings. Do not expect others to read your mind. Use "I" statements and refrain from blaming.
2. Communicate directly with the person or persons involved in an issue. Do not work through go-betweens or serve as a go-between for others. If someone asks you for information about an issue in which you are not directly involved, direct him or her to the proper source.
3. Do not speak critically about others behind their backs unless you voice the same criticisms to their faces. To avoid unhelpful speculation, give specific names when you make a critical comment in a meeting.
4. State your position or concern before asking how others feel about it. Do not set someone up to give a "wrong" answer. Be courageous and put yourself on the spot first.
5. Practice active listening. Listen silently and with your whole self until the speaker has finished speaking. Then restate what the speaker has said and wait for confirmation.
6. Provide continual feedback. Do not allow resentments to build up, and do not forget to give positive strokes.
7. Respect and validate others' feelings. If you do not agree or do not support another's statement, acknowledge what has been said, then make your point.
8. Use humor softly, not sharply.

### **CFCI Board of Directors**

The CFCI Board of Directors is the governing body for CFCI. The CFCI Board of Directors is a volunteer board consisting of a mix of parents, staff, and community members. There are currently 11 voting members and 4 non-voting members. The Board sets policies, makes the school budget, and oversees the director. Parents are encouraged to come to the meetings – which are held on the third Tuesday of the month. More information is available on the CFCI web site.

### **Partnership for CFCI**

The Partnership is the parent organization at CFCI; it performs many of the functions of the "PTA" or "PTO" at other schools. The Partnership supports the mission of our school.

The Partnership has its own Board, separate from the CFCI Board of Directors. The Partnership Board is elected each May. Members of the Partnership Board serve a two-year term. All parents, teachers and staff of CFCI are considered members of the

Partnership for Inquiry. There is no membership fee. The Partnership meets throughout the school year. Notice of meetings is sent home through email and backpack flyer. During the year, the Partnership raises funds for the school. The “Fund The Wonder” campaign is an opportunity for families to give directly to the school. In addition, the Partnership sponsors events such as coupon book sales, a silent auction, and others. The Partnership also sponsors the Holiday Festival, an opportunity for the whole school to come together to celebrate the holiday season. The Partnership supports teachers and classrooms through supplementary supply money, and the purchase of needed materials. Parents are encouraged to volunteer with the Partnership. Look for emails and items in your child’s newsletter for volunteer opportunities! Teachers may request the help of a Room Parent through the Partnership. Room parents are volunteers who help in a given classroom on a regular basis and are available to be called on when special assistance is needed. Room parents help in the classroom or outside the classroom by making phone calls, arranging parties, collecting needed project materials, obtaining field trip drivers and chaperones, or in other ways which benefit the students. Parents volunteer at the beginning of the year to be a room parent.

Please refer to CFCI Policy 285 CFCI Partnership’s Involvement in Education and School Relations for more information.

**Parent/Teacher Communication and Conferences**

Regular, open communication between home and school is critical for student success. Conferences can be requested at any time by parents, teachers or students. Conferences with teachers should be scheduled for a time other than class time, preferably after the end of the school day. Unscheduled conferencing with teachers before or after school takes away from student learning and cannot be accommodated.

Home/school communication is important and there are several means by which this is done:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly classroom news</li> <li>• Bi-monthly school newsletters</li> <li>• Backpack flyers (In the event a family has more than one student at CFCI, the youngest student</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually receives the flyer.)</li> <li>• The CFCI website</li> <li>• Exterior message sign</li> <li>• E-mail</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Teachers must approve all class/grade level information sent out; and whole-school communications must be reviewed by the Director or other appropriate administrative staff prior to distribution.

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (CFCI POLICY #455)**

FERPA is a federal law that governs the maintenance of school records. Under the law, parents or guardians of students or students who are 18 years of age or older have the right to inspect all records kept by the school about the student and the right to correct inaccuracies in those records. Under FERPA, access to the records by persons other than the parents or guardians is limited and generally requires written consent by the parents, guardians and/or students age 18 or older. Requests to review student records and requests to correct inaccurate records may be made to the Director.

### **Personal Information**

CFCI must have up-to-date personal information for all students including a correct address, phone number, and emergency contact numbers. Parents should remember to update this information if changes occur throughout the year. All personal information about students and families will remain confidential unless parents request it be disclosed.

### **Requesting/Forwarding Records**

When a student transfers into CFCI, a request for records is sent to the student's previous school. When a student leaves CFCI, the students' new school will request records from CFCI. Records are not forwarded until students officially withdraw from our school. Parents should contact the school office with questions or concerns regarding transfer of records.

### **Court and Custody Orders**

For student safety, relevant custody papers and/or court orders must be on file in the school office. Documentation should be presented to the Director who will notify appropriate personnel. Records will be kept in the student's cumulative file.

### **Committees**

Most CFCI committees are comprised of Board members, CFCI employees and parents; however, some committee membership is limited to Board and faculty members due to confidential matters. If you are interested in being involved on a committee, please speak with a CFCI administrator or teacher for a list of available committees and their responsibilities.

### **Patriotic Exercises** (CFCI POLICY #370)

Each school day will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance will be followed by a moment of silence not to exceed one minute in duration. Such period of silence shall be totally and completely unstructured and free of guidance of any kind from any source. No staff or student will be required to participate in either exercise. During the moment of silence and for those not participating in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, silence shall be maintained and no one may engage in any other activity.

Legal Reference: NC Statute 115 C-29.

### **Fund-Raising Policy for CFCI** (CFCI POLICY #730)

There are two types of fund-raisers (outside of Partnership fund-raisers) that may take place at CFCI:

1. School-wide fund-raisers that are held **to benefit an agency outside of CFCI**, such as the UNITE Project, UNICEF, the Heifer Project, American Cancer Society, etc. All members of the CFCI community are invited to contribute, and all of the proceeds go the recipient agency. Only one of these fund-raisers is allowed per semester. Anyone desiring to hold a school-wide fund-raiser should take a written request to the Administrative Team (AT) to get it approved. The AT will inform the Board of the event and beneficiary/ies chosen. The Administrative Team will put the event on the community calendar, inform the front office and post on the CFCI web-site.

2. School-wide, classroom, or grade-level fund-raisers may be held **to benefit CFCI students or programs**, such as the Art, Music, Spanish, Technology or P.E. programs. In order to hold a fund-raiser for CFCI students/programs, one must :
  - 1) Get approval from the AT, who will check the CFCI community calendar to make sure that there are no facilities conflicts, or conflicts with other fund-raisers scheduled (such as Partnership, other grade levels, etc.)
  2. The AT will notify the front office staff for posting on school calendars.
  - 3) The AT will then notify teachers of the fund-raiser via E-mail, and teachers will be asked to place a notice of the approved fund-raiser in their classroom newsletters.

*Raffles* – Items may be donated to the school for raffle purposes. The Director will ensure that the items offered are appropriate. The school may advertise raffled items, or if appropriate, a local radio station may be used to assist us in advertising. This service must be at no charge to the school. Proceeds from a raffle must be designated for a particular use prior to a raffle.

*Sales* – Students of CFCI will not participate in door-to-door sales. However, there may be sales events held where students may be present. Students can participate in a “booth” type selling with certain restrictions. There can be no solicitation – patrons must come to the “booth” to purchase the item. Adequate adult chaperones must be present with the children at all times.

#### **Donations, Gifts and Contributions** (CFCI POLICY #720)

As a part of the operations of CFCI, representatives of the school such as Board Members, Administration Team members or other designated faculty and staff may accept gifts, donations and contributions to the school. The following policy is designed to avoid potential conflicts of interest or perceptions of favoritism or bias for the school and its representatives when engaged in such activities.

1. No donation, gift or other contribution should be given or accepted as a quid pro quo. No favorable treatment or bias should be expected or given to any individual, group, business, vendor or other entity in return for any donation, gift or contribution.
2. Donations, gifts or contributions are not to be accepted from any vendor that is participating in a bidding process for a pending contract for services or merchandise with CFCI.
3. Donations, gifts or contributions are not to be accepted from any vendor that has been awarded a contract for services or merchandise by CFCI within 60 days after the awarding of the contract or purchase.
4. Donations, gifts or contributions from any vendor that has a current contract for services or merchandise with CFCI beyond 60 days of the awarding of the contract or purchase are limited amounts that are not substantial or material.
5. The Director shall not directly participate in any collection of donations, gifts or contributions from faculty and staff. The Director shall not have knowledge of which staff members made such donations, gifts or contributions or in what amounts.
6. The Administrative Team will develop procedures for accepting donations, gifts or contributions that comply with this policy.

*Corporate Sponsors* – Donations may be accepted by CFCI from corporate sponsors. Thank you letters and charitable contribution forms will be provided upon request for the donation and the sponsor may be recognized in the school newsletter. The Director must approve any other form of recognition such as a logo on a t-shirt, etc.

*Sales* – Students at CFCI will not participate in door-to-door sales. Students may participate in “booth” type selling with certain restrictions. There can be no solicitation—patrons must approach the “booth” to purchase the item. Adequate adult chaperones must be present with the children at all times.

*Equipment* – CFCI accepts donations of useable equipment in good working condition. If you have equipment to donate, please see the director or the Finance Officer to determine if the school can use the equipment before leaving it at the school.

All donations made to CFCI must be recorded with the school Finance Officer.

### **Lunches/Snacks**

As meals are not provided on site, parents are responsible for providing a nutritious lunch and snack from home. These should be sent with your child to school each morning. While classes have lunch at a regular time most days, part of inquiry is allowing the schedule to be flexible. This means that on occasion lunch times will vary somewhat. If your child is waiting for you to deliver their lunch on one of these days they may be very disappointed and very hungry. This problem can be easily avoided by sending lunch in the morning. Forms are sent out at the start of each school year to address issues of financial difficulty. If you need assistance, please complete and return the form. All issues will be confidential.

### **Hot Treat Days**

Some classes choose to provide a Hot Treat once a week. This is a program coordinated by classroom parent volunteers who collect funds to purchase hot foods for their classes one day per week. Forms will be sent home to let parents know when/if this is available in their child’s classroom.

### **Birthdays**

Please speak to your child’s teacher about appropriate classroom celebrations for children’s birthdays.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost and found is a service provided to all members of the CFCI community. Lost items are housed in the common area. Items such as keys and glasses are turned in to the office. Check the lost and found often. Clothing not claimed will be donated to charitable organizations. Notification of upcoming donations will be sent home.

### **Building Usage** (REFER TO CFCI POLICY #630)

Classrooms may be used for meetings after school hours. Groups other than faculty or Board committees wishing to host a meeting must consult with the classroom teacher and Director. During meetings, children **MUST** be supervised at all times. Children **MAY NOT** use the playground or remain in classrooms without adult supervision

**Integrated Pest Management Program** (CFCI POLICY #650)

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry supports clean and safe facilities for its students, staff and the public. To that end, CFCI will use an Integrated Pest Management Program (IPMP) to prevent and control pest problems in the school buildings and grounds and minimize pesticide use. The IPMP means a comprehensive approach to pest management that combines biological, physical, chemical and cultural tactics as well as effective, economic, environmentally sound, and socially acceptable methods to prevent and solve pest problems. The IPMP will emphasize pest prevention and provide a decision-making process for determining if, when and where pest suppression is needed and what control tactics and methods are appropriate. The IPMP will utilize strategies including, but not limited to, training of staff, monitoring and inspecting facilities, communication and notification to staff and parents, and the use of pesticides as a last resort. When a decision is made to use pesticides, the staff will utilize the least toxic pesticide formulation and most targeted application method possible.  
(Legal Reference: NC Statute 115 C-47)

**Soliciting and Advertising** (CFCI POLICY #465)

No person, agent, representative, or salesman shall solicit or attempt to sell or explain any article of property or proposition to any teacher or student of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry on the school grounds or during the school day without having first secured the written permission and consent of the Director or his/her designee. No advertising, announcement or e-mails, that does not concern educational matters or things of general community interest, shall be read to the students of the schools, or distributed in the school rooms or on the school premises.

**Distribution of Non-School Material To Students** (CFCI POLICY #467)

Students and the educational program must be the focus of schools. It is, therefore, the policy of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry to create a non-public forum for distributing materials from outside organizations to be taken home by students. Staff shall be required to distribute only four types of materials to students to be taken home.

1. Materials from the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry.
2. Materials from agencies/departments with the towns, county, state or federal government and the state university system.
3. Materials from CFCI's Partnership.
4. Nonprofit organizations providing programs for youth that are primarily designed to promote fitness, cultural arts or academics consistent with the N. C. Standard Course of Study. Materials that primarily promote fund-raising activities by these nonprofit groups will not be approved.

Materials distributed through students shall contain no commercial advertising unless sponsored by groups identified in numbers 1 – 4 above. No other organizations may require school staff to distribute materials to be taken home by students.

The distribution of non-school materials should not interfere with instructional time. The Director or the Director's designee shall approve materials from all other school-related groups, as well as agencies, government branches and nonprofit organizations before distribution.

Staff members may share information with individual students to inform them about community resources to supplement the education provided by CFCI. Other than as authorized above, no materials shall be distributed or made available to students on Cape Fear Center for Inquiry grounds or using any mode of communication operated by the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry, except materials as may be allowed under Policy 467 Distribution of Materials By Students. This Policy shall not be construed as creating a limited public forum or a public forum. Any person or organization may appeal a decision of the director to disallow or restrict distribution of materials. The appeal must be in writing to the Director. The Director or his/her designee shall render a written decision within seven (7) business days of receiving the written appeal. If the person or organization is not satisfied with the written decision of the Director or designee, the person or organization may appeal in writing to the Executive Committee be place on the next School Board Meeting's agenda.

Upon receipt of a timely written appeal to the School Board, the School Board shall convene a hearing as soon as reasonably practical but not later than the next date on which the Board has a regular monthly meeting which is at least ten (10) days after the Board's receipt of the written appeal. The Board may determine, in its sole discretion, the procedures for the hearing subject to the following guidelines. The Board may decide to receive only written documentation and statements or it may allow live testimony of witnesses. The Board may or may not allow the appealing party and the Director or designee to be present and make verbal statements at the hearing. If the Board allows live testimony, it shall allow the appealing party to be present during the hearing and to be represented by counsel at the appealing party's expense. The appealing party has the right to submit documentation and statements to support its appeal. The appealing party has the burden of proof. The Board shall issue a written decision within three (3) business days of hearing the appeal.

**Distribution of Materials by Students** (CFCI POLICY #468)

Students have a right, under the Constitution of the United States, to express their thoughts and opinions at reasonable times and places. However, certain kinds of speech, whether spoken, written or symbolic, may be prohibited or regulated at school. It is the policy of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry that students be allowed to distribute written materials at school or at sponsored events with the Director's or his/her designee's permission except as prohibited or regulated in this policy.

1. Students may not distribute any materials that are illegal, obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, indecent, libelous, or likely to incite violence or serious disruptions of the learning environment.
2. Students may not distribute commercial advertisements or solicitations from non-school sponsored groups.
3. Students may not distribute any materials during instructional time or in a manner that interferes with instructional time or causes a disruption of the learning environment.
4. Students may not request or receive assistance from teachers or other school personnel in distributing materials pursuant to this policy.
5. Students may not be used as conduits by parents or others to distribute materials.

Students will be considered conduits for the distribution of materials when the primary motivation for the distribution rests with someone other than the student.

## **Safety**

### **Medication** (CFCI POLICY #460)

A physician's authorization for medication is necessary if school personnel are to distribute medication at school or on field trips (including over-the-counter medication). This is applicable for short-term and long-term periods. All medication must be in an original, labeled bottle. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medication. All medication will be kept in a secure location at the front office. Parents may come to school to administer medication as well.

**STUDENTS ARE NOT TO HAVE ON THEIR POSSESSION ANY KIND OF MEDICATION (INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS) WHILE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS. (please refer to page 27)**

### **Illness**

Sometimes it is necessary to send a child home from school due to sickness. This occurs when the teacher sees that a child is unable to participate in school activities. If your child needs to go home, we will make every effort to contact you. If, for some reason, we cannot reach you or you will be detained for some length of time, we will then contact the people you have listed on the emergency contact sheet. It is very important that you keep this sheet up-to-date.

If a child has a fever over 99 degrees; the presence of lice, scabies, impetigo, inflamed eyes, rash, or lesions; or is vomiting s/he will be sent home and should not return to school until symptoms have ceased for 24 hours. If a student is limited in his/her ability to participate in the activities of a regular school day, the parent(s) provide written explanation for the student's limitations. A doctor's note may be requested as appropriate.

There is no need to call the school office if your child will be out sick. However, a note should be provided upon return to school.

### **Lice**

Should lice be found on a child in one of our classrooms, the child's parents will be called to pick up their child. The parents will be provided with written suggestions for lice and nit removal. The classroom where lice have been detected will be thoroughly vacuumed, and all pillows, blankets, and stuffed animals will be bagged for the duration of the outbreak. The other parents of children in the class will be sent a note alerting them that lice have been found in the class. They will be reminded to check their children carefully each day for the next few weeks and to continue checking as part of routine hygiene. If nits are found on the child upon returning to school, they will be sent home again for further nit removal. All the students in that classroom will be checked weekly until there have been no new cases for 14 consecutive days. At that time, the classroom will be declared "lice free." Parents will be expected to follow procedures for lice and nit removal to avoid re-occurrence of infestation and minimal number of absences.

### **Telephone Use**

Students may use the school telephone only in the event of an emergency such as sickness, and students may not use the telephone during the school day without faculty supervision. Arrangements for transportation should be made before school.

## **Immunizations**

Parents of all children must present to the school acceptable medical evidence indicating that the required immunizations have been received, which are:

- a) 5 DTP doses (If the 4<sup>th</sup> dose is after the fourth birthday, a 5<sup>th</sup> is not required)  
A booster dose of Tdap vaccine is required for all children before entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade on or after Aug. 1, 2008, if 5 years or more have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine.
- b) 4 Polio doses (If the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is after the fourth birthday, a 4<sup>th</sup> dose is not required)
- c) 1-4 Hib doses
- d) 2 Measles, Mumps, Rubella doses (on or after first birthday and before entering school)
- e) 1 Varicella dose for students born on/after 4/01/01. Students born before 4/01/01 are not required to receive varicella vaccine.
- f) 3 doses Hepatitis B vaccine for students born on or after 7/01/94.

*Religious and/or medical exemptions must be appropriately documented and on file in the school office and submitted for review as to legal exceptions. Students not in compliance with the immunization policy will not be allowed to attend school.*

## **Emergency Closing**

When CFCI must dismiss students unexpectedly due to adverse weather conditions or other types of emergencies, the early dismissals will be announced through local television and radio stations. When snow, ice or other adverse weather conditions cause school to be cancelled or delayed, information will be broadcast over local radio and television stations. CFCI will follow New Hanover County schools in cancellations and dismissals due to weather. Please do not call the school office for this information.

## **Lock Down Procedures**

A 'lock down' is a procedure followed during the threat of danger just outside our school walls. Occasionally individuals escape police custody, for instance, and the school is advised to bring everyone indoors as a precaution. Once inside, the school day proceeds with caution and, usually, very little distraction. In the event of a lock down, the following actions will occur:

- 1) All outdoor areas will be evacuated.
- 2) Everyone in the school community who is present will be directed into the building.
- 3) The Director or designee will inform faculty and students of the lock down.
- 4) Staff, volunteers, and all people present will be informed as all rooms will be checked and confirmed to be locked to the outside and safe.
- 5) All exterior doors will be closed and locked.
- 6) Teachers will make an immediate accounting of their students. That accounting will be collected confirmed and noted on one document.

Pick up procedures during a lock down will require that:

- 1) The faculty receives notification to proceed with pick up at the time of dismissal.
- 2) All students wait indoors until escorted away from school by a recognized adult of the CFCI community.
- 3) Parents will be informed in writing that a lock down occurred by a note sent home with the students.

## **Student Admissions**

### **Statement of non-discriminatory policy**

The Cape Fear Center for Inquiry shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of gender, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, ancestry, disability or measure of intellectual ability or achievement or aptitude or athletic ability in its admissions or education programs. Tuition or admission fees shall not be charged to any student.

### **Application**

The Cape Fear Center for Inquiry accepts applications for prospective students starting each January for a set application period. Applications are made available at parent meetings held through the application period. These meetings will be announced and advertised. Students who are currently attending CFCI do not need to apply again; however, if these students have siblings wishing to start at CFCI they do need to complete an application. Applications for siblings of currently enrolled students are available in the school office.

Admission to the school is based on a lottery system. Maximum class size limits will determine the numbers of students in each class.

### **Enrollment**

Once a student has been admitted to the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry, formal enrollment is required to reserve the student's space in the school. Enrollment will take place during the month of March. The enrollment procedure will ensure that the school has all information it needs to meet State Board of Education records requirements for charter schools.

North Carolina State law requires all students to have immunization records complete and on file within 30 days of starting school or the student may not be allowed to return to school.

A student who has been admitted but who has not fully enrolled by the last school day in March may be removed from the list of admitted students and may have to re-apply to the school to gain entrance.

## **Middle grades program handbook**

### **Middle grades purpose**

In the CFCI middle grades program, we stress rigorous academics and a sense of personal responsibility in each student. We work towards helping students gain independence, problem solving skills, and experience collaborating with groups. We focus on students building high expectations for themselves through reflection and critical thinking.

### **Structure**

The middle grades program is composed of two teachers at each grade level; in total, there are six middle grades classroom teachers. Currently, one teacher addresses language arts and social studies (Humanities) while the other teacher addresses math and science. Students have Circle of Power and Respect, math, science, and social studies with grade level peers; they are placed in mixed-grade groups for language arts. Exceptional children's teacher(s) offer support to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in a variety of ways. We are on a trimester schedule for all classes.

**Social Curriculum**

The middle grades social curriculum is composed of both proactive and reactive strategies that are designed to help students develop a healthy internal sense of competency and adequacy. Six principles guide the social curriculum:

1. Social learning is as important to success as academic learning.
2. We learn best by constructing our own understanding through exploration, discovery, practicing, and applying what we have learned, both socially and academically.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interactions within a supportive community.
4. There is a set of personal/social skills that students need to learn and practice in order to be successful social and academically: cooperation assertion responsibility empathy self-control (CARES).
5. Knowing the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of the students we teach is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Trust among adults is a fundamental necessity for academic and social success in a learning community.

(Adapted from *Guidelines for Responsive Designs for Middle School* published by The Origins Program, 2004)

**What can we expect from middle grades students?**

The follow brief guidelines are intended to help parents know what can be expected from middle school students. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines: any individual child may develop more rapidly or more slowly than general guidelines indicate. In addition, although the description below may fit your child, it is the role of the teacher to stretch each child beyond his/her current capacity and/or inclination.

Area of development	Sixth grade	Seventh grade	Eighth grade
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Like movement</li> <li>● Often physicality may get out of control</li> <li>● Tend to be sick more often</li> <li>● Fine motor skills well developed, although some still struggle with handwriting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High energy</li> <li>● Need frequent opportunities to refuel with high quality foods</li> <li>● Boys and girls both experiencing puberty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Girls have reached adult height</li> <li>● Boys often still awkward</li> <li>● Increasing anxiety about appearance</li> </ul>

Area of development	Sixth grade	Seventh grade	Eighth grade
Social-emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Moody</li> <li>● Love to argue; want things to be fair</li> <li>● Wide emotion swings</li> <li>● Intensified interest in peer groups; sometimes extends to sarcasm and put-downs of “outsiders”</li> <li>● Push limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mix of enthusiasm, uninhibited behavior and self-consciousness, identity-seeking</li> <li>● Empathetic with friends</li> <li>● Oppositional to adults</li> <li>● Healthy seventh graders stay within parental limits while often complaining / criticizing the limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peak of self-consciousness and embarrassment</li> <li>● Girls seek close friendships; boys hang out in groups</li> <li>● Hard time connecting to adults</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interested in ideas</li> <li>● Love to argue: see black &amp; white, not gray</li> <li>● Can see from more than one perspective with help</li> <li>● Like new projects rather than mastering old activities</li> <li>● Interested in problem solving and challenging tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Further growth in ability to think abstractly and see things from multiple perspectives</li> <li>● Better organizational skills</li> <li>● Can plan, organize and sustain work for longer periods</li> <li>● Have patience to polish work, reflect, and revise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interested in language and vocabulary</li> <li>● Will work to revise and correct errors</li> <li>● Understand concepts like historical patterns and universal social themes</li> </ul>

### Curriculum

The curriculum is based on student inquiries and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Students are asked to consider what questions they have about themselves and the larger world. Then they work together to create themes based on these questions. Within each theme, students brainstorm the activities and skills they need to learn in order to answer their initial queries. At this point, the teaching team correlates the students’ ideas with the Standard Course of Study. The result is a student-oriented curriculum that exceeds the standards expected of all middle grades students in public schools throughout the state.

The advantage of this curriculum is that learning is generated by the students and is personally meaningful. Students are able to connect information across many subjects as every class works with the same theme.

## **Courses**

Each middle grades student is required to take math, language arts, social studies, and science. Students who meet certain criteria may take Algebra or Geometry. In addition, students are offered specials courses including art, band, chorus, foreign language, physical education, study hall, and technology. Students also take an Academy of Inquiry class one day a week.

### **Language arts:**

*Students are grouped within their grade levels according to their current of skill development. The two classes are taught at grade level and above grade level. These placements are made from diagnostic testing in reading and writing, teacher recommendations, and to a lesser extent, EOG scores. These placements are also fluid—the students can be moved for a better fit within the two classes if necessary.*

**Math, Science and Social Studies:** Because the Standard Course of Study is grade-specific for these courses, students are grouped by grade level. The state is currently developing tests of science and social studies for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### **Academy of Inquiry**

The Academy of Inquiry is an additional class based on students' interests. The courses are an opportunity for students to work beyond the Standard Course of Study. The Academy is based on principles of Joseph Renzulli, a researcher in gifted education at the University of Chicago. In the past, we have offered Academies such as drama, debate, the Middle Ages, Shakespeare, small engine building, the environment, food, interior design, activism, reading, film, and genetics. Academies meet once a week on Wednesdays and last a trimester.

### **Class materials**

We do not use textbooks. The only exception is the Algebra class which uses a book since it is a high school level class. Instead, teachers use novels, nonfiction, manipulatives, simulations, Internet resources, films, and other materials. In math there is a mix of traditional skill-based tasks as well as inquiry-based instruction as appropriate for the particular group of students. From time-to-time, teachers may request that students purchase particular books or materials. Students are required to have a library card to the public library. Library books are frequent components of projects and other assignments.

### **Technology**

An inquiry-based environment requires our students to use a variety of technologies to access supplementary materials and create projects and presentations. Our Computer/Technology Skills Standard Course of Study includes: Internet and telecommunications, word processing, multimedia and presentations, spreadsheets, databases, and social/ethical issues. All middle grades students MUST purchase a memory key (thumb drive) on which to store their projects. These keys allow students to transfer work between home and school. CFCI uses Microsoft products including Word, Excel, and Powerpoint. Students should NOT use products like WordPerfect that cannot be transferred to school computers.

### **Assessment and grading**

Students are assessed through many means, including conferences, homework assignments, class work, projects, essays, performances, group tasks, and tests. Rubrics, checklists, and other methods are used as well. These tasks are often evaluated on a percentage basis. While we do not use traditional letter grades or averages at CFCI, we do want students and parents to be aware of how much of a task a student has mastered. Parents receive a progress report at the 6-week mark of each trimester. Other reports are sent home as needed. Detailed report cards are provided to parents who attend Student Led Conferences at the end of each trimester. As a North

Carolina public school, CFCI participates in the End of Grade and End of Course testing program. Students who elect to take Algebra or Geometry also take their grade level math tests at the end of the year in addition to End of Course tests in their advanced math classes.

### **Homework**

Students will be given tasks to complete at home that reinforce understanding of what they are doing in class. Middle grades students are expected to complete more homework than students in grades K-5. Typically students will have daily and weekly assignments in addition to longer-term projects. Students wishing to enroll in Algebra must sign a homework contract.

The CFCI middle grades teachers use planners purchased at the beginning of the year as a communication tool. All students are expected to write their assignments in their planners on a daily basis. Parents can check these for assignments. On a case by case basis, some teachers may create websites for assignments and handouts.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Each year the middle grades teachers work to offer students extracurricular activities, including dances and movie nights. At times, teachers with parent support may offer clubs. Parents who are interested in starting a club should contact a middle grades teacher. Because we recognize the importance of celebrating students' accomplishments, there is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade semiformal dance. In addition, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade holds a Commencement at the end of each year. Students cannot participate in Commencement if they are not in good academic standing as determined by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.

### **High School registration**

The 8th grade teachers will give students information about high school registration. Typically students are required to attend a registration session at their districted high school. Students wishing to enroll in New Hanover High School's open enrollment program must still register at their districted school. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will work with parents to select courses for 9<sup>th</sup> grade.