Parent/Student Handbook
2026-2027

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Buckeye, Arizona 85326
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A PRIVATE PROGRAM PROVIDING EDUCATION AND THERAPY SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS SINCE 1980

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MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

The purpose of this handbook is to give you an overview of the programs ACCEL provides and to answer some frequently asked questions about the school.

ACCEL was founded in 1980 as a private, non-profit school designed specifically for students with special needs. Education at ACCEL is viewed as the total learning experience designed to prepare students to become active, participating members of society. Education involves more than just learning facts. Education involves learning to live. Our basic principle of service is to provide an educational environment that contributes to the mastery of skills essential for the student's growth and development. There is dignity, worth and value in every individual; education should accent and build upon student's strengths and not their disabilities.

Under the guidelines of prescriptive programming, each student is individually assessed according to their capabilities and potential in order to determine the most appropriate curriculum. The unique model of precision teaching assures a carefully monitored individualized education plan for each student. In addition, effective behavior management techniques encourage academic, emotional and mental growth.

You, as parents, guardians and caregivers, are encouraged to share the concerns, specific needs, goals, and problems of your student with the teachers, therapists and administrators of ACCEL. Cooperation between home and school is necessary to ensure success for your student.

As you read this handbook, please take time to review our mission, vision and core values to learn about our commitment to the highest educational ethics, standards and practices.

We welcome your involvement in our program and appreciate the confidence you have shown us by placing your student at ACCEL.

Sincerely,
Raymond Damm
Chief Executive Office

ACCEL MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

Empower individuals with special needs and developmental disabilities to develop the necessary skills to learn, work and live successfully with independence and dignity.

VISION STATEMENT

A Life of Dignity and Self-Worth

CORE VALUES (IDEAS)

Initiative – We demonstrate leadership and self-direction in accomplishing our goals.

Dignity – We respect the dignity and differences of all individuals and treat everyone with respect under all circumstances.

Excellence – We strive to maintain the highest standards of integrity and performance at all levels within the organization.

Accountability – We are personally accountable and responsible for our behavior and our results.

Service – We are passionate about meeting the needs of our clients, employees, community, and society and are committed to ensuring quality service

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook was specially created for the parents, guardians and caregivers of students who attend ACCEL. We have tried to provide an overview of our programs, but the handbook cannot anticipate or answer every question that may arise. If you have a question regarding a policy or procedure, you are encouraged to ask a teacher or administrator.

We strongly encourage you to read this handbook thoroughly and to familiarize yourself with ACCEL's policies and practices. We also suggest keeping your handbook in a convenient place for questions that may arise; it can serve as a readily available resource.

ACCEL may delete, add or otherwise modify policies, practices or procedures at any time, with or without notice. As policies, practices and procedures are modified, updated material will be provided to you. The updated material will supersede any previously published information.

This handbook applies to all of our students and supersedes any previous handbooks of ACCEL. The information contained in the handbook is presented in summary form as a matter of information only. These procedures may be subject to change should unforeseen circumstances arrive that are not addressed in this handbook.

We encourage you to ask ACCEL staff for clarification when you have questions about contents of this handbook or whenever you need assistance.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

All ACCEL educational and therapeutic programs are developed to protect and guarantee the basic human rights of our students. A student at ACCEL has the right to dignity in treatment, the right to dignity in education and the right to effective instruction.

Education and treatment are designed to assist each individual student develop the following abilities:

- The ability to relate positively to him/herself and others
- The ability to attain the greatest possible degree of personal freedom
- The ability to learn skills that afford him/her the greatest possible degree of personal independence

In order to accomplish these objectives, each student is guaranteed the following:

- A safe environment which protects him/her from harm inflicted by self or others and is free from bullying by other students or staff
- A positive environment which recognizes individual strength and remediates individual weakness
- An individualized evaluation which leads to comprehensive and informed educational planning
- An environment which strives to limit stimuli or experiences which may be disruptive to student growth
- A commitment to provide additional services when needed to implement identified goals and objectives
- The implementation of environmental and/or behavioral limits to reduce the potential for behaviors that are harmful to him/herself or to others
- An environment which prevents or controls behavior which compromise the dignity of the student
- Maintenance of student's right to privacy and confidentiality

RELATED AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES

ACCEL provides extensive therapeutic services as part of its continuum of services to individuals with special needs. Therapeutic services are delivered in collaboration with the educational program and students benefit from a therapy rich environment. ACCEL employs a team of over 15 fulltime therapists. Therapy services are tailored to meet the student's individual needs and include:

- ***Physical/Occupational Therapy***
  These services enable students to work to develop gross and fine motor skills, and to improve balance, mobility, sensory, and perceptual skills.

- ***Speech-Language Therapy***
  Integrated into daily academic activities, technology and training come together to help students communicate more effectively. Students may receive articulation therapy or learn to use augmentative communication systems ranging from low-tech picture boards to high-tech personal speaking devices.

- ***Adapted Music***
  The music program emphasizes listening skills and following directions as well as positive interaction and socialization with peers

- ***Adapted Recreation***
  The goal of the recreation/movement program is to attain and maintain emotional and physical well being through carefully chosen activities. Activities promote a spirit of teamwork, sportsmanship, increased mobility, and enhanced self-esteem.

- ***Vision Services***
  For students with vision impairments, ACCEL's program is designed and delivered by a certified teacher of the Visually Impaired to meet the individual needs of the students.

- ***Adapted Aquatics***
  ACCEL'S Metro Campus utilizes its warm-water therapy pool and Jacuzzi for the aquatics programs. Students receive the benefits of free movement, stretching and exercising muscles as well as having fun in the weightless water environment.

- ***Behavioral Services***
  The Department of Behavioral Services consists of PhD and master's level Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA's) and bachelor's level Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCaBA's) along with highly trained behavior team members. ACCEL offers positive behavioral programming to students with a wide range of behavioral concerns. These individuals work closely with special educators and classroom support staff in conducting behavioral assessments, writing related behavioral goals and objectives, and developing function based individualized behavior plans.

- ***Medical Services***
  ACCEL employs a comprehensive team of full-time, on-site, registered and licensed practical nurses that work in conjunction with doctors, psychologists, parents, and ACCEL staff in addressing student medical issues.

Specialized Services for students with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities

- ***Behavioral Services*** provides a unique opportunity to address the needs of students with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities through teaching specified behaviors. ACCEL Behavioral Services utilizes Discrete Trial Training along with the use of applied behavior analysis (ABA) delivered and supervised by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA's) and Arizona Licensed Behavior Analysts.
  ***This program is available through the BISTA Autism Clinic via private insurance, self-pay, and/or the Arizona Department of Disabilities Habilitation programs.

- ***The School Consultation Program*** is an evidence-based approach to educational and behavioral assessment and intervention. We customize our school consultation to the needs of the individual, classroom, school, or district. Detailed recommendations and plans are developed for each situation. We offer a wide variety of workshops for special and general education teachers, as well as, paraprofessionals, student support personnel and administrators

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Students at ACCEL enjoy a variety of enrichment activities, including participation in Special Olympics, dances, theme-based activities, and community-based events such as field day events. Students are fine-tuning motor skills, learning to problem solve creatively, increasing social interaction, and building self-esteem. Students also create arts and crafts and learn and practice water safety, water exercise, water recreation and swim skills in our 97-degree therapeutic pool.

VOCATIONAL AND TRANSITION SERVICES

ACCEL provides coordinated, progressive vocational programs designed to promote movement from school to post-school activities. The program focuses on student's strengths, preferences and interests. Along with vocational assessment, interest inventories and interviews, students learn to evaluate their strengths and set realistic goals for the future.

Community Skills programs are designed to help students prepare for post-secondary placements increasing career awareness, developing meaningful job skills, and providing opportunities to grow socially and emotionally for a more productive, fulfilling life. Both on-site and off-site employment opportunities provide practice that aid in the student's development of self-confidence and independence in sheltered, supported, or competitive employment.

ENROLLMENT, PROGRAM, and IEP DEVELOPMENT

ACCEL is approved as a private special education day program on a yearly basis by the Arizona State Department of Education. Approval includes provision of special education services to students in all eligibility categories with the exception of Hearing Impaired. ACCEL follows all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discriminatory policies and practices. ACCEL believes in equal attention and care for all students and clients regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender or levels of ability.

When a student is recommended for placement, ACCEL will request records for review. ACCEL staff may make arrangements to observe the student in his/her current educational placement or in his/her home environment. Parents/Guardians, district representatives and the student are invited to tour ACCEL. After careful analysis of educational information and other factors, if ACCEL staff believe placement at ACCEL is appropriate, a multidisciplinary team meeting is conducted. The team will review all available documents for the student and discuss the most appropriate educational ACCEL classroom placement for the student. Parents/guardians will be given an enrollment packet and a start date is set. When required documents/enrollment forms are in order, the student may begin. It is important to note that the school district is responsible for transportation, and the arranging for transportation may affect the start date for the student. Parents are responsible for transportation if the student is being privately placed.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is an important written record of the decision reached by the team members at the IEP meeting. All IEPs developed at ACCEL meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Arizona Revised Statues and the Arizona Administrative Code (State Board of Education Rules/Regulations). ACCEL IEP meetings are held at least once a year but may be reviewed more often as circumstances warrant.

The role of the parent/guardian is essential in the IEP meeting. The parent is an equal partner in ACCEL IEP team discussions. ACCEL takes great care to ensure that one or both parents/guardians are present at each IEP meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate.

Progress reports detailing progress toward IEP goals and benchmarks are prepared each quarter. (The data-based model employed at ACCEL provides ongoing information about progress on specific goals and objectives and enables teachers and support staff to make informal instructional decisions concerning program modification.) Educational evaluations and educational plans are updated at least once a year.

Recommendations for placement changes are made when students demonstrate readiness and meet the exit criteria for returning to a less restrictive environment. Those students who are unable to return to district programs continue to work toward their district's graduation criteria and progress summaries are submitted to the student's home school each quarter.

Recommendations for a change of placement may also be made to the IEP team if ACCEL staff believes that continued ACCEL placement is no longer the most appropriate.

When a student has met his/her district's special education graduation requirement, he/she may participate in their home school graduation and/or ACCEL's graduation ceremonies.

GENERAL INFORMATION

BREAKFAST/LUNCH: A school breakfast and lunch program is available to all students at ACCEL during the school year. Students may purchase the school lunch or bring a lunch from home. Parents are also responsible for providing medical documentation of specialized or restricted diets.

It is important to note, that if specialized or restricted dietary needs cannot be met through the provisions of the National School Lunch Program, parents are required to provide such items. Free and reduced lunch rates are available based on financial need. Information about the lunch program will be sent home with the student at the beginning of each school year or upon ACCEL placement. Parents/Guardians are required to pay the full price of the school lunch, or the reduced price of the school lunch as determined by their approved school lunch application. Advance payments must be made. ACCEL cannot maintain outstanding balances.

If the occasion arises in which ACCEL provides a meal to a student whose account has insufficient funds to pay for the meal, we will contact the student's parents for reimbursement. Parents are responsible for reimbursing the unpaid amounts upon request by ACCEL.

SNACKS/TREATS: Any treats/snacks for classroom consumption must be store purchased items in the original factory sealed packaging and dated per Public Health Service guidelines. Only your student may consume home-prepared snacks or treats that you send to school. Home-prepared snacks and treats cannot be shared with other students in the classroom.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES: Throughout the school year many classrooms incorporate a holiday theme into their classroom activities. Your student's teacher will inform you of those particular plans for their classroom in regard to parties, special events and holiday related activities. If you prefer that your student not participate in any holiday theme related activities, please contact your student's teacher and alternative activities will be provided for him/her.

SHOWERING: Occasionally a student requires a shower throughout the school day due to toileting accidents, messy play activities, IEP goal, etc. When a student requires a shower at school, the student will be showered by two same sex adults and the student's privacy will be maintained. Parents/Guardians will be notified prior to a shower being administered that was not related to an IEP goal.

MEDICATIONS: Medications (prescription or non-prescription) may be administered only with specific written permission. Nursing intake questionnaires, which include information regarding medications, will be required annually. Medication must be provided in the original, prescription containers and will be kept in the nurse's office.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS: ACCEL provides students with a variety of enrichment activities and programs. All students have an opportunity to participate in enrichment activities over the course of the school year. Community sponsored programs and speakers are also brought on campus throughout the year to further enhance educational programming.

ADAPTED SEATING: In order to ensure your student's safety while at school and therapeutic needs when accessing the curriculum, ACCEL's therapy and behavioral team may conduct a seating assessment to select the most appropriate seating system for your student to use during the school day. Your student's core strength, posture and overall safety will be considered when evaluating seating systems. Upon conclusion of the seating assessment, parents will be notified of ACCEL's recommendations, parental consent will be obtained prior to implementation and any seating adaptations will be added to your student's IEP.

EXPERIENCE TRIPS: ACCEL provides a full special education program that is primarily campus based. It is important however, that students have the opportunity to practice their skills in real life situations in the community setting. Your permission to involve students in off campus instructional activities in close proximity to each campus will be requested.

FIELD TRIPS: Occasionally, instructional activities are planned which require traveling farther from campus than experience trips allow. Special written permission will be required for these occasions. Students are permitted to go off campus if they have not engaged in any instances of aggression or spent any time in the alternative room for the last 5 consecutive school days. Any other severe problem behavior, such as self-injury or elopement, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If a student is not able to attend due to instances of aggression or alternative room time, a staff will remain behind to supervise the student. This policy is in place to ensure the safety and dignity of ACCEL students, staff and others not employed by ACCEL.

STUDENT HOURS: During the regular school year student hours at the Metro Campus, East Campus and the Buckeye Learning Center are 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. It is important that students attend school on a regular basis for the designated school hours. ACCEL is unable to accept any student prior to 8:30 a.m. Parents picking up students for appointments must stop at the reception desk at their designated campus to sign out their student. Maintaining student safety/security is of utmost importance to ACCEL. Parents/caregivers must be prepared to show identification when picking up students. Generally, students will not be accepted at school after 12:00 p.m. unless they are returning to school after an appointment or unless prior arrangements have been made by the parent/guardian. On an early release school day or during extended school year, students will not be accepted after 11:00 a.m. unless they are returning to school after an appointment or unless prior arrangements have been made by the parent/guardian.

CURRICULUM

ACCEL believes that the Arizona Academic Standards must guide teaching and learning with an emphasis on high expectations for student achievement. ACCEL's curriculum and all evaluations and diagnostic instruments are non-biased and developmentally appropriate. All evaluations and diagnostics instruments are selected, administrated and interpreted with sensitivity to language and cultural differences. Delivery of curricular instruction includes determining students' current skills, matching instructional strategies to objectives, and planning instruction at appropriate levels of challenge.

ACCEL provides individualized instructional programs designed to meet the needs of each student and promote skill development that will maximize independence in daily life settings. This includes an academic curriculum at individualized achievement levels in the areas of reading, mathematics and written language. There is extensive use of therapeutic modifications, augmentative communication and adaptive equipment, including but not limited to: switches, communication devices, visual supports, PECS, Adaptation Team made books and mathematics activities. An extensive vocational and transition program is provided so that students may learn and practice potential work opportunities to prepare them for community settings.

ACCEL's literacy programs include the SRA Corrective Reading program, McGraw Hill Study Sync., Unique Learning Systems, SRA Mastery Series, PCI Reading Programs, Early Literacy Skill Builders, Discrete Trial Trainer, Handwriting without Tears program, and a variety of high interest theme-based texts at the achievement level of the students. The literacy program is designed to combine vocabulary with visual supports throughout the day applied in the classroom and vocational rotations. Students learn vocabulary that is relevant to work settings as well as academic based and leisure reading. Speech/Language pathologists assist teachers in modifying material in the classroom and vocational setting to accomplish individualized language objectives. A core language approach is utilized to promote acquisition of the most frequently used words in our language to maximize effective communication.

The mathematics curriculum utilizes the SRA Direct Instruction Mathematics program, Menu Math, Touch Point Math, Unique Learning Systems and the McGraw Hill Glencoe Mathematics Program. Functional activities include learning center-based mathematics practices including Money Math and problem-solving and practice in applied settings.

Additional curriculum programs include Social Skills Programs utilizing the Second Step Program and Social Skills Video Training, Social Stories and Social Thinking methodologies, as well as thematic Science units utilizing PCI Life Sciences, developmentally appropriate thematic Science, Unique Learning Systems, the McGraw Hill Life *iScience* Program, McGraw Hill Inspire Science and the Conover Workplace Readiness Program.

Individualized IEP goals targeted for each student are accomplished in a variety of settings, including one to one classroom instruction, independent workstations, learning centers, the ADL (Activities of Daily Living) classroom and other vocational settings.

ACCEL RESEARCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACCEL is committed to providing quality programs consistent with recommended research practices. ACCEL is also committed to ethical and confidential research policies. Research may be conducted at ACCEL for the following reasons:

1) To evaluate effectiveness of programs.
2) To augment training and instruction of staff.
3) To contribute to the professional literature with regard to the advancement of effective practices.
4) For collaboration with other professional institutions in advancing knowledge in the field at local, regional, or national conferences, and through peer reviewed journals.

Research protocols will be reviewed for potential risks and benefits by the ACCEL Institutional Review Board (IRB), which consists of the Director of the Ajyal Center for Comprehensive Education and Life Skills, Dr. Phillip Tanner, the Program Manager of the Ajyal Center for Comprehensive Education and Life Skills, Bradley Reed and the Director of Intern Programs, Clinical and Research Associate, Dr. Donald Stenhoff. Appropriate consents will be obtained from participants, and/or parent/legal guardians. Participants will be informed that participation is optional and that they may withdraw at any time. In all cases, student identifying information will not be associated with the data, videos, etc., without specific, expressed permission of the participant or parent/legal guardian. The progress of research projects will be monitored by the ACCEL IRB.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

ACCEL's educational/behavioral philosophy respects a student's right to effective teaching and respect of his/her dignity at all times. This philosophy was developed in consideration of the guidelines suggested by the Arizona Department of Education, Special Education Section. At ACCEL, "learning" is defined as a process that occurs when experience causes "a relatively permanent change in an individual's knowledge and behavior, which must be brought about by the interaction of a person with his/her environment." ACCEL promotes the improvement of student leaning, performance and adaptive behavior by systematically following appropriate behavior with reward, reinforcement and recognition.

Behavior management techniques and programs utilized at ACCEL complement and enhance the ability of the student to benefit from educational programs and assist the student to maximize his/her competence and potential in achieving successful personal, interpersonal, adaptive, vocational, and community interactions.

Within the framework of the goals of the educational programs at ACCEL, inappropriate behaviors demonstrated by ACCEL students which significantly interfere with the student's ability (or the ability of others) to interact successfully with their environment, and/or which may result in danger to the student and/or others are programmatically addressed. Information regarding such behavior(s) is actively solicited from and shared with the parents/caregivers, other professional persons/agencies, when a release of information is obtained, and whenever possible with the student. When necessary, a functional behavior assessment is conducted and an individualized behavior program may be developed, utilizing a continuum of techniques or interventions that emphasize prevention of inappropriate behaviors and teaching appropriate behaviors. When prevention is unsuccessful, programs will be developed using techniques or interventions that require the least possible intrusion, intensity or restriction to safely control inappropriate behavior(s). The goal of such programs is to eliminate or significantly reduce the occurrences of challenging behavior(s) and replace them with behavior(s) that are generally considered to be more adaptive. This replacement may allow the student to participate with more success and independence in his/her environments. Data collection, evaluation of the successfulness of the program in achievement of stated goals and communication of the results of such individualized programs with involved persons is emphasized.

ACCEL does not advocate or promote the use of medications for behavioral control. However, in recognition of the needs of some students for the use of such medications when behavioral issues present a danger to the student and/or to others, ACCEL provides behavioral consultation and information to medical practitioners as well as caregivers to assist in the evaluation of medication issues. Any potential side effects of such medications are identified and communicated to ACCEL caregivers and are closely monitored by ACCEL nursing and behavior staff persons.

Verbal abuse, sexual harassment and/or corporal punishment are not permitted under any circumstance at ACCEL.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

ACCEL is founded upon the belief that students have the right to education, effective teaching, and dignity. ACCEL's approach to education was developed in consideration of the guidelines suggested by the Arizona Department of Education—Special Education Section.

Our primary instructional emphasis is promoting progress by developing and facilitating areas of strength in each student. A student's performance is improved by systematically following appropriate behavior with reward or reinforcement. Teaching procedures, such as shaping, prompting, and modeling are used in conjunction with reinforcement of appropriate behavior. Corporal punishment, verbal abuse, and/or any type of harassment are not permitted at ACCEL under any circumstance.

It is the policy of ACCEL to promote a safe and productive workplace and educational environment for its students and employees. In the classroom, problem behaviors are addressed initially by using the least intrusive methods. Appropriate interventions may include (but are not limited to) differential reinforcement of behavior, such as providing praise for appropriate behaviors, teaching alternative means to access items, activities or breaks and functional communication. If problem behavior presents a risk to a student, his/her peers, and/or staff, a more intensive intervention may be warranted to ensure the safety of all involved. More intensive interventions may include (but are not limited to) loss of rewards, removal from immediate environment, and/or physical intervention. All physical interventions employ Safety Care by Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS).

ACCEL policy expressly prohibits the use of a physical restraint or seclusion as a means of punishment or as a response to property destruction, disruptive behavior, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm.

ACCEL policy aligns with Arizona Revised Statute 15-105 and all US Department of Education guidelines.

Arizona Revised Statute 15-105. Use of restraint and seclusion techniques; requirements; definitions

A. A school may permit the use of restraint or seclusion techniques on any pupil if both of the following apply:
1. The pupil's behavior presents an imminent danger of bodily harm to the pupil or others.
2. Less restrictive interventions appear insufficient to mitigate the imminent danger of bodily harm.

B. If a restraint or seclusion technique is used on a pupil:
1. School personnel shall maintain continuous visual observation and monitoring of the pupil while the restraint or seclusion technique is in use.
2. The restraint or seclusion technique shall end when the pupil's behavior no longer presents an imminent danger to the pupil or others.

3. The restraint or seclusion technique shall be used only by school personnel who are trained in the safe and effective use of restraint and seclusion techniques unless an emergency situation does not allow sufficient time to summon trained personnel.
4. The restraint technique employed may not impede the pupil's ability to breathe.
5. The restraint technique may not be out of proportion to the pupil's age or physical condition.

C. Schools may establish policies and procedures for the use of restraint or seclusion techniques in a school safety or crisis intervention plan if the plan is not specific to any individual pupil.

D. Schools shall establish reporting and documentation procedures to be followed when a restraint or seclusion technique has been used on a pupil. The procedures shall include the following requirements:
1. School personnel shall provide the pupil's parent or guardian with written or oral notice on the same day that the incident occurred, unless circumstances prevent same-day notification. If the notice is not provided on the same day of the incident, notice shall be given within twenty-four hours after the incident.
2. Within a reasonable time following the incident, school personnel shall provide the pupil's parent or guardian with written documentation that includes information about any persons, locations or activities that may have triggered the behavior, if known, and specific information about the behavior and its precursors, the type of restraint or seclusion technique used and the duration of its use.
3. Schools shall review strategies used to address a pupil's dangerous behavior if there has been repeated use of restraint or seclusion techniques for the pupil during a school year. The review shall include a review of the incidents in which restraint or seclusion technique were used and an analysis of how future incidents may be avoided, including whether the pupil requires a functional behavioral assessment.

E. If a school district or charter school summons law enforcement instead of using a restraint or seclusion technique on a pupil, the school shall comply with the reporting, documentation and review procedures established under subsection D of this section.

Notwithstanding this section, school resource officers are authorized to respond to situations that present the imminent danger of bodily harm according to protocols established by their law enforcement agency.

F. This section does not prohibit schools from adopting policies pursuant to section 15-843, subsection B, paragraph 3.

G. For the purposes of this section:
1. "Restraint" means any method or device that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a pupil to move the pupil's torso, arms, legs or head freely, including physical force or mechanical devices. Restraint does not include any of the following:
(a) Methods or devices implemented by trained school personnel or used by a pupil for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which the method or device is designed and, if applicable, prescribed.
(b) The temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a pupil to comply with a reasonable request or to go to a safe location.

(c) The brief holding of a pupil by one adult for the purpose of calming or comforting the pupil.
(d) Physical force used to take a weapon away from a pupil or to separate and remove a pupil from another person when the pupil is engaged in a physical assault on another person.
2. "School" means a school district, a charter school, a public or private special education school that provides services to pupils placed by a public school, the Arizona state schools for the deaf and the blind and a private school.
3. "Seclusion" means the involuntary confinement of a pupil alone in a room from which egress is prevented. Seclusion does not include the use of a voluntary behavior management technique, including a timeout location, as part of a pupil's education plan, individual safety plan, behavioral plan or individualized education program that involves the pupil's separation from a larger group for purposes of calming.

US Department of Education

Seclusion:

The US Department of Education (DOE) defines seclusion as, "**the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving**," (DOE's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), May 2012). Most of ACCEL's classrooms are equipped with alternative rooms (averaging 8½ by 7½ feet) equipped with lights, a door with a window, a mat, and a fire alarm near the ceiling. Alternative rooms are used for behavioral intervention when a student's behavior poses an imminent safety risk to themselves or others. Other uses of the alternative room include instances when a student asks for a break in a quieter area or when they voluntarily walk into the alternative room to calm themselves. ACCEL's policies require staff to continuously visually monitor any student in an alternative room, lights must be on at all times, and the students must be prompted out as soon as safely possible.

Following the 15 principles laid out by the DOE, school personnel shall only use seclusion when it is needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm.

Physical Restraint:

The US Department of Education (DOE) defines physical restraint as, "**a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his or her torso, arms, legs, or head freely**," (DOE's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), May 2012).

Following the 15 principles laid out by the DOE, school personnel shall only administer a physical restraint when it is needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm. When a physical restraint needs to be administered, school personnel shall seek to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of the physical restraint.

A physical restraint may be used, if all other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring with an individual student. In other

words, **a physical restraint can only be used when nonphysical interventions would not be effective, and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to himself or herself or others**. Any physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable means as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

When used, only trained school personnel shall administer physical restraints. Trained school personnel are those individuals who have received in-depth training and certification in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI).

Individual Behavior Intervention Plans (IBIP):

Prior to the development of an individual behavior intervention plan, parent/guardian consent is required to complete a behavioral assessment to determine the function of the behavior. Methods for behavioral assessment are informed using teacher/parent interview, direct observation, descriptive analysis, and/or functional analysis. All behavior intervention plans will be written and/or approved by the Behavior Intervention Manager and/or campus BCBA. Parent/Guardian approval will be sought for all behavior intervention plans. However, if a parent/guardian does not approve the plan within a reasonable time period (10 days), the plan will be implemented to ensure the safety of students and staff until an IEP review meeting can be scheduled or a signature can be obtained. Should the need for a more intensive intervention arise after the plan's approval, parents/guardians will be notified of changes and parent/guardian approval and signature will be sought. Parents/guardians will be notified of minor changes; however, a signature will not be required. In the event a parent/guardian has a concern regarding the plan of intervention, they may contact the department of behavioral services.

In emergency situations, when a problem behavior arises for which a plan is not in place, the staff will use the least intrusive method to manage the behavior and ensure safety of all involved. A behavior incident report must then be given to a BCBA or BCaBA in the Department of Behavioral Services and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure a plan is in place in the event that behavior recurs.

In the event a student's problem behavior places the student and/or others at risk of injury and the plan is ineffective in safely reducing and resolving the behavior, a conference will be convened with ACCEL administration, including (but not limited to) a BCBA or BCaBA in the Department of Behavioral Services, consulting clinical psychologist and/or medical personnel to determine the continued suitability of the student's placement at ACCEL.

If, at any time, in the opinion of the ACCEL staff, the student's behavior presents an immediate risk to him/herself or others an emergency staffing will be held to assess the student's suitability and/or readiness to be educated.

Behavioral Data Tracking and Communication

Behavioral data at ACCEL is systematically tracked to monitor student progress and inform instructional and behavioral interventions. Data is collected daily using both paper-based and digital methods to ensure accuracy and accessibility.

Student behavioral data is tracked in terms of frequency, duration, and intensity. Data is recorded in real-time using tally charts divided into 30-minute intervals throughout the school day. Staff may utilize paper-based forms or tablets for data entry, depending on the classroom setup. Intensity levels are documented according to ACCEL's standardized intensity rating system, which provides consistency across all staff and settings.

All behavioral data is stored in a secure database, allowing for efficient retrieval and analysis. This data is included in the student's quarterly progress reports, which are shared with parents and the student's public school or charter district. Additionally, behavior data can be provided on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis upon request by parents or district representatives.

The ability to access and share behavioral data quickly supports a transparent and responsive communication process with all stakeholders, helping ensure that student needs are met in a timely and effective manner.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACCEL, in conjunction with contracting school districts, follows disciplinary policies and procedures as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Students at ACCEL are expected to dress appropriately at all times. Inappropriate clothing (examples: gang related colors or insignia, revealing clothing, clothing with obscene words, phrases or gestures) may not be worn on campus. Parents, caregivers and guardians will be requested to provide appropriate clothing upon request by ACCEL or to pick up students who are dressed inappropriately.

Students who attend ACCEL may not bring to school or have in their possession any item that may be classified as a weapon (examples: guns, knives, matches, lighters, etc.). A student who brings such items to ACCEL may be required to participate in daily searches of person or personal possessions thereafter to ensure the safety of the student and others. Possession of these items may be considered grounds for recommendation of suspension.

Assaultive behavior by students (use of a weapon or object used as a weapon or battery against a staff person or another student) will not be tolerated at ACCEL. The school district and parents, caregivers or guardians will be notified immediately in the event assaultive behavior occurs. A recommendation may be made for suspension, a Manifestation Determination meeting, or a review of placement.

ACCEL STUDENT WEAPON POLICY

Weapons are strictly prohibited at ACCEL. Weapons include but are not limited to guns, knives, and explosives. If a student is found with a weapon, ACCEL will report it to law enforcement officials, parents/guardians, and transportation personnel. ACCEL will follow law enforcement direction to safely confiscate the weapon. ACCEL takes all threats and suspicions of possession of weapons very seriously.

The school administration reserves the right to search the students, their lockers, and other personal effects when a reasonable cause exists regarding contraband; or a threat exists to the general welfare of the school. The determination of the reasonableness of the cause, under the foregoing circumstances, will be decided by the administration.

Possession of firearms or other weapons on campus or while attending or participating in a school-sponsored activity off campus is subject to sanctions up to and including expulsion.

USE & POSESSION OF ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/VAPOR PRODUCTS

Alcohol, Tobacco and Vapor Products are prohibited on all ACCEL school grounds, buildings, parking lots, playing fields, playgrounds, buses and at off campus school sponsored events. Drinking alcohol, smoking or possession of alcohol, tobacco and/or vapor products is not permitted within 300 feet of school property (school grounds, inside school buildings, in school parking lots, playgrounds or playing fields, or in school vehicles) or at off-campus school sponsored events.

"Tobacco product" means any of the following: Cigars, Cigarettes, Cigarette papers of any kind, smoking tobacco of any kind and chewing tobacco of any kind. "Vapor product" means a non-combustible tobacco-derived product containing nicotine and/or THC that employs a mechanical heating element, battery or circuit, regardless of shape or size that can be used to heat a liquid nicotine solution contained in cartridges.

SUSPENSION OF PROGRAMMING

A student's attendance at ACCEL may be suspended on the following basis:

1. Clinical necessity, i.e., a student demonstrates a psychiatric or medical instability or condition that compromises effective education.

2. Educational necessity, i.e., a student requires educational programs or services that currently cannot be provided satisfactorily in an ACCEL program.

Administrative suspension of programming may occur as a result of either a determination based on ACCEL administrative review of student needs and recommendation to the contracting school district or upon the recommendation of the IEP team. An administrative suspension may be effective immediately, or upon determination of need by administrative review, to determine a course of action through clinical intervention, change of placement or programmatic modification.

SCHOOL HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (HIPAA)

In 1996, Congress enacted the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to ensure continued health insurance coverage to individuals who change jobs or establish standards regarding the electronic sharing of health information. For purposes of HIPAA, covered entities include health plans, health care clearinghouses, and health care providers that transmit health information in electronic form in connection with covered transactions (45 CFR 160.103).

Technically, schools and school systems that provide health care services to student may qualify as covered entities under HIPAA. However, the final regulations for the HIPAA Privacy Rules exclude information considered education records under FERPA from HIPAA privacy requirements. This includes student health records and immunization records maintained by an education agency or institution, or its representative; as education records subject to FERPA, these files are not subject to HIPAA privacy requirements. In addition, school nurse or other health records maintained on students receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are considered education records and also subject to that Act's confidentiality provision. Consequently, these records are subject to FERPA and not the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

Nevertheless, certain activities, when performed by a school, could be subject to other provisions of HIPAA that concern electronic transactions. According to the preamble to the December 2000 final rules, an educational institution or agency that employs a school nurse is subject to our (HIPAA) regulation if the school nurse or the school engages in a HIPAA transaction. HIPAA transactions are defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) as the transmission of information between two parties to carry out financial or administrative activities related to health care, including the submitting of claims. However, consent must still be secured under FERPA before the records are disclosed.

SCHOOL HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The ACCEL Nursing Team is continually striving to provide the most appropriate health care for your students and all students at ACCEL. Your careful attention to the following school health policies and procedures is greatly appreciated.

Each student must complete the following packets and forms and have them on file in the ACCEL Nursing Office for the *current school year*. The following are the packets/forms required to be on file:

- **Nursing Intake Packet** (completed and signed by parent/guardian)
- **Medical Release Form** (completed and signed by parent/guardian)
- **Student Emergency Information Form** (completed and signed by parent/guardian)

Prescription medications must arrive at school in the *original container* and be properly labeled with the student's name, medication name, dosage, time of administration, and the current date. Upon request, a pharmacist can provide an additional prescription bottle for school use. The Nursing Department cannot accept bottles that are more than one year old or that are not current in any way (for example, a bottle that identifies the correct medication but reflects an incorrect dosage). Inhalers must have a label affixed directly to the inhaler.

The ACCEL Nursing Department can only administer FDA-approved medications prescribed by a doctor. Homeopathic medications **will not** be administered at school **unless** the ACCEL Nursing Department has a written physician's order requesting that the medication be given at school. The written order must include the student's name, the name of the homeopathic medication, the dosage, and the time of administration. The medication must be in its original packaging with all warnings and directions clearly visible, and the student's name must be on each bottle. Nursing cannot administer any medications or supplements containing CBD or THC. CBD & THC **will not be allowed** on school campuses. ACCEL students may not self-administer medications.

Students who require medication during school hours must receive the medication at the prescribed time and dosage according to the physician's orders. If the time of administration or dosage is changed by the physician, the ACCEL Nursing Department must receive the medication in ***a new prescription bottle that reflects the change.*** A copy of the physician's order may be accepted temporarily while a new prescription bottle is being obtained.

Any changes to medications given ***at school and/or at home*** should be reported as soon as possible to the ACCEL Nursing Department.

Medications must be provided to the Nursing Department at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled administration time to ensure students are properly prepared for the school day. If medications are not received on time, you may be contacted and asked to come to the school to administer the medication at the prescribed time.

Occasionally, your student may unexpectedly require medication during the school day. For these situations, written parent/guardian permission is required. The Nursing Office maintains a

limited supply of over-the-counter medications for student use; however, ***parents/guardians are encouraged to provide over-the-counter medications if they are needed for extended use or for a chronic condition***. All medications must be in their original packaging with labels clearly visible and must be marked with the student's name. Please include a written request specifying the medication name, dosage, and time of administration. It is also helpful to document in the student's daily communication log any over-the-counter medication given at home before school.

If your student appears ill or is ill in the morning before school, please keep them at home. In general, students will be sent home if they have a temperature of 100°F or higher, repeated episodes of vomiting or diarrhea that may be infectious in nature, or symptoms of a communicable illness or condition. If your student is sent home, they **should not return to school until they have maintained a normal temperature (98.6°F) for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. The student must also be free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Seizure action plans ***are required*** by school districts and transportation. However, in the event of a discrepancy between the Seizure Action Plan and the prescription bottle, **nursing staff will always follow the prescription label on the medication bottle**.

If your student has a history of seizures or is currently experiencing seizures but does not have a rescue medication available, we will call 911services if:
- The seizure lasts longer than 3 minutes
- The student has difficulty breathing after the seizure
- It is the student's first known seizure
- The student has a second seizure shortly after the first
- The student is injured or diabetic
- The seizure occurs in water
- The student does not return to usual behavior or consciousness

Parents, guardians, caregivers, or group homes **must** provide accurate and up-to-date emergency contact telephone numbers and ensure they are kept current throughout the school year. Emergency contacts must be individuals who can take responsibility for the student and are able to pick the student up from school if necessary. **It is expected that the student will be picked up within one hour of notification.**

If a student is hospitalized for any reason (medical or behavioral), undergoes a surgical procedure (including outpatient procedures), or requires short-term or ongoing wound or incision care, the ACCEL Nursing Department ***must receive a discharge summary and a medical release to return to school.*** Documentation must include current medications, treatment plans, and any specific school instructions (e.g., limited physical activity). ACCEL cannot provide post-surgical or complex wound care.

ACCEL may conduct a physical check of a student. This may include a visual scan of areas typically uncovered by clothing or, when necessary, a more comprehensive visual assessment of areas usually covered by clothing. These checks may occur if:

• Confirmation of a suspected medical condition is needed before treatment or referral
• A parent or guardian requests the check
• Injuries of unknown or unclear origin are reported by a parent, caregiver, or agency
• ACCEL staff report injuries of unknown origin to the Nursing Department or appropriate agencies

Students may be checked on a daily, weekly, or as-needed basis as requested by parents, caregivers, agencies, or as determined necessary by ACCEL Nursing or administrative staff. Privacy, dignity, and confidentiality will always be maintained.

ACCEL personnel are required by state law to report any known or suspected child maltreatment, including physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. ACCEL personnel are also required to report any known or suspected abuse or exploitation of vulnerable or incapacitated adults to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement, Child Protective Services (CPS), or Adult Protective Services (APS).

VISITOR PROCEDURES

Parents, district personnel, and DDD case managers are welcome to visit their student's classroom with prior permission. Due to the nature of the students served at ACCEL, interruptions and distractions in the classroom must be kept to a minimum for **all** students in the room. All visits must be pre-approved by the site principal. Please contact the principal regarding arrangements at least 24 hours in advance of the intended visit. All visitors must report to the front desk to sign in and to receive a visitor badge. Visitor identification and written authorization from a parent/guardian may be requested at that time. An ACCEL staff member will accompany the visitor to the classroom. All visitors must sign out at the front desk when leaving the school facility. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

As the safety and well being of all students is a primary concern, visitors are asked to limit a stay to one-half hour to minimize classroom disruptions. Groups of visitors (more than two persons) may be asked to visit the classroom at separate times. ACCEL requests that siblings or small children are not brought along during scheduled visitations.

ACCEL teachers and therapists are not able to take instructional time to discuss class events, procedures, or student matters with visitors. It is recommended that a second time before or after school be arranged with the teacher and/or the therapist to discuss the visitor's observations.

Building principals, or persons acting in their absence, are authorized to refuse entry to the school to persons who do not have legitimate business at school and to request any unauthorized person or person engaging in unacceptable conduct leave school grounds.

DDD/Private Therapy Services

Students who qualify for home-based therapy services in addition to therapy services provided by the school which are indicated on an ACCEP IEP will need to schedule those sessions outside of school hours. ACCEL is unable to approve outside providers on our campus during district funded hours.

USE OF STUDENT INFORMATION FOR INTERNAL, PUBLIC DISPLAY, AND MEDIA PURPOSES

While at ACCEL, your child will participate in a variety of educational and recreational activities. ACCEL photographs these activities for use in our internal bulletins, classroom displays, and yearbook. ACCEL also uses photographs of students and adults participating in our programs in our newsletter's brochures, website, videos, and other informational publications. These materials are used to promote our programs and to highlight your child's achievements at ACCEL. Additionally, local news people have often featured ACCEL programs in newspaper articles with accompanying photographs of participating students. Appropriate consents will be obtained from participants, and/or parent/legal guardians.

Additionally, there are occasions when the media come to ACCEL for special projects about our programs. Past collaborations have included magazine articles, television, and film documentaries. There are also occasions when ACCEL will showcase student projects and work for public display. In all cases, student identifying information will not be associated with the videos, projects, etc., without specific, expressed permission of the participant or parent/legal guardian. For each special media project, you would receive a separate consent form as well as information about the project, its proposed content and intended audience.

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

ACCEL is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment and bullying in any form. All individuals associated with ACCEL, including all employees, students and members of the public while on campus are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an educational atmosphere free from harassment.

Definition: Harassment/bullying is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., cyber-bullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed and used by students) that is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress.

Harassment/bullying may be motivated either by bias or prejudice based upon any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based upon association with another person who has or is perceived to have any distinguishing characteristic.

Such behaviors are considered to be bullying or harassment whether they take place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle or at any time or place where a child's imminent safety or over-all well being may be at issue.

Harassment/bullying includes, but is not limited to:

1. Verbal: Derogatory comments or jokes, slurs, insults, epithets or threatening words spoken to another person.
2. Physical: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking or movements or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
3. Visual: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, calendars, written words, letters, notes, invitations, drawings, gestures or objects.
4. Sexual: Verbal harassment or abuse related to sex, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome touching, suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or actual threats concerning one's grade, placement, etc.

Sexual harassment is described as unwelcome sexual advances; request for favors and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by an employee of ACCEL to a student, when made by any employee of ACCEL to another employee or when made by any student to another student when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education; or
2 Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decision affecting that individual; or

3 Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional standing or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or educational environment

How to Report Harassment or bullying: Any person who believes that they or a student has been subject to any type of harassment or observes harassment on a campus or administrative facility of ACCEL should promptly take the following action:

1. Inform the harasser that conduct is unwelcome and ask that the harassment stop. (ACCEL recognizes that, in certain circumstances, it may be uncomfortable or dangerous to confront the harasser but should immediately report the incident as described below.)
2. Report the incident to the immediate supervisor or directly to either the Principal or the Executive Director.
3. Students should report directly to a teacher, the Principal or to the Executive Director.
4. It is preferred that complaints of harassment be made in writing; however, verbal complaints will be accepted.

Investigation Procedures: ACCEL is compelled to thoroughly investigate all complaints and take timely and appropriate corrective action or discipline an all-confirmed violation. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected in a manner consistent with ACCEL's legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take action when this conduct has occurred.

Sanctions: In complaints involving staff, a substantiated charge of harassment or bullying will subject such staff member to disciplinary action up to and including termination. A substantiated charge against a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Retaliation is prohibited: ACCEL will neither allow nor tolerate retaliation in any form by an employee, student or others against any complaining employee, student or corroborating witness. Retaliation that contravenes this policy could result in discipline up to and including termination or expulsion.

Educational training: ACCEL is committed to:

1. Providing continual information and training for its administrators and staff through regular meetings, ensuring that they understand ACCEL's position regarding harassment/bullying and its importance.
2. Making all faculty, staff and students aware of ACCEL's commitment toward harassment/bullying free environment.
3. Remaining watchful of conditions that create or may lead to a hostile or offensive school environment.
4. Establishing programs and practices designed to create a school environment free from harassment and bullying.

For further information regarding ACCEL's commitment to provide an atmosphere free of harassment and bullying, please contact the Chief operations Officer.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS AND PERSONAL INFORMATION (FERPA)

ACCEL regards the protection of the confidentiality of its students as one of its greatest responsibilities. ACCEL will do all in its power to protect such confidentiality including, when necessary, to seek legal counsel. Such legal counsel may assist ACCEL in clarifying and writing policies with respect to laws and state and federal regulations which govern the confidentiality of records.

ACCEL has established written policies regarding the collection, storage, retrieval, use and transfer of student educational information collected and maintained pertinent to the education of all students to ensure the confidentiality of the information and to guarantee parents' and students' rights to privacy. These policies and procedures are incompliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and implementing regulations, at 34 C.F.R. Part 99.

ACCEL policies and procedures are also in compliance with Arizona Revised Statutes as appropriate.

Student education records are compiled to help in the instruction, guidance and educational progress of the student, provide information to parents and staff, provide a basis for the evaluation and improvement of school programs, and for legitimate educational research. The student records maintained by the school may include, but are not limited to, identifying data; transcripts of academic work completed, standardized achievement test scores, attendance data, reports or psychological testing, health data, teacher or counselor observations and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.

These records are maintained in the central office of each ACCEL facility and are available only to the teachers and professional staff working with the student. Special Education records including evaluations, testing data, individualized education plans and health records including basic identifying data, general medical history, vision and hearing tests, medical reports and student accidents reports will be disposed of five years after the student exits an ACCEL program. At each individualized education plan meeting, participants will have the opportunity to review and request a copy (ies) of information contained in the student's individual ACCEL file. The student's district of residence will maintain a complete and duplicate file.

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review any and all records related to their student. Parents wishing to review their student's records should contact the program director for an appointment. School personnel will be available to explain the contents of the records.

If a parent/guardian believes information in the record file is inaccurate or misleading, they have the right to request that a correction be made and to add their own comments. If at any time an agreement between the principal and parent cannot be reached, parents/guardians may contact the school district.

Copies of the district student education record confidentiality policies and procedures may be reviewed at the district office. Federal law also permits a parent to file a complaint with the Office

of Family Education Rights and Privacy in Washington, D.C.; if you feel the school is violating public school records policies and statutes.

ACCEL also maintains confidentiality policies and procedures regarding information of a personal nature that is not governed by records policies and procedures. This includes student/parent names, addresses and telephone numbers.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within 45 days of a request made to the school administrator. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records with copies. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request in writing that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:
  - School officials with legitimate education interest
    - A school official is a person employed or contracted by the school to serve as an administrator, supervisor, teacher, or support staff member (including health staff, law enforcement personnel, attorney, auditor or other similar roles); a person serving on the school board; or a parent or student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks;
    - A legitimate educational interest means the review of records is necessary to fulfill a professional responsibility for the school.
  - Other schools to which a student is seeking to enroll.
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.

- Accrediting organizations.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies, and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors or awards, sports participation (including height and weight of athletes) and dates of attendance unless notified by the parents or eligible student that the school is not to disclose the information without consent.

ACCEL follows Arizona law which requires school personnel who suspect that a child has received non-accidental injury or has been neglected to report their concerns to CPS or local law enforcement (ARS §13-3620.A).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that protects the rights of students with disabilities. In addition to standard school records, for children with disabilities, education records could include evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, Individualized Education Programs and related notices and consents, progress reports, materials related to disciplinary actions and mediation agreements. Such information is gathered from a number of sources, including the student's parents and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parental permission, information may be gathered from additional pertinent sources, such a doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected assures the child is identified, evaluated and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws.

Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must assure that at all stages of gathering, storing, retaining and disclosing education records to third parties complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a child with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

For additional information or to file a complaint, you may call the federal government at (202) 260-3887 (voice) or 1-800-877-8339 (TDD) OR the Arizona Department of Education (ADE/ESS) at (602) 542-4013. Or you may contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S, Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C.	Arizona Department of Education Exceptional Student Services 1535 W. Jefferson, BIN 24 Phoenix, AZ 85007

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This notice is available in English and Spanish on the ADE website at www.ade.az.gov/ess/resources under "forms". For assistance in obtaining this notice in other languages, contact the ADE/ESS at the above phone/address.

PARENT AND STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

ACCEL believes that many problems or grievances that may arise can be addressed through open communication. Parents/students desiring aid in the resolution of a problem are encouraged to first contact the teacher, therapist, nurse or other person at ACCEL most directly involved.

If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved at the direct service level, parents/students are encouraged to contact the Principal at ACCEL for further assistance. Upon formal notification of a complaint or issue, the Principal will investigate the complaint and the individual bringing the complaint will receive a resolution within 10 days of receipt of the complaint to the Principal. The ACCEL Principal will notify the individual/agency registering the complaint/issue and per mutual agreement of involved parties and determine method of notification by email, letter, phone call and/or meeting. If the problem requires further resolution, parents/students are encouraged to contact the Executive Director of Education Programs at ACCEL. If the problem continues to require further resolution, the Chief Executive Officer of ACCEL and/or the parent/student may contact the Special Education Director of the school district for assistance.

EXIT CRITERIA PROCEDURES

1. Exit Criteria for a student is developed at the IEP meeting. The IEP team defines criteria the student must meet to be considered for a less restrictive placement.

2. Exit Criteria is based upon the need of the student and addresses the following:
    - Progress toward goals/objectives
    - Related service needs
    - Specialized curricula needs
    - Intensity of specialized staffing needs
    - Unique needs such as a need for a protected environment.

3. In selecting the least restrictive environment, there is discussion of the continuum of alternative placement options available to meet the individual needs of the student from the least to the most restrictive setting.

4. The student's right to an appropriate educational placement/program including the location and type of program necessary for the student to make progress in the least restrictive setting is ensured through the IEP team's Exit Criteria discussions.

5. Progress toward Exit Criteria is reported to parents and school districts on a quarterly basis through the student's progress reports.

When a student leaves ACCEL, ACCEL will forward the student's records to the receiving school. With written permission, ACCEL will forward records to non-school programs.

ACCEL STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students will be required to come to ACCEL in the following attire.

Shorts, pants, or skirts must be worn at all times*. They should fit properly (not too loose or tight) and may not be worn below the waist and may come up no higher than 4 inches above the knee. Underwear may not be exposed.

Shirts must be worn at all times*. Long or short sleeve shirts are acceptable. Shirts must cover torso and midriff. Shirts should fit properly (not too loose or tight). Tank tops are not suitable student attire.

Shoes must be worn at all times* while at school. Sandals, sneakers, and flats are allowed. Heels above 2 inches are prohibited at school.

No more than 1 pair of earrings, 2 necklaces, 2 bracelets, and 2 rings may be worn while at school*.

All clothing should have appropriate messages and logos. No alcohol or tobacco slogans or brands should be on any item of clothing. No curse words or inappropriate messages should be on any article of clothing. Deeming a message inappropriate will be the responsibility of the student's teacher.

If student is not in appropriate attire:

- Staff will be required to change the student into something that follows the dress code. If students' own clothes are available, those will be used, if not, school clothes will be used.
- A dress code incident will go home in the communication log reminding parents/guardians of the dress code as well as a reminder to send the school clothes back with the student. Parents/guardians must sign this and send back the next day.
- After the fifth infraction during the school year, a student will be sent home if dress code is violated.

*These rules do not apply to time student spends going to/from and while in aquatics. No jewelry may be worn while in aquatics.

*Satellite programs may have additional dress code policies specific to those district programs. Please refer to the district handbook for more specifics.

Personal Property, Electronic Devices, and Water Bottles

Students are discouraged from bringing personal property or items of significant value to school. ACCEL is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal items brought to campus.

To help maintain a safe, calm, and supportive learning environment, certain personal items may be restricted during the school day.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices that are not required for educational purposes are not permitted in classrooms unless specifically authorized as part of a student's individualized behavior, communication, or incentive program. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Tablets or iPads
- iPods or music-playing devices
- Handheld gaming systems
- Smart watches or similar devices used for entertainment or communication

If a student brings an electronic device to school, staff may ask the student to store the item in their backpack or another designated location during instructional time.

If the device becomes a distraction, interferes with learning, disrupts the educational environment, or impacts student regulation or safety, staff may temporarily secure the item in a designated area or office. The item will typically be returned to the student at dismissal unless otherwise determined by administration.

Water Bottles

Students are encouraged to bring water to school each day using approved reusable water bottles. To support campus safety and maintain organized classroom environments, metal water bottles are not permitted in classrooms or student common areas.

Students should instead use plastic or silicone reusable water bottles. If a student brings a metal water bottle to school, staff may ask the student to store the item in a designated location for the remainder of the school day or transfer the contents to an approved container, if available.

Administrative Discretion

School administration reserves the right to restrict, store, or temporarily confiscate any item that creates a disruption, presents a safety concern, interferes with educational opportunities, or is inconsistent with school expectations. Exceptions or accommodations may be made on a case-by-case basis in consideration of individual student needs.

Families who have questions regarding approved items or who need assistance obtaining appropriate alternatives are encouraged to contact the school office.

SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT POLICY

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors by promptly addressing verbal or physical threats and the presence of weapons within the school.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and parents within the school community.

Procedure

1. **Notification of Potential Threat**
    - When administration is made aware of a potential threat by a student to harm themselves or others, the administrators will commence a threat assessment. This assessment will be conducted in partnership with the referring district (when appropriate) and the student's parents.
2. **Threat Assessment Process**
    - The threat assessment will be conducted using the ACCEL threat assessment form or a district-provided document if required by the partnering school district.
    - The assessment will include interviews with the student, staff, and parents to gather comprehensive information about the threat.
3. **Outcomes of Threat Assessment**
    - The threat assessment will guide the next steps, which may include but are not limited to:
        - **Supported Conversation with Family**: Engaging in a supportive dialogue with the family to understand the underlying issues and guide them to appropriate resources.
        - **Suspension**: Temporary suspension of the student if the threat is deemed serious and immediate.
        - **Temporary Removal of Personal Items**: Confiscation of personal items such as backpacks if they pose a potential risk.
        - **Use of Metal Detector**: Implementing the use of a metal detector at drop-off time to ensure no weapons are brought into the school.
4. **Partnership and Communication**
    - The school will maintain clear communication with the referring district and the student's parents throughout the threat assessment process.
    - Confidentiality will be upheld to protect the privacy of the student and their family.
5. **Support and Resources**
    - The school will provide support to the student and their family, including access to counseling and other relevant resources to address the issues underlying the threat.

Responsibilities

- **Administrators**: Responsible for initiating and conducting the threat assessment, ensuring all procedures are followed, and communicating with the referring district and parents.
- **Staff**: Responsible for reporting any potential threats to the administration promptly and participating in the threat assessment process as needed.
- **Parents**: Expected to cooperate with the school's threat assessment process and provide necessary information to help address the situation effectively.

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with district requirements and legal standards.

ACCEL Truancy and Compulsory Attendance Policy

Regular Attendance
Regular school attendance is essential to student success and is required by Arizona law. ACCEL is committed to partnering with families to support consistent attendance and to address barriers that may interfere with a student's ability to attend school.
Definitions
• Truant: A student with an unexcused absence for at least one class period during the school day.

• Truant Child: A child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) who is not in attendance during school hours and does not have a valid excuse.

• Habitually Truant: A student who accumulates five (5) or more unexcused absence days during a school year.

• Excessive Absences: Absences that exceed ten percent (10%) of the required school attendance days, whether excused or unexcused.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities
Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Parents should notify the school as soon as possible when a student will be absent and provide appropriate documentation when requested.
Excused Absences
Absences may be excused for illness or medical appointments, family emergencies, religious observances, court appearances, bereavement, and other circumstances approved by school administration. Documentation may be required for extended or frequent absences.

Unexcused Absences
An absence will be considered unexcused when no reason is provided, the reason does not meet school criteria for an excused absence, or required documentation is not submitted within the designated timeframe.

Attendance Interventions
ACCEL will make reasonable efforts to support students and families through parent notification, attendance conferences, review of attendance barriers, attendance improvement plans, and coordination with service providers or community agencies as appropriate.

Truancy Process
1. Three (3) Unexcused Absences: Parent/guardian notification and review of attendance expectations.

2. Five (5) Unexcused Absences (Habitual Truancy Threshold): Written notification, attendance conference, and possible attendance intervention plan.

3. Continued Unexcused Absences: Additional interventions, consultation with the student's resident district, and referrals as permitted by Arizona law.

Students with Disabilities
Attendance concerns involving students with disabilities will be addressed in consideration of the student's IEP, medical needs, behavioral support plans, transportation needs, and other disability-related factors.
Legal Compliance

Arizona law requires school attendance for children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16). Habitual truancy and excessive absenteeism may result in referrals to appropriate agencies or legal authorities as permitted under state law. ACCEL will make reasonable efforts to work collaboratively with families before pursuing such actions.

Policy on the Use of Two-Way Communication or Listening Devices

This policy aims to ensure the privacy, safety, and security of all students, staff, and visitors within the school environment. It establishes guidelines for the prohibition of two-way recording or listening devices within school premises in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The use of two-way recording or listening devices, such as "Angel Sense," is strictly prohibited within the classroom and school premises due to potential violations of privacy rights of other students. Exceptions to this policy may be made for educational purposes, safety, or security reasons. Such exceptions must be approved in writing by the school principal or an authorized representative.

HIPAA and FERPA protect the privacy of students' educational and health information. The use of two-way recording devices can inadvertently capture sensitive information about other students, which is a violation of these privacy rights.

Procedures

1. **Discovery of Device**: If a two-way recording device is discovered on a student:

    - The administration will immediately communicate with the family regarding the policy and the need to remove the device or disable the two-way recording feature.
2. **Non-Compliance**:
    - If the family refuses to comply, the student may be suspended until an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting can be held to determine appropriate next steps.
3. **IEP Team Meeting**:
    - The IEP team will convene to discuss the situation and develop a plan that respects the privacy rights of all students while addressing the needs of the student in question.

All students, parents, and guardians are expected to comply with this policy. The school administration is responsible for enforcing this policy and ensuring the privacy rights of all students are maintained.

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be amended as necessary to ensure compliance with federal and state laws, as well as to address any emerging issues related to the use of technology in the classroom.