

## *About This Employee Handbook*

*The purpose of this employee handbook is to provide easy to follow information about the policies and procedures of eSchool Consultants (eSchool), Focus Learning Academies (FLA) and Focus North High School (FNHS).*

*This handbook does not create an express or implied contract. The information set forth is merely a guideline and does not change the at-will employment relationship between eSchool Consultants or Focus and its employees, which means that either party may terminate the employment relationship, with or without cause, and with or without notice at any time.*

## **PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

***The first consideration of a school staff member is the welfare of the students. Staff members guide students in their growth toward maturity, preparing them to be socially, emotionally and educationally competent in the school, home and community. Staff members recognize the concern of the parent for the child's development and seek to share this responsibility and to cooperate with the home for the best interest of each student.***

- 1. All staff members deal kindly and justly with every student as an individual without prejudice or partiality.*
- 2. All staff members respect the confidence of the student. Information given in confidence should be passed on only to authorized persons or agencies that are attempting to aid the student.*
- 3. All staff members respect the basic responsibility of parents for their children, seek to establish friendly and cooperative relationships with the home, and are discreet with information received from parents. There is an expectation of understanding and tolerance for circumstances which may prevent or impede parental involvement and there is a willingness to assist the parent with those circumstances.*
- 4. All staff members do not use school/classroom privileges and prestige to promote personal gain, selfish interest, partisan politics or sectarian religious views.*
- 5. All staff members strive to help students develop sound moral, emotional and intellectual foundations.*
- 6. All staff members strengthen the democratic activities of the school. We show our students that American citizenship involves responsibilities as well as privileges.*
- 7. Any action that disrupts the educational mission of the school is subject to review and can result in discipline, up to and including termination.*

## **STANDARD EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**

*eSchool Consultants and Focus are equal opportunity employers. Our company is its employees, and is made stronger by the diversity of the staff. For that reason, eSchool and Focus encourage people from all races and backgrounds to apply for positions for which they are qualified.*

*eSchool Consultants and Focus hire employees based on their experience, skill and qualifications for the job. Prospective employees will receive consideration without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, handicap or other legally protected status.*

### *At Will Employment*

*Employment with eSchool Consultants and Focus is at-will. This means that either the management company, the school or the employee may terminate the relationship with or without cause and with or without notice at any time. Only the Executive Director or CEO has the authority to modify these terms and conditions and may do so only in writing. Any implied statement or contract by any other company representative shall be considered invalid.*

### *Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Overview*

*eSchool Consultants and Focus are committed to a work environment free of inappropriate and disrespectful conduct and prohibit harassment or discrimination against a person because of that person's race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, handicap, disability or other legally protected status. Consequently, and in an effort to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, this policy is to be followed.*

*Harassment in the workplace by an officer, employee or non-employee will not be tolerated. It does not matter whether the victim is male or female. All harassment and discrimination is against company policy and is a violation of the law.*

### *Personnel Records*

*The Human Resources Director is responsible for maintaining the personnel files of all job applicants, whether hired, rejected, terminated, retired, or any other status. These records will be maintained in a locked file cabinet for the privacy of all employees and applicants. It is very important to notify the Human Resources Director if any of your personal information changes. In addition, you will be asked to complete a form listing medical information, emergency contacts, physicians, etc. Please make sure this form is updated as needed.*

*Personnel files containing medical information shall be kept separately from all other personnel files and shall also be maintained in a locked file cabinet.*

*If you know that someone will be calling to verify employment for a loan, or for any other possible information requests, tell your Director as soon as possible so the call can be handled properly. You may be required to complete a "Release of Information" form.*

### *Telephone Use*

*While it is recognized that some personal telephone calls may be necessary during business hours, we strongly feel that they should be kept to an absolute minimum. To the extent possible, all personal calls should be made during lunch or during other authorized breaks. Cell phone usage in the workplace is prohibited, unless it is a call that is necessary and, as with other telephone calls, should be made during lunch or other authorized breaks if possible. Emergency calls can be handled at any time but routine calls should be made during a break.*

### *Postage, Shipping and Other Office Supplies*

*Employees may not use office postage, office supplies or shipping for personal use.*

### *Payroll Mistakes*

*Although eSchool Consultants guards against payroll mistakes and hopes that none occur, in the event there is a payroll mistake which results in an employee being underpaid, eSchool will correct that error, upon it being brought to the attention of HR, in the next regularly scheduled payroll. If, on the other hand, an employee is overpaid or a required deduction has not been*

made, you hereby consent to eSchool correcting that error by future payroll deductions. Staff is reminded to check all paystubs for errors.

### **Confidential Information**

*Employees will frequently have access to information about students, their families, employees, the school, the company or other sensitive information. This information is highly confidential. Great care should be taken before discussing confidential information with people who may seem to have a right to the information (such as a parent). Check the appropriate records and/or make phone calls to confirm the person's right to the information. If there is any doubt about the validity of the request, absolutely no information should be divulged. Breaching this confidentiality could result in serious personal, ethical or legal issues. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including employment termination.*

### **Professionalism**

*Our employees are one of our best sources of promoting the school and its mission. Even when things at work are not going well, professionalism must be maintained. Employees are expected to project a positive attitude about the school and its mission to the public at all times.*

*Negativity in the workplace can be contagious and lead to serious morale problems for the entire staff. Everyone has bad days, but when this becomes a normal occurrence, it is imperative to identify the problem before it becomes a major issue. Talk to your Director, Executive Director, or H.R. if there is a problem.*

*No one enjoys working in an atmosphere of conflict. Employees are expected to avoid conversation and behavior that is intended to create stressful situations in the workplace. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, gossip, lying about others, engaging in petty disputes, etc. These behaviors are counterproductive, and will not be tolerated. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in disciplinary action up to and including employment termination.*

*The students we serve can be difficult to deal with at times, even rude or belligerent. eSchool Consultants and Focus employees are expected to maintain professional composure regardless of the behavior of the family member. If a person becomes verbally abusive or offensive, do not react in anger, as this may intensify the situation, and will not solve anything. Once again, maintaining professionalism at all times is the rule.*

### **Media Contact**

*Employees will sometimes be contacted by the media for information or comments regarding our students. You may not provide any information about our school or students to the media. All media contacts must be referred to the CEO, Executive Director, Media Arts Manager or School Director. This requirement is an attempt to protect all staff and students from any negativity that may result from the media's attempt to translate information into a newsworthy event. If any staff member intentionally or unintentionally engages with the media, that event should be reported to the Executive Director.*

### **Work Attire**

*Employees must present a professional appearance to our students and the public at all times. For that reason, we observe the following dress code:*

- 1. Employees should always be clean, well groomed and neat in appearance.*

2. *Employee clothing should be “business casual,” and appropriate for a professional work environment. This includes, but is not limited to, khakis, slacks, skirts, dresses, sweaters, collared shirts and blouses. Women should refrain from wearing excessively short skirts or revealing blouses. Shorts, flip-flops, halter-tops, tank or muscle shirts, t-shirts, cut offs, and clothing that displays profane or controversial content and other questionable attire are prohibited.*
3. *Blue denim jeans and t-shirts are not appropriate office apparel, with two exceptions:*
  - *Jeans and t-shirts are sometimes permitted on specifically designated days only, with Director approval.*
  - *If you are involved in work that might be dirty or damaging to your business clothes, jeans and t- shirts may be permissible. Ask your Director if the situation warrants such attire.*

*Colored jeans in good condition are permitted.*

### **Smoking**

*Focus is a smoke-free environment. Absolutely no smoking is permitted in any office space that is occupied by the company.*

### **Weapons in the Workplace**

*No employee shall have in their possession a weapon at any time when performing any job related duties, whether on or off Focus premises. This includes but is not limited to duties related to recruitment, enrollment, orientation, withdrawal of students and technical support. This also includes any Focus employee social functions, such as parties or picnics. Again, these policies apply even if the employee has a permit to carry a weapon.*

*Exceptions to this policy are limited exclusively to police officers or other law enforcement officials, security guards or other persons who have written permission to be armed while on the property.*

*To request an exception to this policy, the staff member should send an email to the Executive Director explaining why the exception should be considered.*

### **Visitors**

*As part of our normal business practices, many parents, students and other visitors enter our premises on a regular basis. When hosting these visitors, hospitality should always be a top priority. However, the security of our students, employees, visitors and the premises is the primary concern.*

*All visitors to the school should be greeted by an employee in a timely manner. No unauthorized or unknown person should be permitted to gain access to any office or other area of the school. If you are unsure of their authorization, contact your Director before allowing them to enter.*

*All visitors will be required to wear a Visitor ID- clearly visible to all.*

*Employees should always keep their eyes and ears open for potentially unsafe or suspicious situations involving visitors. These may include angry, out of control parents, unsupervised children or people lurking about the premises with no apparent reason to be here. These situations should be reported to your Director immediately.*

### **Personal Property**

*Valuable personal property should not be brought into the workplace unless absolutely necessary, and then should never be left unattended or behind. Unless otherwise noted, Focus assumes no liability or responsibility for your personal property, including damage, theft or other loss.*

### **Dangerous Situations**

*Security issues may arise, such as fire, gas leaks, water leaks, etc. If you observe any of these potentially dangerous situations on the premises, report it to your Director immediately and follow the Emergency Operation Plan for your school. Call 911 if appropriate.*

*You should also never disable, disarm, obstruct or tamper with any doors or fire exits, locks, alarms or other security devices (smoke alarms, fire alarms, security lights, fire extinguishers or sprinklers, or other similar equipment.).*

### **Threats and Violence**

*Violence in the workplace can happen without warning. For that reason, Focus prohibits violence or threats of any kind, including verbal or written abuse, stalking, harassment, horseplay, physical attacks, fist fights and unwelcome physical contact (sexual or otherwise).*

*If you are aware of threats against employees or students, or know of a potentially violent situation (involving employees, parents, students or any other person), tell someone of authority immediately. If the situation is an emergency involving injury or potential injury, call 911 immediately.*

### **Outside Employment**

*Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they do not interfere with attendance, punctuality, and performance at Focus and as long as the nature of the second job would not reflect poorly on the school. Working for a competitor of Focus while still employed with the school is strictly prohibited. If you are uncertain as to whether your job would conflict with your Focus job, talk with your Director immediately.*

*The Employee shall notify the Director and Executive Director of any outside employment. Employee must notify the Director in writing two weeks prior to the commencement of such outside employment. The Director will then make an initial determination as to the appropriateness of the outside employment. The Employee shall provide a written proposal to the Director detailing the type of outside employment that he or she will be taking. The Director will then recommend and seek approval from the Executive Director on behalf of the employee. Outside employment may not interfere with the expectations/job requirements of the position held at Focus. Focus may at any time require the Employee to cease or not to begin any such outside employment.*

### **Nepotism**

*We like to think of Focus employees as a family. As such, employment of close relatives of Focus employees will be considered, unless such employment could lead to conflicts of interest, influence, favor, or undue consideration.*

## **Criminal Convictions**

**Any contact with law enforcement should be immediately reported to the immediate supervisor. Criminal convictions of any kind, misdemeanor or felony, must all be discussed with the Executive Director to determine if that conviction precludes employment/continued employment with Focus.**

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

### **Employee Classifications**

There are three classifications of employees at Focus.

1. *Regular Full-Time* – These employees are expected to work an average of at least 32-40 hours per week throughout the year on an ongoing basis. Generally, they are eligible to apply for company benefits, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.
2. *Part-Time* – These employees work on the average less than 24 hours per week, throughout the year on an ongoing basis. They are not eligible for company benefits.
3. *Seasonal or Temporary* – These employees are hired to fill seasonal or temporary needs, and are generally expected to work less than 12 months. They are not eligible for company benefits.

**Independent Contractors/Freelance Consultants** – eSchool may pay professionals for various, non-payroll jobs. These people are independent contractors, and are not employees, and are not entitled to any of the benefits provided to employees.

### **Pay Periods**

eSchool Consultants and Focus employees are paid every two weeks, or twenty-six (26) times per year. Generally, pay periods run from Monday through the Sunday that occurs fourteen (14) days later. See the Human Resources Director for more detailed information regarding pay periods.

### **Pay Rate**

Your pay rate and type of payment will be discussed with you when you are initially hired. Generally, you will be paid either an hourly rate or a salary. Your pay rate is your private business between you and eSchool Consultants. In many cases, your pay rate is not comparable to other employees pay rate and if an employee chooses to discuss this information, any negative situations which might arise from that conversation are not to be a source of workplace negativity.

A direct deposit option is mandatory for employees. See your Director for details.

### **Overtime**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”) classifies employees in two ways regarding overtime.

1. *Exempt* – This means that the employee is exempt from the overtime laws, and is not eligible for overtime pay.

2. *Non-exempt* – This means that the employee is covered by overtime laws, and must be paid overtime at the rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate if more than forty (40) hours are worked in a week, regardless of the total number of hours worked in the two-week pay period.

### **Promotions and Transfers**

Positions often become available within Focus as a result of job creation, transfers to other positions, and terminations. All employees are encouraged to apply for positions for which they feel they are qualified. To do so, contact the Director to express your interest in the position. If it is determined that you are the best candidate for the open position, any changes in salary, benefits or other status will be discussed with you. These changes are at the sole discretion of the Director with approval from the Executive Director.

### **Worker's Compensation**

Safety must always be the primary objective of all Focus employees. Unsafe working conditions should be reported to your Director immediately so appropriate action can be taken. If an accident occurs and an employee is injured, Workers' Compensation insurance is state mandated and regulated to compensate for work related injuries and illnesses. Focus complies with state law by providing this insurance to all employees. In the event of a workplace injury, the injured employee should seek medical care as soon as possible. A drug test may also be administered when any injury occurs. An "Incident Report" should be completed as soon as possible by the injured party and all witnesses to the accident.

### **SERS / STRS**

Those regular fulltime and regular reduced time employees whose position supplants that of a school district will be members of the Ohio School Employees Retirement System (SERS). Contributions to SERS will be deducted from your paycheck automatically, and will replace the deductions for Social Security. All certified teaching staff will be members of the State Teacher's Retirement System (STRS).

### **Absence Protocol**

**Staff attendance is crucial to the success of our students.** However, it is understood there are times when one will be absent. If you are going to be absent from work, you are to contact your building Director by phone no later than 7:00 am and email the HR Director as soon as possible. ([ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com](mailto:ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com)) All Administrative Team members contact the Executive Director and email HR.

**Jury Duty** – Employees are not paid during the time that they are absent for jury duty; and documentation for verification of the obligation must be submitted to submit the leave request.

**Bereavement Leave** – Employees are entitled to three days of bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member including: mother, father, spouse, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother. No specific entry into Paychex is required as this process is handled at the school level. Inform the Director about the needs in this area for leave requests and to request assistance if needed.

**Military Duty** – Focus complies with all laws concerning military duty and return from military duty.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

1. Work your hours – Our school is made strong by teamwork. Everyone has a job to do and we depend on each other to get our jobs done. For this reason, employees are expected to work the hours agreed upon by them and their Director. Arriving late and/or leaving early on a frequent basis is not acceptable, and may result in disciplinary action. Chronic violations will result in termination.
2. Keep us informed – With the exception of approved time off (see “Time Off” section), employees should be at work each day they are scheduled to work. **In the event of an unexpected illness or other emergency, or if you expect to arrive at work late, call the school as soon as possible.** Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or termination. More than three (3) days of absences due to illness or taking a day before or after a holiday will require a doctor’s statement. Chronic violations will result in termination.
3. Be at work – Employees are expected to exercise good attendance practices. Excessive absences may result in discipline or employment termination. Any employee who fails to call in for an absence will be deemed as “no call no show” and will be considered for termination.

## **Time Off**

Leave requests are available at HR Online. A leave request should be submitted via email to the HR Director at [ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com](mailto:ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com) and to your Director at least two weeks prior to planned vacation time. Requests for time off for appointments or other events should be made at the earliest opportunity. If you are out due to illness or another emergency, a leave request should be submitted immediately upon your return to work. If you have more than three (3) days absent due to illness, a doctor’s statement is required. Failure to comply with this policy may result in discipline up to and including employment termination.

Please refer to the “HR Online-Employee Self-Service at [eservices.paychex.com](http://eservices.paychex.com)” packet for detailed instructions on how to request time off.

## **Family and Medical Leave**

Under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Focus provides full time employees with up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave a year, for one or more of the following reasons:

- For the birth or care for the newborn child; adoption or care for a newly placed child; Leave must conclude within 12 months after the birth or placement.
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent – but not a parent in-law) with a serious health condition; and
- When the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

“Serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

- Any period of incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or



- *A period of incapacity requiring absence of more than three calendar days from work, school, or other regular daily activities that also involves continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a health care provider; or*
- *Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care; or*
- *Any period of incapacity (or treatment therefore) due to a chronic serious health condition (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.); or*
- *A period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective (e.g., Alzheimer's, stroke, terminal diseases, etc.); or,*
- *Any absences to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery there from) by, or on referral by, a healthcare provider for a condition that likely would result in incapacity of more than three consecutive days if left untreated (e.g., chemotherapy, physical therapy, dialysis, etc.).*

***Military Family Leave*** - effective January 16, 2009, an employee who is a “spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin” may take up to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a “member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.” Said employee is also permitted to take FMLA leave for “any qualifying exigency (as the Secretary [of Labor] shall, by regulation, determine) arising out of the fact that the spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation. This provision shall be effective when the Secretary of Labor issues final regulations defining “any qualifying exigency.”

***Medical Certification*** - A request for leave due to a serious health condition is required of the employee or the employee's immediate family member, supported by a certification issued by a healthcare provider. Focus will allow the employee 15 calendar days to obtain the medical certification. Focus may, at its own expense, require the employee to obtain a second medical certification from a healthcare provider of Focus's choice.

Spouses also employed by Focus may be limited to a combined total of 12 work weeks of family leave.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, a Focus employee must:

1. *Have worked for Focus for at least 12 months; and*
2. *Have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of the FMLA leave.*

***Intermittent/Reduced Schedule Leave*** - The FMLA permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances.

*Intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be taken when medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member, or because of the employee's serious health condition.*

*Only the amount of leave actually taken while on intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be charged as FMLA leave. Focus will not require an employee to take more FMLA leave than necessary to address the circumstances that cause the need for leave.*

*Employees needing intermittent/reduced schedule leave for foreseeable medical treatment must work with their Director to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt operations, subject to the approval of the employee's healthcare provider. Employees may be temporarily transferred to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits that accommodate recurring periods of leave better than the employee's regular job.*

**Substitution of PTO** - Focus requires employees to use paid PTO to cover some or all of the FMLA leave taken.

**Maintenance of Health Benefits** - Focus will maintain group health insurance coverage, including family coverage, for an employee on FMLA leave on the same terms as if the employee continued to work.

*Where appropriate, arrangements will need to be made for employees taking unpaid FMLA leave to pay their share of health insurance premiums. Focus's obligation also stops if the employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late and the employer has given the employee written notice at least 15 days in advance advising that coverage will cease if payment is not received.*

*Focus's obligation to maintain health benefits under FMLA stops if and when an employee informs us of an intent not to return to work at the end of the leave period, or if the employee fails to return to work when the FMLA leave entitlement is exhausted. In some circumstances, eSchool/FLA/FNHS/ may recover premiums it paid to maintain health insurance coverage for an employee who fails to return to work from FMLA leave.*

**Job Restoration** - Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be restored to their original job, or to an "equivalent" job, which means virtually identical to the original job in terms of pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

*Under limited circumstances where restoration to employment will cause "substantial and grievous economic injury" to its operations, an employer may refuse to reinstate certain highly paid salaried "key" employees. Focus must notify the employee in writing of his/her status as a "key" employee (as defined by FMLA), the reasons for denying job restoration, and provide the employee a reasonable opportunity to return to work after so notifying the employee.*

**Notice** - Employees seeking to use FMLA leave are required to provide:

- 30-day advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable;
- Notice "as soon as practicable" when the need to take FMLA leave is not foreseeable (at least verbal notice to the employer within one or two business days of learning of the need to take FMLA leave);
- Sufficient information for Focus to determine the employee's eligibility for FMLA-qualifying reasons; and
- Where Focus was not made aware of FMLA reasons and the employee wants the leave counted as FMLA leave, timely notice (generally within two business days of returning to work) that leave was taken for an FMLA-qualifying reason.

*Focus will comply with the Family Medical Leave Act and all amendments to the same.*

### **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)**

*The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) is a federal law that, starting June 27, 2023, requires covered employers to provide “reasonable accommodations” to a qualified worker’s known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an “undue hardship.” An undue hardship is defined as causing significant difficulty or expense”.*

*SOME POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WORKERS ARE: Being able to sit or drink water, Receiving closer parking, Having flexible hours, Receiving appropriately sized uniforms and safety apparel, Receiving additional break time to use the bathroom, eat, and rest, Taking leave or time off to recover from childbirth, Being excused from strenuous activities and/or exposure to chemicals not safe for pregnancy.*

*Other laws that apply to workers affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, include: Title VII which prohibits employment discrimination based on sex, pregnancy, or other protected categories (enforced by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)) The ADA which prohibits employment discrimination based on disability (enforced by the EEOC) The Family and Medical Leave Act which provides unpaid leave for certain workers for pregnancy and to bond with a new child (enforced by the U.S Department of Labor) The PUMP Act which provides nursing mothers a time and private place to pump at work (enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor) Learn more at [www.EEOC.gov/Pregnancy-Discrimination](http://www.EEOC.gov/Pregnancy-Discrimination).*

### **Emergency Closings and Severe Weather**

*If unforeseen events cause Focus to close, employees will be notified by their Director as quickly as possible. The school cancellations will also appear on Channel 10TV.*

### **Termination of Employment**

*Upon ending employment with Focus, employees become ineligible for any further accrual of benefits. All keys, equipment or other company property must be surrendered to your Director unless other arrangements have been made with the Executive Director. No employee shall receive payment for carry-over leave.*

### **Disposition of Employee Upon School Closing**

*If for any reason the Charter of the School is terminated by ODE or the Sponsor (Ex. Charter revoked, enrollment declines to unmanageable level, Board of Directors ends contract etc.) the employee will be given as much advanced notice of the pending closure as possible. Forced closure will be considered as a cause to enforce the negating of the At-Will Contract and will be enforced as such. All pay escrow amounts will be provided to the employee upon the termination of the contract and employees in good standing will be provided with a letter of reference for future employment use.*

### **POLICIES OF FOCUS**

*All policies of Focus have been approved by the schools’ Board of Directors.*

*To obtain a copy of the policies in their entirety, please visit the website: [focuslearn.org](http://focuslearn.org) or please make a request to the School Director.*

## **Complaint Procedure**

### **Our aim:**

**Focus is committed to providing a quality service for all employees and makes every attempt to work in a transparent and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of employees, students and all stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints and by putting mistakes right when possible.**

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- 1) *Making a complaint is as easy as possible.*
- 2) *Any complaint can be made without fear of reprisal.*
- 3) *We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response.*
- 4) *We deal with a complaint promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially.*
- 5) *We learn from the complaint, use it improve our service and review our procedure regularly.*

### **Informal Complaints:**

*We recognize that many complaints/concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly. An informal approach is appropriate when the complainant feels satisfied that the issue has been addressed. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaint procedure should be followed.*

### **Formal Complaints:**

**Definition:** *A complaint is defined as ‘any expression of dissatisfaction with Focus, with a staff member of Focus, with the management company (eSchool Consultants) or with a member of the Board of Directors.’ That dissatisfaction must relate to Focus and requires a formal response.*

**Purpose:** *The formal complaint procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and wherever possible, resolved to the complainant’s satisfaction.*

### **The responsibility of Focus:**

- 1) *Accept all complaints and acknowledge each in writing.*
- 2) *Response and acknowledgement of complaint should be submitted within 5 business days.*
- 3) *Forward information related to the complaint to appropriate Administrative Team Member.*
- 4) *Share the complaint with those who need to know.*
- 5) *Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint.*
- 6) *Take action where appropriate.*

### **The responsibility of the complainant:**

- 1) *Raise concerns promptly and directly with the offending Focus Staff Member according to the Social Contract established at the school and with Administration.*
- 2) *If the staff member is unable to accomplish #1, proceed to #3.*

- 3) *Bring their complaint, in writing, to the attention of an Administrative Team Member normally within 2 weeks of the issue arising.*

*Those staff members who may be approached in order of procedural preference:*

*-Director of school*

*- North-310-0430*

*-West- 545-2000*

*- East-269-0150*

*-Title IX Co-Coordinator*

*-Executive Director-269-0150 X2103  
310-3710*

*-Additional Administration*

*Director of Academic Development- Ms. Natalie Murphy-269-0150*

*Human Resources Director -Ms. Ann Corbin-322-7996*

*CEO eSchool Consultants- Mr. Donnie Musick-322-7996*

*Board of Directors*

- 4) *Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date.*
- 5) *Allow Focus Administration time to deal with the matter so that an adequate investigation can be accomplished.*
- 6) *Recognize that some circumstances may be beyond the control of Focus.*

**Note: An anonymous complaint will be reviewed and potentially investigated but cannot be given the same validity as a signed complaint.**

**Confidentiality:** *Except in unusual circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and the receiver of that complaint maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality, with each complaint being judged on its own merit. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.*

**Monitoring and Reporting:** *A report will be included at Board Meetings if complaints have been received. The complainant will remain anonymous.*

### **Formal complaint procedure:**

#### **Stage One:**

*In the first instance, if an employee is unable to resolve the issue informally, the staff member should put the concern in writing and send to the staff member or Director so that the staff member or Director has the opportunity to address the issue. In the formal writing, there should be detail regarding the incident or individual involved, the consequences for the employee as a result and the remedy being sought.*

*A response should be expected within 2 weeks.*

#### **Stage Two:**

*If the response in stage one is not satisfactory, the complaint should be sent to the next highest level on the aforementioned list of staff members who may receive complaints. The original response should be included with the reason why it is not satisfactory.*

*The aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible, however, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require more time to be fully investigated. An interim response explaining the need for additional time for investigation may be received.*

*A final response shall be received within 5 days.*

*Final Stage:*

*If the employee is still not satisfied with the response from stage two, the matter will be sent to the Board of Directors as soon as practically possible. The President of the Board of Directors, or his or her designee, will be provided with all previous investigation material and responses. The President or his/her designee will respond within 10 days.*

***Note: Prohibition of Harassment: No person shall be subjected to discharge, suspension, discipline, harassment, or any form of discrimination for having used or having helped others use this complaint process.***

### ***Progressive Discipline***

*Progressive discipline is a process for dealing with job-related behavior that does not meet expected and communicated performance standards. The primary purpose for progressive discipline is to **assist the employee** in understanding that a performance problem or opportunity for improvement exists. The process features increasingly formal efforts to provide feedback to the employee so he or she can correct the problem. The goal of progressive discipline is to improve employee performance. The process of progressive discipline is not intended as a punishment for an employee, but to assist the employee to overcome performance problems and satisfy job expectations. Progressive discipline is an intervention to assist an individual in becoming an effectively performing member of the organization.*

*If attempts to assist the employee fail to produce effective results, progressive discipline enables the organization to fairly, and with substantial documentation, terminate the employment of employees who are ineffective and unwilling or unable to perform requirements of the job.*

*Focus will take the following steps in the progressive discipline process for staff members:*

- 1) First occurrence- Informal meeting to address performance issue and develop strategies for expected professional growth*
- 2) Second occurrence -Oral reprimand with intervention meeting including additional strategies for professional growth*
- 3) Third occurrence -Written reprimand with intervention strategies reinforced*
- 4) Fourth occurrence –Termination*

*It should be noted that the Executive Director reserves the right to expedite the progressive discipline process should the offense be of extreme gravity and/or be excessive in nature. Jeopardizing the safety or wellbeing of a student will always justify such action.*

**From contract: Employment.** eSchool agrees to employ Employee and Employee agrees to be employed by eSchool as \_\_\_\_\_. Employee agrees to devote his/her full time and best efforts to his/her duties. In addition, Employee agrees to abide by all policies and procedures of eSchool and fulfill any such duties that may be assigned. Employee's employment is contingent upon Employee meeting all requirements for employment in his/her position.

**Employment at Will/Termination of Contract.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Agreement, Employee is employed "at will." eSchool may terminate this Agreement and dismiss Employee from his/her employment at any time with or without cause, and Employee may resign from his/her employment at any time with or without cause.

**Intervention/Discipline Form**

Staff Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

School Location:       East               North                       Southwest  
Purpose of Meeting:    Intervention    Discipline  
Occurrence:             1<sup>st</sup>               2<sup>nd</sup>               3<sup>rd</sup>  
Reprimand:             Yes                       No              If Yes, was it:    Oral    Written

**AREA OF CONCERN:**

- Academic Dishonesty
- Disrespect
- Failure to Protect the Privacy of Students/Staff
- Violation of Acceptable Use Policy
- Misuse/Destruction of Academy Property
- Sexual Misconduct
- Insubordination
- No Call / No Show
- Excessive Absenteeism
- Failure to Perform Work Assignment
- Horseplay
- Failure to Promote the Mission of the Focus
- Wrongful Conduct

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Other

**DETAILS OF OCCURRENCE:**

Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Policies/Procedures for Immediate Review**

**A. ETHICS POLICY**

**Policy Statement**

**It is policy of Focus to carry out its mission in accordance with the strictest ethical guidelines and to ensure that Focus members and employees conduct themselves in a manner that fosters public confidence in the integrity of Focus, its processes, and its accomplishments.**

**General Standards of Ethical Conduct**

**All Focus officials and employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio's ethics laws, as found in Chapters 102. and 2921. of the Ohio Revised Code, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. (A copy of these laws is provided by Focus, and receipt acknowledged, as required in R.C. 102.09(D).) Officials and employees must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety.**

**A general summary of the restraints upon the conduct of all officials and employees includes, but is not limited to, those listed below.**

**No official or employee shall:**

**Solicit or accept anything of value from anyone doing business with Focus**

**Solicit or accept employment from anyone doing business with Focus, unless the official or employee completely withdraws from Focus activity regarding the party offering employment, and Focus approves the withdrawal;**

**Use his or her public position to obtain benefits for the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship;**

**Be paid or accept any form of compensation for personal services rendered on a matter before any board, commission, or other body of Focus, unless the official or employee qualifies for the exception, and files the statement, described in R.C. 102.04(D);**

**Hold or benefit from a contract with, authorized by, or approved by, Focus, (the Ethics Law does except some limited stockholdings, and some contracts objectively shown as the lowest cost services, where all criteria under R.C. 2921.42 are met);**

**Vote, authorize, recommend, or in any other way use his or her position to secure approval of a Focus contract (including employment or personal services) in which the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship, has an interest;**

**Solicit or accept honoraria (see R.C. 102.01(H) and 102.03(H)) ;**

**During public service, and for one year after leaving public service, represent any person, in any fashion, before any public agency, with respect to a matter in which the official or employee personally participated while serving with Focus**

**Use or disclose confidential information protected by law, unless appropriately authorized; or Ohio Ethics Commission**



**Use, or authorize the use of, his or her title, the name "Focus," or "the FOCUS acronym," or Focus 's logo in a manner that suggests impropriety, favoritism, or bias by Focus or the official or employee;**

**For purposes of this policy:**

**"Anything of value" includes anything of monetary value, including, but not limited to, money, gifts, food or beverages, social event tickets and expenses, travel expenses, golf outings, consulting fees, compensation, or employment. "Value" means worth greater than de minimis or nominal.**

**"Anyone doing business with Focus " includes, but is not limited to, any person, corporation, or other party that is doing or seeking to do business with, regulated by, or has interests before Focus .**

#### **Financial Disclosure**

**Every Focus official or employee required to file a financial disclosure statement must file a complete and accurate statement with the Ethics Commission by April 15 of each year. An official or employee elected, appointed, or employed to a filing position after February 15 must file a statement within ninety days of appointment or employment.**

#### **Ethics Education**

**Providing ethics education and information is an inherent part of good ethics governance. The Ethics Commission is available to provide educational seminars and informational materials. The Commission can be contacted at (614) 466-7090.**

#### **Assistance**

**The Ethics Commission is available to provide advice and assistance regarding the application of the Ethics Law and related statutes. The Commission can be contacted at (614) 466-7090. The Commission's web site address is: [www.ethics.ohio.gov](http://www.ethics.ohio.gov). Focus counsel is available to answer questions involving this policy.**

#### **Penalties**

**Failure of any Focus official or employee to abide by this Ethics policy, or to comply with the Ethics Law and related statutes, will result in discipline, which may include dismissal, as well as any potential civil or criminal sanctions under the law.**

#### **Changes**

**This policy may be changed only by stipulated official or majority vote of the legislative authority of Focus.**

## **B. Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy**

### **I. Introduction**

**The State Board of Education believes that Ohio schools should provide physically safe and emotionally secure environments for all students and school personnel. It is the goal of the State Board of Education, through the Ohio School Climate Guidelines and this policy, to enhance/create such positive learning and teaching environments.**

***The State Board defines a positive climate as one that evokes non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding and acceptance toward all students and staff in, and in transit to and from, the school environment.***

***The State Board of Education encourages local school districts to establish policies and strategies to emphasize and recognize positive behaviors that promote a safe and secure learning environment for all students and school personnel. Local school policies should assist school personnel in identifying bullying, intimidation and harassment; and provide a framework for an appropriate response that reinforces and encourages positive conduct.***

## **II. State Department of Education Anti-bullying Policy**

***It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden.***

***For purposes of this policy, "School-Sponsored Activity" shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.***

***To implement this policy, the Board of Education directs the Executive Director to develop and adopt regulations to address the existence of bullying in the schools.***

***Such regulations shall:***

- ***Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators***
- ***Enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports (provided by school) of suspected bullying***
- ***Require teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying to notify school administrators***
- ***Require school administrators to investigate any written reports filed and to review any anonymous reports***
- ***Include an intervention strategy for all school personnel to deal with bullying***
- ***Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying***
- ***Require school administrators to notify both the parents of a student who commits any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed, and***
- ***Require each school within the district to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection.***

***Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district's commitment to addressing bullying behavior, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion***

**of a school atmosphere in which bullying will not be tolerated by students, faculty or school personnel.**

**It is imperative that bullying be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met, because the designation of conduct as bullying carries with it special statutory obligations. Any misconduct by one student against another student, whether or not appropriately defined as bullying, however, will result in appropriate disciplinary consequences of the perpetrator.**

### **III. Definition of Terms**

***Bullying: In accordance with the Board policy, “bullying” means any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Bullying means any written, verbal or physical act taking place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:***

- ***Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student’s property***
- ***Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property***
- ***Insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school’s educational mission or the education of any student.***
- ***(A) As used in this section:***
- ***(1) “Electronic act” means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.***
- ***(2) “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means either of the following:***
- ***(a) Any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both:***
- ***(i) Causes mental or physical harm to the other student;***
- ***(ii) Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.***
- ***(b) Violence within a dating relationship.***

***In accordance with this definition, the following factors should be considered before identifying conduct by a student or group of students as bullying in violation of Board policy. The determination that conduct does not constitute bullying under Board policy, however, does not restrict the right of the Administration and of the Board of Education to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct.***

**Location. Bullying behavior in violation of Board policy must occur on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity (which by Board policy includes transportation services). Conduct that occurs off-campus (e.g. physical intimidation in the community) is not bullying under this Policy and Regulation.**

**While not considered bullying under Board policy, conduct that would otherwise be considered bullying occurring off-campus (and outside of any school-sponsored activity) should trigger disciplinary action if such conduct markedly interrupts or interferes with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.**

**Ridicule, humiliation, and/or intimidation. Bullying behavior is more than misconduct. Such behavior is marked by the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the victim. In evaluating whether conduct constitutes bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred, of the perpetrator.**

#### **IV. Types of Conduct**

**Bullying can take many forms and can include many different behaviors having overt intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student. Examples of conduct that could constitute bullying include:**

- **Physical violence and/or attacks**
- **Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including taunts based on ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected and/or individual characteristics.**
- **Threats and intimidation (through words and/or gestures)**
- **Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions.**
- **Exclusion from the peer group.**

#### **V. Complaint Processes**

##### **A. Publication of the Prohibition against Bullying and Related Procedures**

**The prohibition against bullying shall be publicized by including the following statement in the student handbook of each of the district schools:**

**Bullying behavior by any student/staff member in Focus is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" shall mean any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Bullying means any written, verbal or physical act taking place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:**

- **Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property**

- *Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property*
- *Insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.*

*Students and parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school personnel and administrators. Any report of suspected bullying behavior would be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process.*

#### **B. Formal Complaints**

*Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including person(s) involved, time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Director for review and action in accordance with Section VI.*

#### **C. Informal Complaints**

*Students may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to a teacher or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including person(s) involved, time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witness. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school staff member and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Director for review and action in accordance with Section VI.*

#### **D. Anonymous Complaints**

*Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent, such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying.*

### **VI. School Personnel Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies**

#### **A. Teachers and Other School Staff**

*Teachers and other school staff, who witness acts of bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the Building Director and/or his/her designee of the event observed, and shall promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed. Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying shall promptly notify the Building Director and/or his/her designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Building Director or his/her designee. If the report is an*

***informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he or she shall prepare a succinct written report of the informal complaint, which shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Building Director or his/her designee.***

***In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel members are encouraged to address the issue of bullying in other interaction with students. School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."***

#### **B. Administrator Responsibilities**

##### **Investigation**

***The Director (or other responsible program administrator) shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected bullying received by any building administrator or school personnel. Under the direction of the Building Director or his/her designee, all such complaints shall be investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying were verified, and, when acts of bullying are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.***

***Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.***

##### **Remedial Actions**

***Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the Building Director or his/her designee that is intended to assure that the prohibition against bullying behavior is enforced, with the goal that any such bullying behavior will end as a result.***

***Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying" as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in and out-of-school suspension; or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Building Director. The following sets forth possible interventions for building Directors to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying.***

##### **Non-disciplinary Interventions**

***When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as***

**to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying.**

**If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.**

### **Disciplinary Interventions**

**When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.**

**An out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.**

**Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Executive Director in accordance with Board policy. This consequence shall be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.**

### **C. General Intervention Strategies**

**In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other district actions may ameliorate any potential problem with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators and school personnel:**

- **Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or school personnel;**
- **Planned professional development programs addressing bully/targeted individuals' problems;**
- **Data collection to document bully/victim problems to determine the nature and scope of the problem;**
- **Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;**
- **Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g. males need to be strong and tough);**
- **Awareness and involvement on the part of all school personnel and parents with regards to bully-victim problems;**

- **An attitude that promotes communication, friendship, assertiveness skills, and character education;**
- **Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;**
- **Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others (Ohio School Climate Guidelines);**
- **Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.**

## **VII. Reporting Obligations**

### **A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

**If after investigation, acts of bullying by a specific student are verified, the Building Director or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator in writing of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification.**

### **B. Reports to the Victim and His/Her Parent or Guardian**

**If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the Building Director or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such bullying.**

### **C. List of Verified Acts of Bullying**

**The Director of each school shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school, and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The list shall be limited to the number of such verified acts of bullying in the school, and it shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.**

**This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions or debate that is protected by state or federal law such as the Nondiscrimination, Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process, Violent and Aggressive Behavior, Hazing, Discipline/Punishment, Sexual Harassment, Peer Sexual Harassment, and Equal Educational Opportunity Acts.**

## **VIII. Reprisal / False Accusations**

**The Focus Board of Directors prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Executive Director after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act.**

**The Focus Board of Directors prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.**



**Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures and agreements as determined by the Executive Director.**

**Legal References: Ohio General Statutes Concerning Bullying Behavior in Schools.**

## **Title IX**

### **Title IX Coordinator/Section 504 Coordinator**

**The School intends to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which states, in part: "No persons in the United States shall on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, handicap or other legally protected status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving financial assistance...." The school also intends to comply with Section 504 of the American Disabilities Act in protecting the rights of students with disabilities.**

**The Executive Director or appropriately qualified/trained designee(s), shall be the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator/Section 504 Coordinator and is responsible for investigating any complaint alleging noncompliance with Title IX or Section 504.**

**A specific procedure for grievances related to Title IX issues is set forth as the "Title IX Grievance Procedure" below.**

### **Title IX Grievance Procedure**

#### **I. Filing of Grievances**

- A. **Eligibility for Filing:** Any student or employee, or any individual or group acting in behalf of a student or employee (male or female) may file any grievance of sex discrimination or sexual harassment with the Title IX coordinator. Any student or employee, or any individual or group acting in behalf of a handicapped student or handicapped employee may file any grievance of discrimination on the basis of a physical or mental handicap with the Section 504 coordinator.
- B. **Pre-grievance Contact:** Prior to the submission of a written grievance to a hearing officer, the grievant(s) may request pre-grievance contact with the respondent alleged to be directly responsible for the violation, and/or with the persons having immediate supervisory authority related to the grievance. These persons may make reasonable efforts to meet with the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator to discuss the grievance that the student(s) or employee(s) wishes to bring to their attention. Such a pre-grievance contact, however, shall be at the option of the grievant(s); it shall not be a precondition for the submission of a written grievance to a hearing officer.
- C. **Grievance filing:** Grievances filed with the Title IX or the Section 504 coordinator shall be in writing on a form provided by the coordinator, and shall provide the following information: name and address of grievant(s); nature of alleged violation; name of persons responsible for the alleged violation (where known); requested relief or corrective action (specification of desired relief shall be at the option of the grievant), and any background information the grievant believes to be relevant (e.g., names or groups of other persons affected by the violation, etc).

- D. **Grievance forms:** A grievance form (see next page) shall be prepared by the grievant and the Title IX or the Section 504 coordinator who will facilitate the filing of the grievance. These forms may be obtained from the Title IX coordinator or from the Section 504 coordinator. The grievant shall have the right to request assistance from the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator or any other individual, group, or organization to assist in the preparation of the form or in the filing of the grievance.
- E. **Time Limit for Grievance filing:** A grievance must be filed within 60 days of the occurrence of the alleged Title IX violation or the alleged Section 504 violation.

## **II. Definitions**

- A. **Grievance:** a complaint alleging any policy, procedure, or practice which would be prohibited by Title IX or by Section 504.
- B. **Title IX:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the 1975 implementing regulation, and any memoranda, directive, guidelines, or subsequent legislation that may be issued or enacted.
- C. **Section 504:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and any memoranda, directive, guidelines or subsequent legislation that may be issued or enacted.
- D. **Grievant:** a student or employee of Focus who submits a grievance relevant to Title IX or to Section 504, or an individual or group submitting a grievance in behalf of a student(s) or employee(s).
- E. **Focus/Focus North High School:** any reference to any school, department, subunit or program operated by Focus or Focus North High School.
- F. **Title IX Coordinator:** the employee(s) designated to coordinate FLA/FNHS efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the Title IX regulation.
- G. **Section 504 Coordinator:** the employee(s) designated to coordinate FLA/FNHS efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the Section 504 regulations.
- H. **Respondent:** a person alleged to be responsible or who may be responsible for the Section 504 or the Title IX violation alleged in a grievance. The term may be used to designate persons with direct responsibility for a particular action or those persons with supervisory responsibility for procedures and policies in those areas covered in the grievance.
- I. **Hearing Officer:** the representative(s) of Focus or of its governing body who is delegated authority for hearing/resolving a grievance at a specified level of grievance processing.
- J. **Grievance Answer:** the written statement of the respondent regarding the grievance allegation and possible corrective action.
- K. **Grievance Decision:** the written statement of a hearing officer of his/her findings regarding the validity of the alleged grievance and the corrective action to be taken.
- L. **Day:** a working day. The calculation of days specified in this grievance procedure exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Any time limits set by this procedure may be extended, however, by mutual consent of the grievant(s) and the respondent(s).

- M. **Corrective Action:** *the action which is taken by Focus to eliminate or modify any policy, procedure, or practice found to be in violation of Title IX or Section 504, or to provide redress to any grievant injured by the identified violation.*

### **III. Initial Processing of Grievances**

- A. *Notification of Respondents: Within five days of the filing of a grievance, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall submit a copy of the completed grievance form to the respondent(s), if requested by the grievant. The respondent(s) shall provide a written grievance answer and return the grievance form to the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator within five days after receipt of the grievance.*
- B. *Respondent's Grievance Answer: The respondent(s) receiving a copy of a grievance form shall, within five days, submit a written grievance answer to the grievant via the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator. Such answer shall confirm or deny each fact alleged in the grievance, indicate the extent to which the grievance has merit, or indicate acceptance or rejection of any desired redress specified by the grievant, or outline an alternative proposal for redress.*
- C. *Referral of Grievance and Grievance Answer to Appropriate Processing Level: Within five days after receipt of the respondent's written grievance answer, the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator shall determine the appropriate level for first grievance processing and submit a copy of the grievance form and the respondent's grievance answer to the appropriate hearing officer. If no grievance answer has been received from the respondent(s) by the fifth day after notification, the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator shall, on the sixth day, immediately submit a copy of the grievance form to the appropriate hearing officer along with a notice of non-response from the respondent.*

*The criteria which shall be used by the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator in determining the appropriate level for first processing of a grievance include:*

*Level I: Grievance involving policy, procedure or practice of single unit or subunit of agency/institution.*

*Level II: Grievance involving administrative policy, procedure, or practice of entire agency/institution.*

*Level III: Grievance involving policy for which a governing board is primarily responsible.*

*The hearing officer selected by the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator at each level shall be:*

*Level I: Examples are: Director, Academic Adviser, Student Advocate, chairperson of a department, or supervisor of non-instructional staff.*

*Level II: Examples are: Executive Director, CEO eSchool Consultants, HR Director*

*Level III: Governing board of agency/institution or representative of the governing board.*

*If the grievance is referred directly to Level II or to Level III for first processing, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall briefly write the reason(s) for this decision on the form.*

### **IV. Grievance Processing Levels**

A. Level I:

1. Written grievance decision by Level I hearing officer - when a grievance and, if possible, a grievance answer or non-response are referred to Level I for first processing, the Level I hearing officer shall, within five days of referral, submit a written grievance decision to the grievant, and if applicable, the respondent, via the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator. The decision shall: 1.) confirm or deny each fact alleged in the grievance and in the respondent's answer; 2.) indicate the extent to which the grievance has merit; and 3.) indicate acceptance or rejection of any redress specified by the grievant or respondent.
2. Acceptance or rejection of hearing decision by the grievant - if the grievant rejects the Level I hearing decision, she/he shall, within ten days of the receipt of the hearing decision, notify the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator of his/her intent to appeal the grievance to Level II. This notification shall be in writing. If no such notification is received by the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator within this time period, any corrective action specified in the Level I hearing decision shall be taken, and the grievance will be recorded as closed.
3. No written decision by Level I hearing officer - in the event that no written decision is issued by the Level I hearing officer within five days of referral, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall, on the sixth day, immediately arrange a date for a Level II hearing, and submit the grievance along with a notice of non-response from the Level I hearing officer to the Level II hearing officer.

B. Level II:

1. Scheduling of a Level II hearing: notification of participants - within five days of the grievant's request to appeal the grievance to Level II, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall arrange a date for a Level II hearing. The coordinator shall notify the grievant, the respondent if applicable, and the Level II hearing officer of the time, place, and minimum duration of the hearing. The hearing shall be held within five days after appeal/referral of the grievance to Level II. If any written materials or records relevant to the grievance are transmitted to the Level II hearing officer by the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator at the time of notification, copies of these materials shall also be transmitted to the grievant and, if applicable, the respondent.
2. Persons present at the Level II hearing - persons at the information hearing shall include the grievant, the respondent, any representative(s) of either the grievant or the respondent, any individual requested by either party to provide information relevant to the evaluation of the grievance, and the Level II hearing officer. The Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall be present to act as moderator and recorder. Hearings shall not be open to other persons unless requested or approved by the grievant.
3. Procedures governing the conduct of the Level II hearing
  - a. Duration: no hearing shall be less than three hours long, unless all parties consent to a shorter hearing. The time established for the duration of the hearing shall be allocated in equal parts to the grievant and the respondent. The Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall moderate the usage of time.
  - b. Grievance witnesses: both the grievant and the respondent shall have the right to present such witnesses as they deem necessary to develop the facts pertinent to the grievance.

- c. *Questioning of witnesses: formal rules of evidence shall not be applied to the Level II grievance hearing. The grievant and respondent shall have the right to use their allocated time to ask questions of any person participating in the hearing.*
- 4. *Level II hearing decision - within five days after the Level II hearing, the Level II hearing officer shall issue a written decision which includes a statement regarding the validity of the grievance allegation, and a specification of any corrective action to be taken. This decision shall specify the reasons on which the decision is based. Copies of the decision shall be sent to the grievant and the respondent via the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator.*
- 5. *Acceptance or rejection of hearing decision by the grievant - if the grievant rejects the Level II hearing decision, she/he shall, within ten days of the receipt of the hearing decision, notify the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator of her/his intent to appeal the grievance to Level III. This notification shall be in writing. If no such notification is received within this time period, any corrective action specified in the Level II hearing decision shall be taken, and the grievance will be recorded as closed.*
- 6. *No written decision by Level II hearing officer - in the event that no written decision is issued by the Level II hearing officer within five days after the Level II hearing, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall, on the sixth day, immediately submit a copy of the grievance form for processing at Level III, along with a formal notification for a Level III hearing, to the governing board of Focus or its designated representative(s). The grievance form shall also include a notice of non-response from the Level II hearing officer.*

C. *Level III:*

- 1. *Grievance hearing conducted by the governing board or the board's designated representative(s). Processing activities shall occur on the following schedule:*
  - a. *Scheduling of the hearing: within five days of the grievant's request to appeal the grievance to Level III, the Section 504 or Title IX coordinator shall submit to the governing board or its designated representative(s) a copy of the grievance and a formal notification requesting a date for the Level III hearing. The coordinator shall notify the grievant, the respondent, and the Level III hearing officer(s) of the time, place, and minimum duration of the hearing to occur within fifteen days after notifying the Level III hearing officer of the grievance. If any written materials or records relevant to the grievance are transmitted to the Level III hearing officer(s) by the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator prior to the hearing, copies of these materials shall also be transmitted to the grievant, and if applicable, to the respondent.*
  - b. *Conducting the hearing: the hearing shall be scheduled for and conducted on a date not to exceed fifteen days after the appeal/referral of the grievance to Level III. It should be conducted similar to procedures governing the conduct of the Level II hearing.*
- 2. *Level III hearing decision: the governing board or the board's designated representative(s) of Focus shall issue a written decision which includes a statement regarding the validity of the alleged grievance and a specification of any corrective action to be taken. This decision shall constitute the final decision issued pursuant to any grievance.*

*All Level III hearing decisions shall be based on a majority vote by the governing board or its designated representative(s). Any board member in disagreement with*

*the majority or its designated representative(s) shall have the option to prepare a dissenting opinion for inclusion within the final decision.*

*A copy of the decision shall be sent to the grievant and the respondent, if applicable, via the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator. The Executive Director or chief executive officer of the institution/agency shall also receive a copy of the decision.*

3. *Rejection of hearing decision by the grievant* - *if the grievant rejects the Level III hearing decision, she/he may notify a state or federal agency having civil rights enforcement power. This agency is the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100*

## **V. General Provisions**

- A. *Grievant's Right to Information*: *A grievant(s) may request access to information and records of the agency/institution which relate to the validity of the grievance. If such requested information requires an unreasonable cost by the agency/institution, such request may be refused provided that the information is not submitted as evidence by the respondent(s), and that this refusal is considered during the grievance hearing. In order to protect the privacy of persons not directly involved in the grievance proceeding, the agency/institution shall reserve the right to expunge names and any identifying information not directly relevant to the substance of the grievance from any information or records supplied to the grievant.*
- B. *Grievant's Right to Representation and Assistance*:
  1. *Right to representation – The grievant has the right to be represented by knowledgeable persons, organizations, or groups of her/his selection at any point during the initiation, filing, or processing of the grievance. The Section 504 or Title IX coordinator shall provide help in identifying such knowledgeable persons or groups.*
  2. *Right to assistance – The institution/agency shall provide assistance to grievants, including access to copies of the Title IX and Section 504 regulation, related guidelines, memoranda, and other relevant materials supplied the institution by the federal government as well as access to public grievance records. In addition, the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator shall provide consultation and assistance in the interpretation of such information and the use of this grievance procedure.*
- C. *Training of Grievance Hearing Officers*: *All persons designated as Level I, II and III grievance hearing officers may request training regarding Title IX or Section 504 regulatory requirements and non-discrimination precedents, and the basic principles and operation of this grievance procedure. This training shall be arranged by the Title IX or Section 504 coordinator. The Title IX or Section 504 coordinator may also provide continuing consultation to hearing officers regarding the civil rights requirements and the implementation of this procedure.*
- D. *Confidentiality of Grievance Handling*: *Grievant(s) shall also have the right to determine whether or not their grievance record shall be open or closed to the public. Should grievant decide that the grievance record shall be open to the public, they shall have the additional right to have any matter which directly or indirectly identifies the grievant removed from all grievance records or documents*

open to the public. No record of grievance shall be entered in the personal file of any student or employee.

- E. Maintenance of Grievance Records: Records shall be kept of each grievance. These shall include, at minimum: the name of the grievant and her/his position in (name of institution/agency); the date of grievance filing; the specific allegation made in the grievance and any corrective action requested; the names of respondents; the levels of processing and the resolution, date, and hearing officer(s) at each level; a summary of major points, facts, and evidence presented by each party to the grievance; and a statement of the final resolution and the nature and date of any corrective action taken. Such records shall be maintained on a confidential basis unless otherwise specified by the grievant, and shall be filed for a minimum of three years.
- F. Prohibition of Harassment: No person shall be subjected to discharge, suspension, discipline, harassment, or any form of discrimination for having used or having helped others use this grievance process.
- G. Role of the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator(s): It is the primary responsibility of the Title IX and Section 504 coordinator(s) to ensure the effective installation, maintenance, processing, record keeping, and notification required by this grievance procedure.
- H. Financial Responsibility for Grievance Processing: All costs involved in the administration of this grievance procedure shall be assumed by the Focus.

### **C. Acceptable Use Policy:**

#### **Statement of Purpose**

Focus is pleased to offer our students' and staff access to the World Wide Web and other electronic networks. However, it is important to remember that access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities for all involved.

#### **Terms of Agreement**

In order for a student to be allowed access to a school computer system, computer network and the internet, parents must sign and return a consent form to Focus.

#### **Acceptable Uses**

The district is providing access to its school computer systems, computer networks and the internet for educational purposes only. If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational, you may consult with the person(s) designated by the school to help you decide. When in doubt, talk with your Director. Accordingly, regulations for participation by anyone on the internet shall include by not be limited to the following:

- All users must abide by rules of network etiquette (netiquette), including the following:
  - Be polite. Use appropriate language and graphics. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent or threatening language.
  - Avoid language and/or graphic representations which may be offensive to other users. Don't use network or internet access to make, distribute or redistribute

*jokes, stories or other material which is based on slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion or sexual orientation.*

- o *Do not assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when you know that the individual would have no objection.*
- o *No personal addresses, personal phone numbers or last names of students will be permitted to be given out on the internet. No identifiable photographs will be allowed to be published on the internet without appropriate written consent. Concerning a student, appropriate written consent means a signature by a parent or legal guardian of the student.*

**Privacy.** *Network and internet access is provided as a tool for your education. The district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time, and without prior notice, any and all usage of the computer network and internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the district and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.*

**Copyright.** *All students and faculty must adhere to the copyright laws of the United States (P.L. 94-553) and the Congressional Guidelines that delineate it regarding software, authorship and copying information.*

#### **Failure to Follow Acceptable Use Policy**

*Use of the computer network and internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this agreement shall, at a minimum, have his or her access to the network and internet terminated and is subject to disciplinary action by the school administrator. The district may also take other disciplinary actions.*

- *Unacceptable uses of the network may include:*
  - o *Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property.*
  - o *Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the internet. For example, do not disclose or share your password with others; do not impersonate another user.*
  - o *Illegal activities, including copyright or contract violations shall not be permitted on the internet.*
  - o *The internet shall not be used for commercial, political, illegal, financial or religious purposes. Violations shall be reported to a teacher or an administrator immediately.*
  - o *Threatening, profane, harassing or abusive language shall be forbidden.*
  - o *Use of the network for any illegal activities is prohibited. Illegal activities include:*
    - o *Tampering with computer hardware or software*
    - o *Unauthorized entry into computers and files (hacking)*
    - o *Knowledgeable vandalism or destruction of equipment*
    - o *Deletion of computer files*

*Such activity is considered a crime under state and federal law. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.*

- *No user is permitted to knowingly or inadvertently load or create a computer virus or load any software that destroys files and programs, confuses users or disrupts the*



- performance of the system. No third party software will be installed without the consent of the assigned administrator.
- *Invading the privacy of another user, using another's account, posting personal messages without the author's consent and sending or posting anonymous messages shall be forbidden.*
  - *Accessing pornographic or obscene materials, or using or sending profanity in messages shall be forbidden.*
  - *Any subscription to list serves, bulletin boards, or on-line services shall be approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to any such usage.*
  - *The use of anonymous proxies to get around content filtering is strictly prohibited and is a direct violation of this agreement.*

### **Internet Safety**

**Parents and Users.** *Despite every effort for supervision and filtering, all users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged students. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the network and internet and avoid these sites.*

**Personal Safety.** *In using the network and internet, users should not reveal personal information such as home address or telephone number. Users should never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone "met" on the Internet without a parent's permission.*

**Confidentiality of Student Information.** *Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the internet without the permission of a parent or guardian. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the internet.*

**Active Restriction Measures.** *The district will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors. The use of anonymous proxies to get around the content filter is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of this policy. The school will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means.*

### **Use of New Web Tools**

*Online communication is critical to our students' learning of 21st Century Skills and tools such as blogging and podcasting that offer an authentic, real-world vehicle for student expression. Again, as educators, our primary responsibility to students is their safety. Hence, expectations for classroom blog, student protected e-mail, podcast projects or other web interactive use must follow all established internet safety guidelines.*

#### **Blogging/Podcasting Terms and Conditions:**

- *The use of blogs, podcasts or other web 2.0 tools is considered an extension of your classroom. Therefore, any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of blogs, podcasts or other web 2.0 tools. This includes but is not limited to profanity; racist, sexist or discriminatory remarks.*
- *Students using blogs, podcasts or other web tools are expected to act safely by keeping ALL personal information out of their posts.*

- A student should NEVER post personal information on the web (including, but not limited to, last names, personal details including address or phone numbers or photographs). Do not, under any circumstances, agree to meet someone you have met over the internet.
- Any personal blog a student creates in class is directly linked to the class blog which is typically linked to the student profile, and therefore must follow these blogging guidelines. In addition to following the information above about not sharing too much personal information (in the profile or in any posts/comments made), students need to realize that anywhere they use that login it links back to the class blog. Therefore, anywhere that login is used (posting to a separate personal blog, commenting on someone else's blog, etc.), the account should be treated the same as a school blog and follow these guidelines. Comments made on blogs should be monitored and, if they are inappropriate, deleted.
- Never link to web sites from your blog or blog comment without reading the entire article to make sure it is appropriate for a school setting.
- Students using such tools agree to not share their user name or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents and treat blog spaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is also inappropriate for a blog.
- Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or be subject to consequences appropriate to misuse.

### **Teacher Responsibilities**

- Teachers will provide developmentally appropriate guidance to students as they make use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies related to the district curriculum.
- All students will be informed of their rights and responsibilities as users of the district network prior to gaining access to that network, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.
- Use of networked resources will be in support of educational goals.
- Treat student infractions of the Acceptable Use Policy according to the school discipline policy.
- Provide alternate activities for students who do not have permission to use the internet.

### **Director Responsibilities**

- Include Acceptable Use Policy in student handbook.
- Be sure handbooks are distributed to all students.
- Treat student infractions of the Acceptable Use Policy according to the school discipline policy.
- Permission forms must be kept on file for one year.
- Students who do not have permission to use the internet must be identified to the teaching staff.

### **District Responsibilities**

- Ensure that filtering software is in use to block access to materials that are inappropriate, offensive, obscene, or contain pornography.
- Have Acceptable Use Policy approved by the board and reviewed yearly.

### **D. Duty to Report Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

***Because of their sustained contact with school-age children, teachers, counselors, community coordinators and other School employees are in a unique position to identify abused or neglected children.***

***To comply with Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, any School teacher, School employee, service provider working on contract with the School, or governing authority member who knows or suspects that a student under eighteen years of age (or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired student under twenty-one (21) years of age) has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the student shall immediately report that knowledge or suspicion, by telephone or in person, to the Franklin County Children's Services Board, the Columbus City Police or, if the student is not a resident of Franklin County, to the public children's services agency or a municipal or county police officer of the county in which the student resides. S/He shall also notify the Director.***

***If the agency or officer receiving the report requests a written report, the Director shall provide a written report containing the following information:***

***The names and addresses of the Student and the Student's Parents or the person or persons having custody of the Student, if known;***

***The Student's age and current condition;***

***The nature and extent of the Student's known or suspected injuries, abuse, or neglect, or of the known or suspected threat of injury, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect; and***

***Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or suspected injury, abuse or neglect, or of the suspected threat of injury, abuse or neglect.***

***In addition, the Director may take color photographs of areas of trauma visible on the student and include them with the written report.***

***The identity of the reporting person shall be confidential, subject only to disclosure by consent or court order. Information concerning alleged child abuse of a student is confidential information and shall not be shared with any unauthorized person. A staff member who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and/or civil and/or criminal penalties.***

***The Director will be mindful of the possibility of physical or mental abuse being inflicted on a student by an employee. Any such instances, whether real or alleged, should be reported to the Executive Director who will investigate and take appropriate action in accordance with statute.***

***Anyone making a report under 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code is presumed to be acting in good faith and is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise result from making the report. A report made under this section is confidential as set forth in 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code. No person may disclose the contents of any report made under this section except as provided above.***

**Failure to make a report required by this section, or unauthorized disclosure of the contents of a report made under this section, may result in disciplinary action against the employee.**

**Educator Websites**

**Focus Website – [www.focuslearn.org](http://www.focuslearn.org)**

**Ohio Department of Education – <https://education.ohio.gov>**

**National Council of Teachers of Mathematics – [www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org)**

**National Council of Teachers of English – [www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org)**

**National Science Teacher Association – [www.nsta.org](http://www.nsta.org)**

**National Council for History Education – [www.nche.org](http://www.nche.org)**

**Training Website:**

**SafeSchools:** <http://focuslearn.oh.safeschools.com/login>

**User Name-email address**

**Mandatory Training:**

- 1) **Child Abuse Recognition Training** \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) **CPR** \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) **Bullying Recognition and Response** \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) **Dating Violence** \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) **Suicide Prevention** \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) **Blood Bourne Pathogens** \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) **Heimlich Maneuver** \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) **PBIS Restraint/Seclusion** \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) **AED** \_\_\_\_\_
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**Chapter 102: PUBLIC OFFICERS - ETHICS**

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**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Ethics Policy**

*I have been given a copy, read and understand the Focus Ethics Policy, and will abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio's ethics laws, as found in Chapters 102. and 2921. of the Ohio Revised Code, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. I agree to comply with the guidelines in the policy during my professional association with Focus.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name of Employee/Board Member*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Employee/Board Member*

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_



### **Acknowledgement of Attendance Protocol**

**Because of the nature of the work week; i.e. staff members only being required to normally work 4 days per week (32 hours) with exceptions noted on the school calendar, the following protocol will be required for all leave requests.**

**1) When requesting time off, all staff members will email Ann Corbin, Human Services Director, with all leave requests. The email will be sent to [ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com](mailto:ann.corbin@eschoolconsultants.com) and CC the school Director and their immediate supervisor.**

**-CTE staff include [cordia.bishop@focuslearn.org](mailto:cordia.bishop@focuslearn.org)**

**-EC staff include [carla.gilroy@focuslearn.org](mailto:carla.gilroy@focuslearn.org)**

**-North staff include [tiffany.kocher@focuslearn.org](mailto:tiffany.kocher@focuslearn.org)**

**-East staff include [lebanon.spann@focuslearn.org](mailto:lebanon.spann@focuslearn.org)**

**-West staff include [kerry.hill@focuslearn.org](mailto:kerry.hill@focuslearn.org)**

**-Administrative Team members include [kathy.williams@focuslearn.org](mailto:kathy.williams@focuslearn.org)**

**2) As much advanced notice as possible should be given for all leave requests.**

**3) No staff member will be permitted to take the day before a holiday or the day after a holiday unless there is prior authorization from the immediate supervisor and that authorization should be confirmed in the original email notification. Any sick leave requested should be verified with a doctor's excuse.**

**4) Discretion should be used when scheduling necessary appointments during work hours with preference given to the use of afternoon hours for those appointments.**

**5) If a staff member uses more time off than they have accumulated, the following pay check will reflect that loss of pay equal to the hours used.**

---

Printed Name of Employee

---

*Signature of Employee*

*Date*

***Acknowledgement of Receipt of Staff Handbook***

*I have been given a copy, read and understand the Focus Employee Handbook. I agree to comply with the guidelines in the handbook during my employment with Focus. I further recognize that my employment with Focus is "at will," which means that either I or Focus may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause.*

---

*Printed Name of Employee*

---

*Signature of Employee*

*Date*



# FOCUS ON SAFETY

TEACHERS, FACULTY, SUPPORT STAFF

HELP KEEP OUR SCHOOLS SAFE!



**SEE SOMETHING?**

**SAY SOMETHING!**

## PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR SCHOOLS SAFE

Report **any** possible threats to our school directors

**FOCUS NORTH** - Principal, Mrs. Kocher - (614) 310-0430  
**FOCUS EAST** - Principal, Mr. Paulauskas - (614) 269-0150  
**FOCUS WEST** - Principal, Mr. Hill - (614) 545-2000

*In case of a school crisis, you will receive a call through the school messenger service.*

**PLEASE UPDATE PHONE NUMBERS AT SCHOOL**

## FAMILY REUNIFICATION SITES

*Talk to your school directors*