



## STUDENT & PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

2024 - 2025

Revised 5/29/24

Designed for the Dyslexic Mind

### MISSION

The Mission of the Laurel School of Princeton is to **engage**, **educate**, and **empower** students with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, through researched-based, multisensory instruction designed to complement their unique abilities and challenges. Laurel School is dedicated to providing a nurturing environment, so students develop the confidence and knowledge to achieve their highest potential and future goals.

In fulfillment of its mission, the Laurel School has established the following goals:

- To empower students to overcome their learning differences and reach their academic potential.
- To empower the families of our students to become partners in an educational process characterized by highly professional remediation and a supportive and caring learning environment.

### HISTORY

The Laurel School was founded in 2012 under the leadership of Gordon Sherman, Ph.D. He was previously Director of the Dyslexia Research laboratory at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA, and Assistant Professor of Neurology (Neurosciences) at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Sherman is a former President of the International Dyslexia Association. He is the recipient of their Samuel T. Orton Award, which is presented annually to a person who has made a dramatic impact in the field of dyslexia. Dr. Sherman received his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychobiology from the University of Connecticut (Storrs, CT) in 1980 and has over 25 years of research experience related

to the development of the brain and the understanding of developmental dyslexia. A prolific writer, he is the author and editor of over 80 scientific articles, reviews, and books. For over 40 years, Dr. Sherman has lectured nationally and internationally to parents/guardians, teachers, and scientists about cerebrodiversity, learning differences, brain development, and the enlightened classroom. He oversaw the Newgrange Organization from 2001 through 20018.

The Newgrange School was founded in Princeton in 1977 with four teachers and six young dyslexic students. Over time, the school grew to serve students from ages 7 to 21 from public school districts throughout Central New Jersey. It ultimately moved to its present location at 800 North Road, Hopewell, NJ in 2018. As it grew and as the needs of the clients grew, the focus of The Newgrange School expanded from just dyslexia to multiple learning disabilities, including nonverbal learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.

The Laurel School of Princeton brings us back to our roots of serving children who have dyslexia. The Laurel School takes its name from the laurel wreath, an ancient symbol of achievement and challenges overcome. This name was selected to highlight its distinct mission, as separate from the more broadly focused Newgrange School.

The Ann Robinowitz Education Center, formerly the Newgrange Education Center, was founded in 1991 and is located together with the Newgrange and Laurel Schools on the campus of 800 North Road in Hopewell. The Center provides outreach services to the broader community concerned about dyslexia and other related learning issues, including tutoring, consulting, public speaking, advocacy, educational evaluations, and countless opportunities for professional development.

The Laurel School, The Newgrange School, and the Ann Robinowitz Education Center are all parts of The Newgrange School of Princeton, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered in the state of New Jersey.

### **SCHOOL STAFF**

Jim Sheeley - CEO and Head of Schools for The Newgrange and Laurel Schools

Sharon Anderson - Assistant Head of School for The Laurel School Lynn Smola -

Lynn Smola - Executive Assistant to the CEO

#### **Teaching Staff:**

Sharon Anderson - Assistant Head of School and Teacher

Nancy Hammill - Director of Education and Teacher

Rebecca Horner - Teacher

Esther Jovolos- Teacher

Lauren Finslayson- Teacher

Hope Krick-Smith Music & Theatre/NoticeAbility

Shawn Krick-Smith - Technology Teacher

Erica Brooks - Art Teacher

Sandy Boyles - Math Teacher

Logan Rogers- Health/Physical Education

Julia Brenna-Hall School Counselor

Clarisa Rivera- Nurse

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Main Phone: 609-566-6000

Assistant to CEO/Head of Schools: Lynn Smola, ext. 0210  
[ismola@thenewgrange.org](mailto:ismola@thenewgrange.org)

Executive Director/Head of Schools: Jim Sheeley, ext 0291  
[jsheeley@thenewgrange.org](mailto:jsheeley@thenewgrange.org)

Director of Admissions and Family Support: Amy Deutsch, ext 0282  
[adeutsch@thenewgrange.org](mailto:adeutsch@thenewgrange.org)

Assistant Head of School Sharon Anderson, ext 0272  
[sanderson@laurelschoolprinceton.org](mailto:sanderson@laurelschoolprinceton.org)

### **ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL**

Students learn best when they are prepared for their days in a calm and thoughtful routine. To ensure this, Laurel students need to be dropped off promptly at the Main Entrance of 800 North Road between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM. At this time, they will go directly to their homeroom classrooms.

If parents need to come into the building for a meeting or to speak with an administrator or nurse, they must park in a designated parking spot and enter through the Main Entrance.

Students will be dismissed at 3:15 PM. If parents are late, students will be dismissed to the After School Program (ASP) at 3:30 PM. If there are extenuating circumstances, please call and email Lynn Smola, Ext. 210 and [ismola@thenewgrange.org](mailto:ismola@thenewgrange.org) to let us know ahead of time.

### **Late Arrival**

Students arriving after 8:30 AM need to arrive at the Main Entrance to be signed in by a parent or guardian. Parents may not escort their child to the classroom.

### **Early Dismissal**

Any time parents/guardians will pick up their child from school early, they are to report to the Main Entrance Reception area. The Administrative Staff will arrange for children to be brought to the Reception Area, in preparation for an early dismissal. **Parents/guardians are asked NOT to pick up their child directly from any classroom.**

Please call and email Lynn Smola by 8:30 AM if children will be leaving early. Please note that parents/guardians are required to notify their **bus company/district transportation office of any changes in busing due to a pick-up or sick child.**

### **Laurel School Attendance Policy**

Laurel School prides itself on individualized and evidence-based programming for our students. Instructional groupings are intentional, small, and specialized, therefore requiring regular attendance for all students to take full advantage of instruction and to see progress. Student success and classroom routines suffer when students are not attending school regularly.

The following is a list of excused absences:

- Illness or hospitalization of the student as documented by a note from the parent or doctor. A written note from a parent or doctor is required for three or more consecutive days of absence during the school year and for any absence in the first or last week of school.
- Illness in the family prevents the physical preparation of the student. A note from a parent or other caretaker is required. This type of absence shall be limited to two scheduled school days per term.
- Death in the immediate family, a note from a parent or other caretaker is required.
- Religious observance.
- Unusually severe weather
- Stoppage of transportation. This may occur when heavy snows cause suspension of bus service for Laurel students while public school and Laurel remain open.
- School closing because of extraordinary circumstances.

Laurel School reserves the right to respond, formulate corrective plans, and evaluate appropriate placement as a result of a student's excessive absences within the academic year. This policy is in place to ensure that both students and parents understand the effects and importance of good attendance.

In the event, that the School needs to move to remote learning, students attending synchronous classes remotely are expected to attend all scheduled classes on time as if they were attending in person. Attendance will be recorded for each class and students will need to attend their classes as expected to be credited with a full day's attendance.

**Absence Procedures:**

Parents/Guardians should contact Lynn Smola: lsmola@thenewgrange.org call 609-566-6000, ext. 0210 by 8:30 am to let her know that a child will be absent, late, or picked up early. Lynn will ensure that all teachers are notified. If a child is showing signs of a contagious illness, please be sure to mention it when calling in so that our School Nurse, Mrs. Silverberg, can track the public health situation at both schools. *It is imperative that you notify Lynn Smola of all child absences, not only your child's teacher.* We need to be sure that information about student attendance is shared efficiently with every faculty member who needs to know the information. By contacting Lynn, you can be sure the information will be properly shared. Thank you for your help with this important detail.

For more information about the importance of good attendance, we encourage you to read the following articles:

[For Elementary Students](#)

[For Middle School Students](#)

**STUDENT SECURITY**

For the protection of all children, we may require identification prior to the release of your child. Please have such identification ready when you arrive at the Main Entrance. Dismissal of a student to anyone other than the parent/guardian requires prior **WRITTEN** permission from the parent/guardian. The person picking up your child will need to show proper identification or the child will not be released.

**Leaving School Grounds Without Permission**

Once students arrive at school, they are not permitted to leave without administrative or parental permission. Should this occur, there will be serious consequences, which may include suspension from school.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **Emergency Information**

Emergency information forms will be provided to each parent/guardian well before school begins. This should be completed prior to your child attending school. This information is extremely important in order to contact you in an emergency. Parents/Guardians should also include the name of a relative or friend who could be contacted in such an emergency if we are unable to reach you. We realize that, during the year such information may change. In that case, please notify Lynn Smola to ensure that our Administrative Staff has the most up-to-date information.

### **Child Custody**

Should there be custody restrictions for certain family members, The Laurel School requires that you notify our Administrative Staff of such changes. Necessary documentation to include in the student's file. If duplicate mailings are requested, please make certain that we have current addresses and phone numbers for each parent.

### **Reporting Abuse and Neglect**

All school staff are required by law to report suspicion of child abuse and neglect. If you suspect abuse or neglect, please call the NJ Division of Children & Families HOTLINE: 1-877-NJ ABUSE or 1-877-652-2873.

## **STUDENT HEALTH**

### **Nursing Services**

Our School Nurse is available on-site to provide screenings and other health services for us and to respond to medical emergencies. She/He/They can be contacted through the direct extension as listed in this handbook.

### **Required Health Documents**

The Laurel School requires a physical examination of all students. A report from your private physician regarding a recent examination will be accepted. [Click Here to download the Healthcare Forms.](#)

### **First Aid, Illness or Emergency**

Students requiring first aid or who become ill while at school will be cared for in the most

appropriate manner, including calling 911 if necessary. Every effort will be made to immediately contact parents/guardians.

### **Medical Concerns**

Parents/guardians are asked to notify our Nurse regarding any and all medical concerns that pertain to their child. She must be notified of any medical procedures that will take place or have taken place. If there are any restrictions that would impact the regular school day, please alert our Nurse about them.

### **Immunizations**

New Jersey State Law requires your child to have specific immunizations before being enrolled. Please contact your physician. Your child's vaccination record must be provided upon enrollment.

### **Authorization for the Administration of Medication**

Before any medication can be dispensed, a signed Medication Administration Form must be returned to the school.

### **NJ Kid Care Insurance Information**

For information about New Jersey Family Care, which is a federal and state-funded health insurance program created to help New Jersey's uninsured families, single adults, and couples without dependent children have affordable health coverage, please call the number below or visit [www.njfamilycare.org](http://www.njfamilycare.org).

NJ FamilyCare  
Affordable health coverage. Quality Care.  
1-800-701-0710  
Multi-lingual operators available  
TTY 1-800-701-0720

## **REPORTING PROGRESS**

### **Reporting Periods**

The Laurel School follows a trimester schedule. Teachers gather data about student progress in several ways, including standardized, non-standardized, and informal assessments. While report cards are sent home on a trimester basis, teachers collect data regularly and will be able to discuss student progress by appointment at any time of the school year. Reporting includes performance data and teacher observations about the students. Report cards are provided three times per year. Parent conferences are scheduled two times per year, in the Fall and Spring.

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences are scheduled to take place during early dismissal days in the Fall and Spring. We remind parents/guardians that students are not permitted in conferences; please make sure that childcare is in place. SHOULD YOU REQUIRE CHILD CARE DURING CONFERENCES, PLEASE LET US KNOW AHEAD OF TIME, SO THAT WE CAN SECURE SUPERVISION FOR YOUR CHILD.

## **HOMEWORK POLICIES**

Homework is a valuable tool in helping students make the most of their experiences at the Laurel School. Homework reinforces what has been taught in class, prepares students for upcoming lessons, and helps students develop executive function skills and responsibility.

The goals of homework are:

- To review and reinforce daily classroom instruction
- To demonstrate mastery of newly acquired skills and knowledge
- To demonstrate an ability to work independently
- To develop effective organization and study skills
- To foster a sense of responsibility

The Laurel School expects students to follow these guidelines:

- All assignments will be completed by the student in a timely manner.
- Missed assignments must be completed as per teacher expectations
- Homework will be completed neatly, reflecting pride in one's work.

If your child has difficulty completing homework assignments independently, please discuss this with the teacher. Homework should never be a source of student or family stress. We feel confident that children will develop independent homework abilities as they grow more confident and secure in their learning.

Parents/Guardians are key to making homework a positive experience for their children. Therefore, we ask that you make homework a top priority, providing necessary supplies and a quiet homework environment.

## **Homework Tips for Parents/Guardians**

1. It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to check a student's homework/assignment sheet or planner, or Google Classroom assignment daily.
2. Provide a clean, well-lit area for homework and studying.
3. Designate a time for study time. It could be right after dinner, but definitely before television viewing.
4. Do not allow your child to make or receive phone calls during study time. Take a message; he/she/they can call back. Remove your child's



- cell phone from the study area.
5. Motivate your child to work independently. Try to make yourself available for help, but remember it is not your homework.
  6. Show interest in your child's schoolwork. Praise good work or improvement, and it is likely to continue.
  7. Students are expected to keep a record of all assignments in a daily planner. Ask every night what the homework assignments are, and ask the child to show you their planner. If you continually get the answer, "I have no homework," something may be wrong. Call the teacher to discuss it.
  8. Set up a long-term schedule for major projects or reports. Don't let them go until the last minute.

## **SCHOOL RULES and PROCEDURES**

### **Student Records**

The Laurel School of Princeton compiles, maintains, and provides access to and security of student records (hard copies and computer records). The policy is consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other State and Federal laws. Our copies of student records are available for review to the parent/guardian and student (when appropriate). If you would like to review the contents of your child's file, please set up an appointment with a school administrator.

### **Dress Code**

The Laurel School promotes unity and school pride in all areas. We aim to create an environment that promotes learning and is appropriate for an educational setting. All students must take responsibility and be accountable for dressing and grooming in a manner that demonstrates respect for themselves and others and is conducive to a safe and healthy environment. Parents are expected to support the school and their children in taking this responsibility seriously.

With this in mind, the dress code below has been adopted for students. Dress-code compliant items are available in the Lands' End School Catalog on the Laurel School approved (Laurel's Preferred School Number: 900184243). All approved items can be found below. Clothing that meets dress code does not need to be purchased at Lands' End, but the items serve as a guide for what students may wear to school.

1. PANTS/SLACKS/CAPRIS/LEGGINGS: Solid colors. No blue jeans/blue denim or jeggings. Leggings must be worn under a dress/jumper/skirt or if worn alone with a top that comes to the top of the leg.
2. SKIRTS/SHORTS/SKORTS/JUMPERS: Solid colors or hunter green plaid. No blue jeans/blue denim. Must be at least fingertip length. No short shorts or "daisy duke" shorts. Jumpers must be worn with an appropriate blouse or shirt.

3. SHIRTS: Solid colors only. Shirts and blouses must have a collar and must be a solid color. Acceptable styles include: Golf/polo-style shirts in short or long sleeves, oxford-style button-down collared shirt, cotton blouse with a peter-pan collar; turtlenecks, and mock turtlenecks. Midriffs should be covered. No tank tops or halter tops.
4. SWEATERS/SWEATSHIRTS/CARDIGANS: Solid colors only. Must be worn with a collared shirt and should be plain with no logos (or very small logos). The Laurel logo is allowed.
5. Headwear of any type may not be worn – male and female. This includes hoods on sweatshirts. (Note: The exception to this rule is documented religious or medical reasons)
6. Outerwear is not permitted while in the building.
7. All shirts must cover shoulders, cleavage, stomach, and back.
8. Footwear must be worn at all times. (Flip flops, athletic slides, or bedroom slippers are not permitted)
9. Clothing must be clean and in good repair. It should be worn and fit as intended:
  - Pants must be worn properly and are to be pulled up and secured at the waist.
  - Leggings must be worn under a dress/jumper/skirt or if worn alone with a top that comes to the top of the leg.
  - Undergarments are not to be visible.
  - Pajamas are not permitted.
  - Excessively oversized garments (including sweatshirts) are not permitted.
10. Apparel and jewelry that advertises, glorifies, or symbolizes any illegal substances or any substances illegal to minors, contains derogatory phrases or profanity, or glorifies violence or criminal behavior is not permitted..

Every Friday, unless otherwise noted, students may wear approved Laurel Spirit Wear neatly and appropriately. Spirit Wear apparel and accessories can be purchased at our online [School Store](#).

Those students who come to school out of dress code will be loaned items of appropriate clothing to wear for the day. Multiple violations of the dress code will result in consequences as listed in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Parents with specific concerns about this dress code should contact the Head of School.

## Electronic Equipment Policy

As a technology-forward school, Laurel wants to promote responsible digital citizenship which includes helping students learn both the benefits and the challenges of cell phones, social media, and other online activity. We intend to support academic success with limited distraction and to promote face-to-face interaction and personal connection.

In keeping with this philosophy:

Students **ARE NOT** permitted to use cell phones during the school day. **DO NOT** call, text, email, or otherwise try to reach your child via their cell phone during the school day. In the event you need to reach your child during school hours please call the receptionist at extension 0237 or Lynn Smola at extension 0210. Messages may be left on the general mailbox voicemail. ***If a student brings a cell phone to school, the cell phone MUST remain in the student's backpack.*** Violations of Laurel policy may result in confiscation of the device and follow-up with a parent before the device may be returned. Laurel School will not be responsible for loss, damage, or theft.

\* A special note about cell phones in the context of a remote learning setting: students at home sometimes have access to multiple devices at once, and may be tempted to inappropriately conduct side conversations or record classes or classmates. Parents or other adults supervising remote instruction are requested to pay special attention to prevent this misuse of electronic devices, as there is little a classroom instructor can do to prevent these "side activities." The successful remote learning experience requires a more active partnership between adults supervising at home and the school.

Students are prohibited from recording anything on school property or at school-sponsored events, including remote or synchronous class meetings unless they are permitted by a faculty member. Students are prohibited from posting anything online without the permission of those in the recording.

Students are expected to sign a digital citizenship contract at the beginning of the year, which will outline all expectations of this important responsibility.

## Lunch

Under normal operating procedures, lunch may take place in the atrium. Under other circumstances (ex.: COVID or time conflict with the multipurpose room), lunches will be held in a child's homeroom. Please be sure to send lunches that will provide good nutrition and energy to allow your child to continue learning throughout the day. Also, most students have a snack at mid-morning, so plan accordingly. At this time, Laurel School does not have a lunch delivery service. Should your child have any food allergies, please notify the Administration to ensure his/her safety. There will be no time for children to microwave lunch, so please do not send foods that require this.

## **Outdoor/Recess**

It is important for children to move around and exercise during the day. Students will have daily recess during the lunch break, and other opportunities for supervised play and exercise. Recess will occur outdoors whenever the weather permits, *even in the snow*. Please send appropriate clothing and shoes to allow your child to participate.

## **CODE of CONDUCT**

Schools are expected to do a great many things. One of the most important goals is to teach students the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful, contributing members of their community. Although the primary focus of an educational program is academics, schools also reinforce the social skills and behaviors valued by our society. Our student Code of Conduct is designed to protect our learning environment, promote respect for self and others, and create a safe place for students and staff. Classroom expectations are set by teachers and reflect Laurel School values.

Any student behavior that interferes with the maintenance of a safe learning environment will result in disciplinary action that includes helping students understand the impact of their behavior and why it was inappropriate. Consequences will be age appropriate and parents/guardians will be notified of any disciplinary action taken that results in a student being removed from the classroom. At the discretion of the administration, negative behaviors will result in one or more of the consequences below:

- An initial warning by the classroom teacher
- Phone call home to discuss behavior and consequences
- In-person parent conference to discuss behavior and consequences
- Loss of recess time
- Loss of other privileges
- In-school suspension: part or full day, during which students will be given an assignment designed to help the student better understand the impact and consequences of their behavior
- Out-of-school suspension

The following behaviors will result in disciplinary action:

- Any behaviors that hurt or endanger self or others (including refusal to adhere to required infection control protocols)
- Showing disrespect
- Lying
- Teasing, bullying, harassing, or violent behavior
- Throwing things or other dangerous behavior
- Threatening to, provoking, or instigating a fight

- Stealing
- Vandalism/property damage (school or personal property)
- Smoking/ vaping
- Sexual assault

Behaviors that disrupt class/school/learning and may result in disciplinary action:

- Talking out of turn/making noises
- Not following directions/defiance/arguing
- Inappropriate language/gestures (not intended to hurt anyone)
- Excessive activity level
- Being late to class
- Leaving class or school grounds without permission
- Refusing to do class work assignment
- Being unprepared for class
- Sleeping in class
- Plagiarism/cheating
- Cutting class

Behaviors that violate school policies that will result in disciplinary action:

- Electronics/cell phone violation
- Dress code violation
- Inappropriate use of the internet/computers/other technology

Extreme cases that will result in immediate dismissal from the school until further consequences are determined:

- Bringing a firearm to school\*
- Assault with a weapon other than a firearm\*
- Violation of substance abuse policy
- Being under the influence\*
- Being in possession or use of illegal substances, or devices\*

In cases where negative behavior continues, parent/ guardian meetings with the administration to review the appropriateness of a student's placement at Laurel School may be deemed necessary.

\*In addition to school disciplinary measures, these behaviors must be reported to the police.

## **PROHIBITION of HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, and BULLYING**

To provide our students with a safe, orderly, and civil learning environment, The Laurel School prohibits all acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying conducted by students or staff. These behaviors disrupt students' ability to learn and the school's ability to educate. Treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying are the behaviors that will be promoted and commended.

### **Definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying**

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L.2010, c. (C.18A:37-15.3), that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that: a. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or c. creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

"Electronic communication" means communication transmitted using an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

### **Pupil Expectations and Core Values**

Taking into consideration the developmental level, maturity, capabilities, and special needs of our students, Laurel School expects students and faculty to behave in a manner that shows proper regard for the rights and welfare of others and the educational purpose of all school activities. Standards for behavior have been set with input from staff, administration, parents, students, and board members. One purpose of these standards is to help create a learning environment that supports the development of self-discipline,

and respect for self and others.

When reinforced, these values will help prevent incidents of direct and active harassment, intimidation, and bullying, as well as bystander and other passive support for these harmful behaviors. Staff members will take advantage of every opportunity to reinforce these values. They will also use violations of these values as an opportunity to help students learn to assume and accept responsibility for, and consequences of, their behavior. The Laurel School prohibits active or passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Pupils are encouraged to support other pupils who:

1. Attempt in a positive, nonviolent, and nonaggressive manner to stop acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
2. Walk away from acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying when they see them; rather than participating in or supporting such acts;
3. Provide support to pupils who have been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and
4. Report acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying to the designated school staff member.

### **Consequences and Remedial Action**

All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying by students or staff shall result in appropriate remedial actions and/or consequences. The appropriateness of any remedial plan or consequence shall be based on the severity of the offense, the developmental ages of the student offenders, the student offender's behavioral history, and the special needs of the students involved. Personal and environmental factors (such as disability, school climate, classroom management considerations, interpersonal relationships, skills, etc) shall be taken into account when developing remedial plans and consequences.

Remedial plans may involve but are not limited to:

- Short-term counseling
- Creating a Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Parent Conference
- Referral for non-school-based therapy
- Restitution for damaged property

Personal plans may involve but are not limited to:

- Warning
- Sent to office
- Lunch detention
- Parent notification
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension

- Meeting with parents and CST
- Reports to law enforcement
- Termination of placement
- School Environment
- Assessment of school climate in relation to harassment, intimidation and bullying
- Review of IEPs
- Review & revision of school policies and programs related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying
- Increasing supervision of critical areas
- Adjusting student and staff schedules
- Professional development for entire staff or targeted groups of staff • Disciplinary action against involved staff
- Parent meetings and/or support groups
- Large group assembly and/or small, targeted group educational programs for students

### **Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Off School Grounds**

This policy and the school's Code of Conduct apply to incidents that occur off school grounds when:

1. The alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and either
2. A reasonable person should know that the alleged behavior will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student damaging the student's property or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical/emotional harm or damage to personal property; or
3. The alleged behavior has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
4. The alleged behavior creates a hostile educational environment by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm.

The Anti-Bullying Specialist shall notify the alleged victim's sending district case manager whenever there is a report of possible HIB off school grounds, on a district school bus, or at a district-sponsored school function. The sending district shall take the lead in investigating the alleged incident.

#### **A. Reporting Procedure**

All incidents of actual or alleged harassment, intimidation, and bullying must be reported to the principal or designee.



1. Board members, school employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers who have contact with students must verbally notify the principal the same day the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident.
2. Board members, school employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers who have contact with students shall submit a written incident report within two school days of their verbal report. Incident reports are available from the Anti-Bullying Specialist or in the Main Office.
3. Pupils, parents, and visitors are encouraged to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Principal on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. Students, parents, and visitors may make an anonymous report. However, formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on an anonymous report.
4. The principal shall inform the parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident and may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling or other intervention services.

A Board member or school employee who makes a report in compliance with this policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:37-18, the harassment, intimidation, and bullying law does not prevent a victim from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal, nor does it create or alter any tort liability.

A school administrator who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying from a school employee, and fails to initiate or investigate, or who should have known of an incident and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Anti-Bullying Specialist shall notify the alleged victim's sending district case manager whenever there is a report of possible HIB off school grounds, on a district school bus, or at a district-sponsored school function. The sending district shall take the lead in investigating the alleged incident.

5. If the Laurel Education group schools permit the use of a preliminary determination for reports of HIB, then the CEO/Executive Director must annually report to the School Board the number of times the preliminary determination was found to be outside the scope of HIB.

- If an alleged incident of HIB is later found as a verified incident of HIB,

copies of the results of the investigation shall be placed in the student's record.

- If a student is found to have committed three incidents of HIB, then a principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, shall develop an individual student intervention plan which shall be approved by the CEO/Executive Director. Each subsequent act of verified HIB would also require a principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, to develop an individual student intervention plan which would be approved by the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee.
- When submitting a written report of HIB to the principal, the written report shall be on the HIB 338 Form.
- The LEA shall provide a means for a parent or guardian to complete the HIB 338 Form, specified for Families and Caregivers, online and confidentially to report an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

## **B. Anti-Bullying Specialist, and School Safety Team**

1. The principal shall appoint an Anti-Bullying Specialist. This shall be a school employee, and where possible it shall be someone trained in guidance, behavior, or psychology. The AntiBullying specialist shall:
  - a. Chair the School Safety Team
  - b. Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying; and
  - c. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying in the school.
2. A School Safety Team shall be formed to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the ongoing, systemic process and practices in the school, and to address school climate issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The School Safety Team shall meet at least two times per school year. The School Safety Team shall consist of the principal, a teacher in the school, the Anti-Bullying Specialist, a parent of a pupil in the school, and other members to be determined by the principal. The Anti-Bullying Specialist shall serve as the chair of the School Safety Team.

The School Safety Team shall:

- a. Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils that have been reported to the principal,
- b. Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying,
- c. Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or

- bullying of pupils in the school;
- d. Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils;
  - e. Educate all members of the school community (pupils, teachers, administrators, parents, etc.) to prevent and address harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils;
  - f. Participate in the training required;
  - g. Execute other related duties as requested by the Principal or the Anti-Bullying Specialist.

A parent who is a member of the School Safety Team shall not participate in the activities of the team outlined in item 2. a., b., or c. above, or other activities of the team that may compromise the confidentiality of a pupil.

### **C. Investigation**

All incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be investigated thoroughly and completely, as follows:

1. The investigation shall be initiated by the School Principal (or designee) within one day of the first report. It shall be conducted by the school's Anti-Bullying Specialist and may involve additional staff, as the principal may designate.
2. The Anti-Bullying Specialist's investigation shall be completed, and a written report given to the principal within 10 days of receipt of the incident report. Any responses shall be in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct, this policy, and standard practices for behavioral incidents, as reviewed below. The principal shall submit the report to the Executive Director within 2 school days of completion of the investigation.
3. The principal shall, as appropriate, ensure that the Code of Conduct has been implemented and provide intervention services, order counseling, establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying and enhance school climate, or take or recommend other appropriate action, as necessary.
4. The incident shall be reported to the Administrative Review Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting (typically this Committee meets weekly). This committee shall be composed of the Executive Director,

the Principal, the Supervisor of Instruction, a School Counselor, and the Business Administrator. The report shall include all relevant dates, as well as any consequences or remedial actions.

5. Parents of pupils who are parties to the investigation shall be provided with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents or guardians shall include the nature of the investigation, whether the school found evidence of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or whether consequences were imposed, or services provided to address the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. This information shall be provided in writing within five school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the Administrative Review Committee.
6. A parent or guardian may request to meet with the Administrative Review Committee if they disagree with actions taken and a meeting shall be scheduled within 10 days of the request. The Administrative Review Committee shall meet in executive session to protect the confidentiality of the students.
7. The school's Anti-Bullying Specialist shall keep detailed records of all incidents and reports.
8. A parent, student, guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c. 169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.).

#### **D. Range of Responses to Confirmed Incidents**

1. Some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be isolated incidents that require school officials to respond to the individuals committing the acts and the victims. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that require a response at a classroom, group, or school level and may involve law enforcement officials, especially when bias is suspected.
  - a. Consequences and remedial actions need to be commensurate with the nature of the act. The nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or patterns of behavior, and the context in which the incident occurred shall be taken into consideration when determining the consequences and remedial plans.

- b. Consequences and/or remedial actions for a student may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspensions or termination of placement as permitted by special education regulations, the student's IEP, and any behavioral intervention plans in place for the students involved.
  - c. Classroom, group, and school-wide level responses can range from surveys, informational presentations, focus groups, adopting bullying-prevention programs, and staff and parent training, to the involvement of law enforcement officials.
2. Support for victims of harassment, intimidation, or bullying could include the following actions, alone or in conjunction with other appropriate steps: Counseling – individual or group, Increase supervision at critical times and places, Schedule changes, Referral for therapy and Parent involvement.
  3. Some acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be bias-related and potentially bias crimes (crimes motivated by racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, or other prejudice). School officials must report suspected bias cases to law enforcement officials as per the Memorandum of Agreement.
  4. All incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying must be documented in the NJ DOE's Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS) each year.

## **J. Prohibition Against Reprisal, Retaliation or False Accusations**

To help establish and maintain a safe and orderly school environment all suspected acts of reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. The Newgrange School prohibits staff, students, and anyone else connected to the school from engaging in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, any witnesses, anyone who reports an incident, or anyone with reliable information about an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

1. Consequences and/or remedial actions shall be determined by the school's administration after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act consistent with school policies and any applicable regulations, statutes, or case law. Consequences and remedial actions for confirmed cases of reprisal or retaliation shall be similar to those listed in Section D above.
2. Consequences for confirmed cases of false accusations shall be as follows:

- a. For students - positive behavioral supports up to and including suspensions or termination of placement as permitted by special education regulations, the students' IEPs, and any behavioral intervention plans in place for the students involved.
- b. For school employees or contracted service providers - disciplinary actions in accordance with school policies, contracts, or agreements.
- c. For visitors, interns, or volunteers - shall be determined by school administration and may include removal from the school building, prohibiting contact with students, reports to law enforcement officials, or other legal actions.

#### **K. Publication of, Notification of, and Access to this Policy**

1. The Laurel School shall disseminate this policy annually to all students, parents, staff, interns, volunteers, and contracted service providers who have contact with students through:
  - a. Staff Handbook of Policies & Procedures
  - b. Student/Parent Handbook
2. The Laurel School shall post a prominent link to this policy on its homepage ([www. thenewgrange.org](http://www.thenewgrange.org)) and will notify students and parents that this policy is available on its website.
3. The name, school address, school phone number, and school email address of the Newgrange Anti-Bullying Specialist shall be posted on the school's website.
4. All staff, volunteers, interns, and contracted service providers who have contact with students shall receive training on this policy annually. The training shall include instruction on preventing bullying based on any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, a mental, physical, or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic.
5. This policy and other issues related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be included in the school's social skills program and other appropriate school programs (assemblies, counseling groups, etc.).
6. The school's administration and the Anti-Bullying Specialist shall conduct an annual assessment of this policy and related procedures and programs.

## **L. Review & Revision of Policy**

1. This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary. School administration, staff, and parents shall participate in this review as needed. The revised policy will be submitted to the Executive Director and Principal for approval prior to going into effect.
2. The revised policy will be disseminated to staff, students, parents, administration, interns, volunteers, contracted service providers, etc. through our Student/Parent and Staff Handbooks, and a link on our website.

## **COMPUTER and INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY and PROVISIONS**

### **A. Policy and Purpose Statement**

The Laurel School believes that the use of computers and the Internet are, if used appropriately, an integral part of the educational program. It has been decided to make Internet access available to the students/staff, only for the express purpose of supporting the educational program. It is made available to enable students/staff to conduct research and to communicate with others, also in furtherance of educational objectives, which relate to student/staff curriculum.

This policy is intended to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act/Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act. The Technology Coordinator shall be responsible for ensuring that the blocking software is installed and functioning.

Although the Internet offers vast opportunities to access resources, an environment that promotes both responsible and ethical conduct in all student/staff computer activities must be maintained. With access to the Internet also comes the possibility, even with the use of blocking software, that students/staff may access materials that are either of no educational value or violate applicable State or Federal law. This is so because, with the current state of technology, it is impossible to control access to all materials, that are obscene or profane, or advocate illegal acts, violence, or unlawful discrimination.

We believe that the educational value of the access to information and interaction enabled by Internet access far outweighs the disadvantage that users may procure materials that are not consistent with the educational goals. The operation of the computer network relies, in part, on the proper conduct of its student users. Therefore, it is necessary for students/staff to follow the guidelines, which are set forth within this policy. If any user violates this policy, his/her privileges to use school computers may be limited or

suspended. In addition, the student/staff may be subject to other applicable disciplinary measures.

## **B. Terms and Conditions of Use**

### **1. Acceptable Use**

The purpose of providing access to the Internet is expressly to support research and education. It is to provide access to various resources and opportunities for collaborative work. The use of the Internet must be solely to support education and research which furthers the educational objectives and curriculum established by The Laurel School. Transmission and accessing of any material in violation of any Federal law (including either the Children's Internet Protection Act or the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act), state law, or regulation/or Board Policy is prohibited. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Users will not transmit or access material, which is profane, obscene, harmful to minors (as that term is defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act), or advocates illegal acts, violence or unlawful discrimination.
- b) Any use of the network for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited. c) Use of the network for personal and private business, limited to non-instructional time. d) Mass emails, not related to school business are prohibited.
- e) Any use of the network for advertising or political purposes is prohibited. f) Users of the network shall not disrupt or interfere with the use of the network by others, including trespassing into others' folders, work, or files.
- g) Computers, networks, hardware, or software shall not be altered, mishandled, or abused in any way, whether physically or through the use of viruses, hacking, phishing, reformatting, or deleting programs.
- h) Users of The Laurel School computer system will not download any software, music, video, or other forms without express permission from the Technology Coordinator. i) The school computer system shall not be used to harass others.
- j) Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited. k) The unauthorized installation of copyrighted software for use on the school computer system is prohibited.
- l) Using other student's or staff's passwords.
- m) Giving personal information without permission from the administration AND parent.
- n) Accessing social networking sites online.
- o) Inappropriately using chat platforms or apps, even if approved by the School.



## **2. Privileges**

The use of The Laurel School computer system, including access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in the suspension, or partial suspension of those privileges as well as other possible discipline, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, which is incorporated by reference herein, and even possible prosecution for illegal activity. Each student, in order to obtain access to the school computer system, will be required to accept and comply with The Laurel School Technology Acceptable Use Agreement. The Technology Coordinator will have the authority to, at least temporarily, suspend use of the system at any time.

## **3. Digital Citizenship**

Users of the school computer system are expected to:

- a) Only use appropriate language.
- b) Never reveal personally identifiable information such as name, address, telephone number, or those of other students.
- c) Understand that the use of The Laurel School computer system is for the exclusive purpose of furthering educational objectives and that there is no expectation of privacy for any access or use thereof.
- d) Comply with all intellectual property laws, such as copyrights.

## **4. Miscellaneous**

1. Security of the system is a high priority. If you have reason to believe that you can identify a security problem in the computer system, you must notify an Administrator
2. Vandalism will result in the automatic suspension of use and will be subject to disciplinary consequences, or possible legal action, which could result in criminal prosecution. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy data, software or hardware, even if belonging to another network. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a virus, intentional propagation of a virus, or dissemination of contaminated data.
3. The Laurel School of Princeton makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damages users suffer. This includes loss of data, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the school's own negligence or the user's errors or omissions. The school cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

## **ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **Emergency Evacuation Drills**

The Department of Education requires all schools to conduct one fire drill and one emergency drill per month, even during the summer program. Emergency drills include the following: bomb threats, lockdowns, non-fire evacuations, active shooter lockdowns/evacuations, reverse evacuations, and shelter-in-place. During all drills, students must remain quiet and follow staff directions without question. During drills and actual emergencies, there will be designated staff responsible for students' well-being, so their needs can be met as quickly as possible under these conditions. In the event of an actual emergency, staff will contact parents/guardians with information about the emergency, their child's well-being, and any directions about coming to school for a pick-up. In the event of a true emergency, school staff will take direction from the Emergency Services personnel (fire and police), and everyone must give these personnel their full cooperation.

### **Smoke-Free Environment**

The Laurel School of Princeton maintains a policy of no smoking on school grounds during school hours or at any school function. This policy applies to all students, employees, visitors, and any service providers. The use of smokeless tobacco products is also strictly prohibited. Any student found in violation of this policy will face serious disciplinary action.

### **Care of School Materials**

It is our goal to help instill a sense of pride and responsibility in our students. Please help us to encourage your children to respect the school and materials within the school. All students are expected to maintain school materials and property with proper care. Students who damage property, including books and electronic devices, will be required to pay the appropriate cost. All fines must be paid before the final report cards are issued.

## **INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

### **Administration**

If you have concerns that you must address, please don't hesitate to call and speak to:

Executive Director and Head of Schools: Jim Sheeley, (ext. 291)

Assistant Head of School: Sharon Anderson (ext. 287)

Administrative Assistant: Lynn Smola, (ext. 210)

## **Permission Slips**

Throughout the year, we schedule field trips for our students to enhance their educational experiences. These trips correlate with the goals and objectives of our curriculum and provide an opportunity for students to extend their academic and social learning. Parents are expected to sign a general permission slip found in the Enrollment Contract that will apply to all of the sponsored field trips.

We will send a notification to you when a trip has been scheduled that will provide specific details about the event. If a student elects to stay home, it will be considered an unexcused absence.

## **Visitors**

Throughout the school year, we plan special activities. Often, parents and guardians are invited to attend. You will be notified about such opportunities through school communication channels such as the weekly newsletter, emails, and flyers, or phone calls. However, we ask that you first SIGN IN AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE, where you will receive a VISITOR'S PASS. THIS PROCEDURE IMPROVES THE SECURITY OF OUR BUILDING FOR OUR CHILDREN.

Visits for other purposes, such as to a classroom in session, require advance permission from the Administration, in accordance with The Laurel School Policy.

## **Emergency Communication - Apprise Alert**

We will receive emergency closure and other alerts through **Apprise Alert** linked to our Paradigm database. These alerts can be received through any combination of text, email, and phone calls. Please make sure Lynn Smola has your correct contact information and knows which mode(s) of communication for these notifications you prefer.

- TEXT notifications will come from "77449"
- VOICE notifications will come from 1-908-332-5621
- e-MAIL notifications will come from "[No-Reply@ppihx.com](mailto:No-Reply@ppihx.com)".

These notifications will *not* show up as coming from the school. You may want to add these numbers to your contacts so you can recognize them immediately.

## **Students' Possessions**

Please label all of your child's possessions for easy identification. A *LOST AND FOUND* box is located in Ms.Smola's office.



Parent Acknowledgement

As the parent/guardian (student name) \_\_\_\_\_,

I have received, read, and understand this handbook and school policies manual. I

have also reviewed the handbook and policies with my Laurel student.

Parent/Guardian 1 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 2 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this signed page to the Administrative Office by September 10, 2024**

