



WASHINGTON LATIN

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

A Classical Education for the Modern World

DISCIPLINE AT LATIN – POLICIES & CONSEQUENCES

Our discipline policy is guided by the belief that missteps and mistakes are frequently a part of personal growth, and the school implements a system of graduated incentives and responses in order to move students toward more acceptable behavior and increased accountability and maturity. The school understands that each of our students has individual circumstances and needs, and we are eager and equipped to support students at every step of their academic career and experience at Washington Latin.

As with all things at Washington Latin, discipline is an individualized process. While there are certain infractions that, once properly investigated, result in immediate, consistent responses, we also take an individualized and situation-specific approach to all disciplinary actions. Our approach focuses on helping students develop a compassionate understanding of how their words and actions affect others, both immediately and directly and over the longer term, and through the extended community. To achieve this, our disciplinary actions are tailored to each student, taking into consideration his/her background, history, and current pertinent circumstances. We remain committed to reducing the minutes that students may be removed from class or school and to mitigate any loss by providing them with access to their teachers during all in-school suspensions. We also assign tutors to work with students during out-of-school suspensions beyond two school days.

Usually, the school staff carries out such actions in an informal way using dialogue and mediation strategies. However, more serious and chronic behaviors may require corrective and disciplinary measures in the form of issuing demerits, conducting conferences, hosting detention, and occasionally, suspending or expelling students. In certain circumstances, the school may also require the student and family to enter into a specific behavior agreement that will determine the student's ability to remain enrolled in school. In situations where behavior is not improving, the school's foremost objective is to craft a solution that minimizes the loss of academic time and maximizes the opportunity to provide the student with the necessary support to manage challenges in their personal lives. To this end, the school is committed to making individualized disciplinary decisions that serve the best interests of the student and the community.

Discipline Policy and Consequences

The word discipline is derived from the Latin word "discipulus," which means student. We recognize that in schooling, as in life, there is much learning that can happen from mistakes that have been made. Our approach to discipline is focused on growth and understands that mistakes are fertile ground for teachable moments. We take a progressive stance towards discipline; progressive discipline does not seek punishment, but instead seeks accountability and positive behavioral change. Helping students to learn from their mistakes allows us to prevent a pattern of negative or inappropriate choices. Our goals for students are as follows: to help students understand the harm caused by poor choices and misbehavior; to foster accountability for the actions they have taken; and to explore better options for future circumstances.

We take great effort to cultivate positive student behaviors through the nurturing of student-teacher relationships, a focus on the communal aspects of schooling, partnership with families, and restorative practices, whenever possible. We aim to tailor individualized responses that focus on intervention, minimize disruption to a student's education, and promote a positive school culture. These responses include supports and interventions in addition to disciplinary responses; supports and interventions are often used in tandem with disciplinary responses.

In determining the response to student misbehavior, our faculty take into consideration the fullest possible picture of the incident. The following facts are considered when determining the appropriate supports, interventions, and disciplinary responses:

- The student's age;
- The nature, severity, and scope of the behavior;
- The student's disciplinary record;
- The circumstances or context in which the behavior occurred;
- The frequency and duration of the behavior;
- The number of persons involved in the behavior;
- The student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan), BIP (Behavioral Intervention Plan), and/or 504 Accommodation Plan, if applicable.

Levels of Infractions

Our discipline approach holds students accountable for their behavior. Whenever possible and appropriate, the response to misconduct should begin with the lowest level of disciplinary response and should include appropriate supports and intervention(s). Progressive Infraction Levels: Infractions are grouped into four levels based on the severity of the infraction.

- Level 1 — Uncooperative/Noncompliant Behavior
- Level 2 — Disorderly or Disruptive Behavior
- Level 3 — Aggressive or Injurious/ Harmful Behavior
- Level 4 — Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

Each level of infractions provides a set of *possible* supports and interventions as well as a range of *possible* disciplinary responses that may be imposed by a teacher, dean, or member of the administrative team. The Discipline Code provides graduated accountability measures for students who engage in repeated misbehaviors despite prior interventions and/or prior imposition of appropriate disciplinary measures. More severe accountability measures will be used for those students who engage in a pattern of persistent misconduct. Whenever possible and appropriate, prior to using such penalties, school officials should exhaust less severe disciplinary responses in conjunction with supports and interventions.

Level 1 Infractions - Uncooperative or noncompliance

Examples of Level 1 Infractions include, but are not limited to, failure to wear the school uniform, being tardy to class, conduct that disrupts the educational process (i.e. making excessive noise in a classroom or the hallway), engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior, and inappropriate use of technology (i.e. using a phone during class time or using a school laptop for purposes besides the assigned work in class).

Supports that may apply for Level 1 Infractions include, but are not limited to: family outreach, restorative practices, intervention by counseling staff, development of an individual behavior contract, short-term behavioral progress reports, community service (with family consent).

Disciplinary responses for Level 1 infractions include, but are not limited to: student-teacher conferences, formal meeting with the student and a member of the administrative team, family conference, loss of school privileges (i.e. temporary exclusion from an extracurricular activity or break).

Level 2 Infractions - Disruptive or defiant behavior

Examples of Level 2 Infractions include, but are not limited to, using profane, obscene, vulgar, or lewd language, gestures, or behavior; lying to faculty members; misusing property belonging to others; possession of cigarettes or vaping devices; inappropriate use of technology (i.e. unauthorized audio/video recording); leaving class or school premises without permission; horseplay, pushing, shoving, or throwing an object at another person; entering through an unauthorized entrance; bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter the school building; tampering with official school records; cheating (i.e. copying from another student's work), plagiarism; engaging in vandalism or other intentional damage to school property.

Supports that may apply for Level 2 Infractions include, but are not limited to: family outreach, restorative practices, intervention by counseling staff, development of an individual behavior contract, short-term behavioral progress reports, community service (with family consent); Functional Behavior Assessment or Behavioral Intervention Plan; referral to a community-based organization.

Disciplinary responses for Level 2 infractions include, but are not limited to: student-teacher conferences, formal meeting with the student and a member of the administrative team, family conference, loss of school privileges (i.e. temporary exclusion from an extracurricular activity or break); after school reflection time, or in-school suspension.

Level 3 Infractions - Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior

Examples of Level 3 Infractions include, but are not limited to, posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing material containing a threat of violence, injury, or harm, or depicting violent actions or obscene, vulgar, or lewd pictures of students or staff; coercing, threatening, planning, or instigating an act of violence, injury, or harm to others; filming an altercation; engaging in sexual conduct on school premises or at school-related functions; making sexually suggestive comments, innuendos, propositions, or similar remarks, or engaging in nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (i.e. touching, pinching, or sending sexually suggestive messages or images); engaging in physically aggressive behavior or a physical altercation; engaging in harassing, intimidating, and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying); such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass; possessing or using controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, and/or prescription medications without proper authorization; falsely activating a fire alarm; creating a substantial risk of serious injury by either recklessly engaging in behavior, and/or using an object that appears capable of causing physical injury (e.g., lighter, belt buckle, umbrella).

Supports that may apply for Level 3 Infractions include, but are not limited to: family outreach, restorative practices, intervention by counseling staff, development of an individual behavior contract, short-term behavioral progress reports, community service (with family consent); Functional Behavior

Assessment or Behavioral Intervention Plan; referral to a community-based organization; development of a school safety plan; referral to a substance abuse prevention program.

Disciplinary responses for Level 3 infractions include, but are not limited to: student-teacher conferences, formal meeting with the student and a member of the administrative team, family conference, loss of school privileges (i.e. temporary exclusion from an extracurricular activity or break); in-school suspension; emergency removal; out-of-school suspension.

Level 4 Infractions - Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

Examples of Level 4 Infractions include, but are not limited to, possessing, displaying, or selling any weapon; starting a fire; using force to take or attempt to take property belonging to another; using force against, or inflicting, or attempting to inflict serious injury against school faculty; using extreme force against or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury upon students or others; instigating, or participating with another or others, in an incident of group violence; engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity; selling or distributing illegal drugs or controlled substances and/or alcohol; engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity.

Supports that may apply for Level 4 Infractions include, but are not limited to: family outreach, restorative practices, intervention by counseling staff, development of an individual behavior contract, short-term behavioral progress reports, community service (with family consent); Functional Behavior Assessment or Behavioral Intervention Plan; referral to a community-based organization; development of a school safety plan; referral to a substance abuse prevention program.

Disciplinary responses for Level 4 infractions include, but are not limited to: student-teacher conferences, formal meeting with the student and a member of the administrative team, family conference, loss of school privileges (i.e. temporary exclusion from an extracurricular activity or break); in-school suspension; emergency removal; out-of-school suspension; expulsion from school.

Suspension

- **In-school suspension (ISS):** A temporary removal from one or all classes and school activities. Students will be assigned to a room where their teachers, dean and counselor (if applicable) will work with them to reflect on their actions and assist them with their work. Students are expected to complete their class assignments during their suspension. Also, students serving suspension must complete a corrective action assignment associated with the infraction committed.
- **Out-of-school suspension (OSS):** If school administrators determine that a student has willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person at Washington Latin, he or she will be suspended out of school. A student who is suspended is excluded from all classes, school activities and from WLPCS property for the duration of the suspension.
- In the case of either ISS or OSS, Latin will establish a plan for the student to continue his or her studies during the period of suspension. Students will be expected to complete assignments during the suspension. The OSS student will be responsible for submitting any work that could not be completed during the suspension immediately upon returning to school.
- Parents/Guardians are essential partners in addressing the behavior issues that have led to the suspension, and Latin will ***strongly urge*** their participation, particularly at key points during the process. This includes:

- If the parent or guardian of a suspended student cannot be notified in person or by telephone, the student must remain at school until the end of the school day. A parent/guardian *or* responsible adult designee **MUST** pick up the suspended student from school.
- The school will arrange a return-to-school conference for the student (attendance is required) and a parent/guardian (attendance is very strongly urged) with an administrator before the student's return to class.

When a ***student with a disability*** is suspended (in-school or out-of-school) for more than ten school days cumulative within the school year:

- The school will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review Meeting within 10 school days from the date that the decision to suspend the student is made. At the Manifestation Determination Review Meeting, relevant members of the IEP/Section 504 team will determine if the behaviors resulting in the suspension are a manifestation of the student's disability. Washington Latin will then take appropriate action based on the determinations made by the team and according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a suspension, change of placement or other disciplinary action is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates the school's Code of Conduct.

Prohibition Against Bullying

Washington Latin defines bullying as behavior - whether physical, electronic, or verbal - which is designed to devalue or hurt another person. This generally includes name calling, racial slurs, calling attention to one's personal characteristics in a derogatory manner, intimidation, group isolation or ostracism, sexual harassment or any other such behavior that interferes with the person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges of Washington Latin. Bullying is specifically defined meeting the following criteria:

1. Includes harassment based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place or residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a student's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
2. Can reasonably be predicted to:
 - a. Place the student in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property;
 - b. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
 - c. Substantially interfere with the student's academic performance or attendance; or
 - d. Substantially interfere with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by an agency or educational institution.

Retaliation for reporting, providing information or witnessing bullying against any student, family or faculty/staff member, including the victim, is also prohibited.

Washington Latin recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying prevention plan, they must be implemented consistently, fairly and equitably. To this end, Washington Latin

ensures that staff members follow these guidelines as closely as possible while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be employed on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense, the disciplinary history of the students involved and the age and developmental status of the students involved.

Responses to incidents of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Reprimand
- Suspension of Washington Latin privileges
- Suspension of participating in optional Washington Latin activities
- Suspension from Washington Latin facilities

Washington Latin does not endorse the use of punitive strategies associated with “zero-tolerance” policies when applying sanctions to an incident of bullying.

Disciplinary Probation

A student may be placed on disciplinary probation either because of a pattern of misbehavior or whenever the Assistant Principal determines that a student's behavior warrants special monitoring. Probation is a period during which the School observes whether a student is respectful of the guidelines for community behavior (when a student is on probation, he or she is expected to maintain an exemplary behavioral record). Violation of a major school rule while a student is on disciplinary probation may result in expulsion from the school.

Expulsion

A student may be expelled from the School either for a chronic pattern of substantial violations that have not been corrected through any of the above methods, or for an extremely serious violation, such as possession of weapons or drugs, or the intent to harm another individual. Parents' or guardians' falsification of records or non-compliance with school policies or support of the child's non-compliance with school policies may also result in expulsion.

Students who are expelled may not re-enter the School.

The School has School Resource Officers (SROs) from the Metropolitan Police Department who visit the school almost daily to offer their support as needed. If the school determines that a student's behavior in any way jeopardizes the safety of the community, the School sees fit to involve the police. If a student is found in possession of an illegal substance or a weapon, the School will notify the police.

Searches of Students, Personal Property in Students' Immediate Possession

School administrators are authorized to search students and/or personal property in students' immediate possession, when, in their judgment, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has violated or is violating Board policies, school rules, federal/state laws, or is interfering with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

All searches of students and/or their personal property will be authorized and conducted by a school administrator in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances render the presence of a witness impractical. A reasonable effort will be made to conduct searches out of the sight and hearing of other students.

Procedure for Requesting an Independent Hearing

It is the sincere hope of the school that all disputes can be solved by mutual cooperation without recourse to a formal complaint, and to that end, every effort should be made to resolve any dispute

informally first. In the case of suspensions or expulsions, families who choose to submit a formal complaint must do so in writing to the Head of School.

1. A written request for a due process hearing signed by a parent or guardian must be submitted to the Head of Schools within five business days of the incident.
2. The Head of Schools will contact the School's Hearing Officer within three school days of receiving the request.
3. The Hearing Officer will schedule a hearing at the earliest mutually convenient time.
4. After hearing the case and deliberating, the Hearing Officer will submit a written recommendation to the President of the Washington Latin Board of Governors.
5. The Board President will provide the parent or guardian with a written decision on the case within one week of receiving the recommendation of the Hearing Officer.