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**2022-2023 Wildcat Academy School Year Calendar**

Wildcat has a total of 211 school days. Adjustments will be made to coincide with the NYC-DOE calendar that is available in May of each year.

<b>July 2023</b>				16 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	16	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

10<sup>th</sup> – Begin School/Extended Period

<b>August 2023</b>				14 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

18<sup>th</sup> End of Extended Period

21<sup>st</sup> Recess

<b>September 2023</b>				16 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29

4<sup>th</sup> Labor Day

7<sup>th</sup> –First full day of school 25<sup>th</sup>—

NO SCHOOL—Yom Kippur

<b>October 2023</b>				21 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

9<sup>th</sup> –NO SCHOOL Italian Heritage/Indigenous Peoples’ Day

<b>November 2023</b>				13 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
28	29			

7<sup>th</sup> –NO STUDENTS-- Election Day

21<sup>st</sup> – Parent Teacher Night

23<sup>rd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> –Thanksgiving Recess

December 2023				16 School Days
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

25<sup>th</sup> -Jan 1<sup>st</sup> – NO SCHOOL Winter Recess

<b>January 2024</b>				20 School Days
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

15<sup>th</sup> – SCHOOLS CLOSED Dr. Martin Luther King

23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> Regents Administration

29<sup>th</sup> – PD Day—No Students

30<sup>th</sup> -- Spring Semester Begins

February 2024				15 School Days
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> – Mid-Winter Recess SCHOOLS CLOSED

<b>March 2024</b>				20 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

27<sup>th</sup> – Parent Teacher Night

29<sup>th</sup> – April 1<sup>st</sup> –Easter Weekend—SCHOOLS CLOSED

<b>April 2024</b>				14 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

10<sup>th</sup> Eid al-Fitr—SCHOOLS CLOSED

22<sup>nd</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> –Spring Recess—SCHOOLS CLOSED

<b>May 2023</b>				20 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

27<sup>th</sup> –Memorial Day

<b>June 2023</b>				17 School Days
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

4<sup>th</sup> Regents Administration for Algebra I

6<sup>th</sup> Chancellor’s Conference Day NO STUDENTS

14<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> Regents Exams (excluding June 17<sup>th</sup> & June 19<sup>th</sup>)

17<sup>th</sup> – Eid al-Adha—NO SCHOOL

19<sup>th</sup> Juneteenth, NO SCHOOL

26<sup>th</sup> – Last Day for Students

## **School Overview**

### **Introduction**

The John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy was established in 1992 to accommodate students identified by the New York Department of Education as having a high risk of failure due to poor attendance, poor academic achievement, behavioral problems, or criminality. Since its conversion to charter school status in 2000, Wildcat Academy's student population has been comprised almost entirely of high school students who have dropped out of, been suspended from, or been expelled from other schools or who have historically attended classes so infrequently that they were labeled "in-school truant." The mission of the school is to serve the needs of "adolescents who are at risk of failure due to poor attendance, disruptive behavior, criminal activity and poor academic achievement."

Wildcat enrolls approximately 425 students, ages 15-21 and has a full-time teaching and counseling staff of 33. Currently, academic programs for grades 9-10 are provided at the school's Bronx site, and academic programs for grades 11-12 are provided at its Manhattan site.

Wildcat Academy students spend 380 minutes per day on core related subjects. All students attend school approximately 215 days per year. Smaller classes and a smaller student body ensure individual attention and a greater chance for students to feel they are part of a community. Academic and group counseling classes are provided for all students so they may have success in school and in life. Internships are also offered to all students so they may have meaningful work experiences, gain first-hand knowledge of the work world and its different sectors and gain skills that they can transfer to future work positions.

## **Campuses**

The John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School (Wildcat Academy) consists of two facilities. One facility is located at 17 Battery Place in lower Manhattan and the other is located at 1239 Lafayette Avenue in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx.

### **Manhattan Facility**

This facility currently includes eight (8) classrooms, one (1) science lab, one (1) computer lab and a large common area for breakfast, lunch and assemblies. In addition to offices for staff, the school houses a library and a weight room. The site is accessible for students with disabilities.

### **Bronx Facility**

This 25,000 square foot facility currently includes ten (10) classrooms, one (1) computer lab and a large common area for breakfast, lunch and assemblies. In addition to offices for staff, the school houses a library, a fitness center and a state-of-the-art culinary kitchen and dining room.

Both the Manhattan and Bronx sites are accessible for students with disabilities.

## **Hours of Operation**

Wildcat Academy is open for students from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday.

## **2022-2023 School Closings and Emergencies**

Wildcat Academy follows the lead of New York City's Department of Education with regard to decisions concerning the opening and closing of school due to weather and other emergencies. School closings or emergencies will be announced on NY1 and WINS 1010.

## **School Visitors**

There may be frequent guests at Wildcat Academy. Staff and students should treat them with courtesy and try to accommodate them. All visitors must sign in at the front desk with proper identification. Please note that visitors may not meet with students without a counselor present.



## **School Leadership**

While Wildcat Academy policy is set by its Board of Trustees (see below), the Wildcat Academy Chief Executive Officer and leadership team are responsible for translating these Board policies into administrative action.

The Board delegates day-to-day decision making to the Chief Executive Officer and holds the Chief Executive Officer responsible for the administration of policy, the execution of Board decisions, the operation of Wildcat Academy and for keeping the Board informed about the operation of the school and other functions. In turn, the Chief Executive Officer delegates responsibility to members of the Leadership Team as necessary to ensure the efficient operation of Wildcat Academy.

The school's highly skilled and experienced leadership team is composed of the following members:

Ron Tabano-Chief Executive Officer

Marc Helfand – UFT Chapter Leader

Julissa Lopez- Director of Internship

Ed Peterman-Assistant Principal

Kimberly LaRosa – Assistant Principal

## **Board of Trustees**

Wildcat Academy is governed by a Board of Trustees. The responsibilities and obligations of this Board include but are not limited to:

- Ratifying the school's mission statement and any modification thereto;
- Selecting and evaluating the performance of the Principal;
- Ensuring that the school complies with all local, state, and federal laws;
- Providing necessary and proper oversight of all financial aspects of Wildcat Academy including approving the school's annual budget, providing fundraising guidance and ensuring that the school remains fiscally sound;
- Establishing and adhering to the school's code of ethics, and enforcing the same upon employees and officers of the school;
- Approving management, operational and service contracts and holding accountable such contractors for performance;
- Authorizing broad curricular guidelines or specific curricular programs, or delegating such authority;
- Approving assessment measures and performance measures or delegating such authority;

- Providing ongoing support and oversight of the academic program and performance of the school or delegating such authority;
- Approving admission policies and procedures for the school consistent with the terms of the charter agreement;
- Setting personnel policies, including establishing qualification criteria for employees, forming dismissal procedures, approving codes of conduct, and authorizing and approving salary schedules as well as terms and conditions of employment or delegating such authority;
- Hearing appeals according to specified processes;
- Hearing complaints from any individual or group alleging any violation of the provisions of the Charter Schools Act, the Wildcat Academy charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management and/or operation of the charter school;
- Ensuring that necessary accountability measures are in place, including the performance of audits and annual reports, and that all necessary records and reports are transmitted to the proper charter school oversight entities; and
- Involving parents and staff in school governance and administration.

The Board's membership consists of business and not-for-profit executives, private attorneys, a CPA, a retired school principal, parents and school staff. This combination of experienced members of the education, finance, business, social services and legal fields gives the Board the capacity to provide meaningful leadership and oversight to the Wildcat Academy.

The Board of Trustees is composed of the following members:

Harvey Newman-Chairman of the Board

Dana Jackson

Evgenia Soldatos

Richard Levine- Vice Chair/Treasurer

Ron Tabano

Lawrence Ng

Rocco Dispirito- Advisor

Michael Russo

## **Getting Started at Wildcat**

### **Admissions and Enrollment**

#### **Overview**

JVL Wildcat is a grade 9 through grade 12 charter school that does not grade students, most of whom are older than their counterparts in traditional public schools. The school's admissions process is open to all New York City high school students, but enrollment preference is granted to pupils returning to the charter school in any subsequent year of operation, residing in the school district of our charter school, siblings of pupils already enrolled in the school, and pupils identified as "high risk". Students who are not determined to be at-risk are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis in the absence of a waiting list of at-risk students. JVL Wildcat uses a set of prescribed characteristics to identify who is "at risk" of failing to achieve at least the proficiency level as defined by the New York State Learning Standards:

#### Academic Failure:

- Below grade level in reading and mathematics;
- Below passing on New York State Regents Exams in core subjects;
- Over-age and under-credited; and/or
- Below grade level proficiencies.

#### Truancy:

- Poor attendance/punctuality patterns; and/or
- In-school truant.

#### Disruptive Behaviors:

- Record of in-school/out-of-school suspensions; and/or
- Expulsions.

#### Criminal Activity:

- Probation and/or parole; and/or
- Pending court case.

#### Foster Care/Group Home:

- Currently in foster care, and/or
- Residing in group home.

#### School Drop-Out or at Risk of Dropping Out:

- Left school prior to graduation;
- Absent 20 consecutive days in previous school; and/or
- Counselor at previous school identifies risk.

## **Outreach**

Past experience indicates that positive word-of-mouth recommendations from JVL Wildcat students and parents are the most effective form of publicity; indeed, satisfied students lay the groundwork for successful recruitment. However, the JVL Wildcat Academy widely publicizes its educational program in all of New York City's five boroughs. In addition to placing notices in local papers and distributing community fliers and bulletins, JVL Wildcat notifies local high schools, community based organizations, group homes, foster care agencies, probation departments and other referral sources if it is accepting applications. These organizations are mailed applications and flyers written both in English and Spanish. In addition, both campuses now have an Outreach Coordinator to both reach out to students as needed as well as recruit students from other high schools who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally and are under credited and overage.

Outreach targets successfully mined by JVL Wildcat in the past include:

Public High School Fairs:

- A.C.O.R.N.
- Morris High School
- James Madison High School
- John Dewey High School
- Clara Barton High School
- Boys & Girls High School
- Dewitt Clinton High School
- Howard Taft High School Stuyvesant High School
- Midwood High School
- Park West High School
- Murray Bergram High School
- Van Arsdale High School
- Springfield Gardens High School
- Seward Park High School

Social Service Agencies:

- Episcopal Mission Society
- Human Resources Administration

- Catholic Guardian Society
- Boys Town National Research
- New York City Outward Bound Center
- Leake & Watts Foster Care Agency
- Black & Puerto Rican Family Services
- The Door

Community Based Organizations:

- C.A.S.E.S.-Community Prep High School
- Community Mediation Service
- Mosholu Montefiore Community Center Family Choice Project
- Chinese American Planning Council
- New York State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Bronx Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Correctional Facility Affiliates:

New York City Department of Probation  
Rikers Island Educational Facility-Island Academy  
Rosewood Educational Facility  
Lincoln Hall Reformatory  
Incarcerated Mothers Program  
Women's Prison Association

Non-Profit Organizations:

- Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.
- New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Moreover, outreach is ongoing, with JVL Wildcat staff members running informational sessions about the JVL Wildcat educational approach and courses throughout the spring and fall semesters. Interested students and/or parents often contact the Administrative Assistant at both the Bronx and Manhattan sites throughout the school year to request applications. During the initial phone call, Administrative Assistants

briefly describe the JVL Wildcat program and gather the prospective applicant’s relevant background information, (i.e. name, address, age, telephone, etc.), after which applications in English and Spanish are mailed to the applicant.

During the fall admissions period (June-August), all parents and/or students who requested applications during the prior school year are invited to information sessions via telephone and mail. Families are encouraged to ask staff members all of their questions regarding the school’s programs so that their expectations mirror the school’s objectives. Of course, such informal meetings between prospective students, families and JVL Wildcat staff are not used to determine eligibility for admission. An open house is also offered at least twice a year, usually prior to the summer and spring enrollments and conducted in both English and Spanish.

In the 2010-11 school year, JVL Wildcat Academy will proactively target English Language Learner (ELL) students to boost the school’s enrolled ELL population. To that end, mailings will be sent to organizations with predominantly Hispanic constituencies, advertisements will appear in the El Diario and La Prensa periodicals, and public announcements will be made on the La Mega and Caliente radio stations.

## Application Process

Every May, JVL Wildcat publicly announces its enrollment period and deadline. Applications for enrollment to JVL Wildcat for the summer and fall terms are accepted beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Applications for the fall session are due on the second Wednesday in August, and the 2010 annual JVL Wildcat lottery for Admission Term One (Fall Term) will take place the following day if necessary. If JVL Wildcat continues to be under-subscribed, applications are accepted through December 31<sup>st</sup> for the spring term (Admission Term Two).

	Fall Term	Spring Term
Dates	September – January	February – June
Applications Available	Throughout calendar year.	Throughout calendar year.
Applications Due	Second Wednesday in August. If all seats are not filled by this date, applications will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis.	If all seats are not filled after the Fall enrollment period, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis through December 31.
Lottery Date	Second Thursday in August (if needed)	None. Students will be admitted based on waiting list status and/or on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Lottery and Waitlist Procedures

The JVL Wildcat lottery is a system of random selection of applications that identifies students for enrollment and generates the school’s waiting list. During the lottery process, every completed application

submitted throughout the enrollment period, including those of special needs students, is randomly drawn until capacity is reached. The remaining applicants are then placed on a waiting list and identified by a number in the order they are selected after enrollment has been met. As openings become available, applicants are invited to join JVL Wildcat according to their placement on the waiting list. Applications received after the enrollment periods end are ordered on the waiting list by date of submission. However, JVL Wildcat’s waiting list is only valid for one school year and a new “enrollment/lottery/waiting list” process begins at the outset of every school year.

Wait-listed students are notified sequentially if an enrolled student transfers or drops-out at any point during the school year. Separate waiting lists are maintained for the Bronx and Manhattan sites based on review of student transcripts that are submitted during informational sessions.

When the number of applications received by the due date does not exceed the number of seats available, all students seeking enrollment by the application due date are admitted. The application submission deadline is then extended, and all subsequent applicants are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **Transfer Credits**

Students at the Bronx site transfer to the Manhattan site upon completion of a minimum of sixteen credits, for enrollment in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. This (along with any other student transfers or drop-outs) may create mid-year openings at either the Bronx or Manhattan sites.

Whenever possible, incoming students’ report cards and/or progress reports are reviewed for course placement and credit. If a student has made satisfactory progress at his/her transferring school in a course, then he/she may be able to get full credit for the equivalent course at JVL Wildcat, given that he/she completes all stated requirements by the end of the term. Students who did not performed satisfactorily at their previous school may be eligible to earn partial credit in an equivalent JVL Wildcat course if they complete all stated requirements by the end of the term. The degree of partial credit granted hinges on consultations between the site principal and respective instructors.

## **Placement of Incoming Students**

Once admitted to the JVL Wildcat Academy, students must provide transcripts from their previous academic institutions. JVL Wildcat Academy then reviews these transcripts and determines placement at either the Bronx site, ( 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades), or Manhattan site, (11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grades), depending on a student’s accumulated credits. JVL Wildcat officials often contact students’ transferring schools with questions regarding their transcripts.

Grade	Credits	Site
9 <sup>th</sup>	0-8	Bronx
10 <sup>th</sup>	9 -20	Bronx
11 <sup>th</sup>	21-29	Manhattan

12 <sup>th</sup>	30+	Manhattan
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## Required Records

Admitted students are also required to complete and submit the following as part of the enrollment process:

- Birth Certificate
- Proof of residence: This can be a utility bill, (but not a cable bill).
- Registration Form: This form is used to record all basic information about the student and the family, including home, work, and emergency telephone numbers. It is extremely important that a parent or guardian sign this form.
- Free and Reduced Price Meals Application: This form must be completed for all students and will be held in strict confidence.
- Medical Forms: This set of forms must be submitted for all students within the first 30 days of attendance. It is the responsibility of each parent to keep their child's medical information, including food allergies, up to date.
- Record Release: This form gives the school permission to obtain all records pertaining to a given student from his or her previous school. It must be completed and should include the telephone number and address of the previous school, as well as the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

## Orientation

Every student entering JVL Wildcat Academy Charter School is required to participate in a three-day orientation session. This orientation typically takes place at the end of August for the fall term and at the end of January for the spring term. Separate orientation sessions are scheduled for students enrolled between the August orientation session and the beginning of the spring term.

During orientation, students participate in a range of activities involving teachers, counselors, and administrators, such as: providing writing samples; completing a Personal Values Inventory; meeting with staff to discuss the school's policies, expectations and goals, attending classes, and participating in a personal goal-setting session. Students are also interviewed individually by internship site coordinators and/or JVL Wildcat counselors to determine their vocational interest and possible internship placement. Finally, incoming students are made aware of counseling services provided by the school and our outside consultants, the Youth Counseling League.

Students also take a series of assessments during orientation that help JVL Wildcat staff determine grade and classroom placement. These include the following:

- IXL (45-minute computer-assisted diagnostic tests in reading, language arts and Math).
- Home Language Survey (used for placement in ELL programs).



## Curriculum and Instructional Design High-School Program

### High School Program

#### Overview

Students enter Wildcat having earned varying numbers of credits in disparate subject areas. In order to accommodate all levels of learners, Wildcat Academy functions as an ungraded school divided into small, heterogeneous learning teams. This model allows the school to emphasize individualized instruction, intensive case management, interdisciplinary teaching strategies, and cooperative learning – all methods that have proven to help students acquire a deep understanding of key concepts while developing critical work skills including self-direction, perseverance, and commitment to quality. Additionally, Wildcat teachers employ innovative classroom techniques such as student portfolios, thematic course units and the integration of instructional technology into the everyday learning environment.

Another critical design element of the School is its internship program, arranged by Wildcat with various host employers at work sites throughout the city, and where students learn about the world of work while also earning money and course credit. Students attend classes at Wildcat and their internships in alternating weeks since the School has found that over-age under-credited students become more engaged in school when they are active in the world of work that the School has structured. Each student at Wildcat is required to enroll in the full academic program and participate in an internship.

While Wildcat does follow an “ungraded” classroom model, for the purposes of alignment with State and City standards, students are classified as follows:

Grade 9	0-8
Grade 10	9-20 credits
Grade 11	21-29 credits
Grade 12	30+

#### Schedules

Wildcat Academy students are expected to be involved with their education on a full-time basis. All students attend school approximately 215 days per year. Wildcat Academy’s scheduling plan includes the following key points:

- School buildings open from 8:00 AM to 6:00PM;
- Classes in session from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM; and
- On-line computer access from all areas to facilitate group project research.

A six-week summer term is also mandatory for all students. Hours are 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. Students may earn up to three credits for the summer term.

Wildcat’s structure is designed to meet the needs of individual students, with not only multiple variations of student schedules depending on their credit needs, but also after-school and pull-out opportunities to

provide remedial services. Student course schedules are individually tailored so students take those classes they need for graduation or to prepare them for success on the Regents exams. Students who struggle with subjects are assigned additional classes, such as Reading Lab or Transition Math, or can receive after-school tutoring (until 6pm) by Wildcat graduates or by teachers for specific subjects or to prepare for Regents exams.

Examples of two different Wildcat daily student schedules are shown below:

Period	Period Start Time	Period End Time	Subject
1	9:00	9:50	Creative Writing
2	9:55	10:45	Algebra
3	10:50	11:40	Global 4
4	11:45	12:35	Language Arts
5	12:40	1:30	Lunch
6	1:35	2:25	Algebra
7	2:30	3:20	Web Site Design
8	3:30	4:50	ESports

Period	Period Start Time	Period End Time	Subject
1	9:00	9:50	Living Environment
2	9:55	10:45	US History and Gov't
3	10:50	11:40	Global 3
4	11:45	12:35	Language Arts
5	12:40	1:30	Lunch
6	1:35	2:25	Literature
7	2:30	3:20	Chemistry
8	3:30	4:45	Art Therapy

### **Credit Accumulation**

#### **Academic Program**

All JVL Wildcat students must meet the New York State “seat time” requirement of 54 hours per term in order to earn a credit towards graduation. However, in keeping with the school’s alternative learning environment, these 54 hours are broken down into 42 hours of classroom instruction and 12 hours of supervised classroom-based assignments. These assignments consist of investigations, research papers, projects and reinforcement homework. Students are responsible for completing these assignments as part of the experiential learning strategy that characterizes the JVL Wildcat Academy. The 12-24 hours needed to complete these assignments amount to the prescribed additional hours of instructional time. For marking purposes, the latter out-of-class homework accounts for 25% of students' classroom grades.

JVL Wildcat can provide examples of Weekly Assignments, Samples of Student Work and Rubrics upon request to clarify the classroom-based assignment aspect of our educational program.

## **Internship Program**

JVL Wildcat awards elective credit for the Internship Program as follows:

One credit is awarded for:

- Complete journal and satisfactory portfolio activities;
- Minimum 54 hours of internship service; and
- Satisfactory internship evaluation.

Two credits are awarded for:

- Complete journal and satisfactory portfolio activities;
- Minimum 108 hours of internship service; and
- Satisfactory internship evaluation.

## **Curriculum**

### Core Subjects

Each core subject offered by the Wildcat Academy has an approved curriculum that is aligned to the New York State learning standards and performance indicators. All of Wildcat Academy's core curricula are based on NYS curriculum guidelines as well as core curricula and core curricula guidelines produced by NYC DOE. Wildcat core curricula are reviewed annually and adjustments are made as required.

According to New York State Learning Standards, core subjects are defined as the following:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Social Sciences
- Languages Other Than English
- Arts
- Health, Physical Education and Family Consumer Sciences
- Career Development and Occupational Studies

### Electives

Students who intend to get further training for employment in college or those who will enter the work force or military directly after high school should tailor their elective choices around their employment plans. All students should consider taking extra math, computer and office skills, writing, literature, and other humanities courses.

## **Additional Services**

### **Special Education**

The special education coordinators (two at each of the sites) provide services in small-groups and individualized settings. All students are assessed at entry to the school, and can be identified for additional services by assessment results or by teacher referral. Please see the Special Education section of this guide for more detailed information.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

JVL Wildcat offers a full range of services to aid in the instruction of English Language Learners. Please see the ELL section of this guide for more information.

### **Title I**

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, JVL Wildcat receives funds to support a School-Wide Program that provides supplemental instructional and support services to all students. For more information about the school's specific provision of Title I services, please see the most recent version of the Consolidated Application (available upon request).

## **Internship Program**

An important factor contributing to the success of Wildcat Academy has been the interplay of academic studies and the internship/job experience. The internship/job experience reinforces our approach to academics by allowing students to be active and work cooperatively while at the same time learning employability skills. Success at a job can help clarify the purpose and routines of the classroom.

Aside from the socialization aspect of internships, Wildcat Academy's students are taught skills with future jobs in mind. Vocational education classes such as horticulture, construction, culinary arts and graphic arts reinforce practical experience. All students experience several different internship assignments while attending Wildcat Academy.

At the present time, internship sites range from law firms to construction work sites. Students with exceptional academic records are eligible for positions at construction sites or on the USS Intrepid. On occasion, students with demonstrated work skills have been hired for permanent positions-several by local trade unions.

Please see the Internship section of this guidebook for comprehensive information about this aspect of the JVL Wildcat instructional program.

## **Performance Measurement**

All incoming students are administered the IXL Math and ELA Assessment Test which provides individual baseline data for annual measurement of individual student progress. Students may be tested in May to check progress.

Wildcat Academy utilizes all State Exams with the understanding that these exams are, in their very design, in alignment with State Standards. In areas where no State exams exist, other standardized assessments are used. Local teacher-made assessments aligned with State Standards, performance indicators and the Wildcat Academy curricula are also used. These assessments include teacher-developed assignments and tests, portfolios, and direct examination of student work. PSAT's and SAT's are also a part of the School's assessment program.

The School utilizes the information from all assessments to refine the curriculum and classroom practice to ensure that the School can respond effectively to the needs of individual learners. Assessment results facilitate an understanding of the status of each student in relation to his/her level of achievement regarding the specific goals of the School. Where these assessments reveal that students are not performing at expected levels, modifications to curriculum and individual student programs will be made. Accordingly, the results of student assessments will influence the type of professional development offered to the instructional staff.

### **Grades and Report Cards**

Report cards are distributed twice each term. Progress reports are distributed after the first six weeks of every term. One report card is issued for the summer term.

### **Honor Roll**

The student must meet the following criteria to qualify for the honor roll:

- Have an 80 average or better.
- Take at least four core subjects.
- Must pass all classes.
- Must have 85% or better attendance.

### **Field Trips**

As part of their regular classroom instruction, teachers may schedule field trips during the school year. Permission slips may be required for students under 18.

### **Student Support**

Members of the school community consciously and continually work to construct a personalized and supportive environment and a climate of caring and respect that facilitates the exchange of information and encourages students and staff members to discuss and solve problems, academic and non-academic.

When a student is having academic problems, that student is assigned to a mentor tutor who provides one-on-one instruction and help with assignments.

When it is determined that a student is dealing with a non-academic personal issue that may interfere with his/her success at Wildcat Academy, the Youth Counseling League offers on-site counseling for those students and their families. In addition, the Youth Counseling League and the Creative Alternative Team

provide workshops at the Wildcat Academy on a wide range of subjects and provides support groups for bereavement, domestic violence, parenting and stress management.

## Graduation Requirements

The John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School (Wildcat Academy) adheres strictly to the New York State requirements for graduation, including all revised State Board of Regents' requirements and examinations.

For high school graduation, students must:

1. Attain 85% or better attendance.
2. Accumulate 44 credits\*, including:

English	8 Credits
Social Studies	8 Credits 4 Global History 2 US History 1 Economics 1 Government
Science	6 Credits
Mathematics	6 Credits
Art	1 Credit
Music	1 Credit
Foreign Language	2 Credits
Health Education	1 Semester / 1 Credit
Electives	7 Credits
Gym	4 Semesters / 4 Credits

\* In order to graduate from the Wildcat Academy Charter High Schools, students must complete at least 44 required units of study. Colleges may have more requirements for admission; students should check individual college catalogs regarding courses they may have to take for acceptance.

3. Achieve passing grades\*\* on five New York State Regents Examinations:
  - a. English
  - b. Mathematics
  - c. Global History
  - d. U.S. History and Government
  - e. Science

\*\* Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2022 must take and pass Regents exams in English, Math, US History & Government, Global Studies and Science with a score of 65 or greater to obtain a diploma.

To earn an Advanced Regents diploma, students must score 65 or more on their Regents exams and take additional credits in a language other than English, pass a Regents Comprehensive Assessment in that

language, pass an additional Regents exam in science (at least one course should be in life science and one in physical sciences) and take an additional set of math courses. Adjustments are made for students taking a sequence in Career or Technology Education or the arts.

#### ELL Students

All English Language Learners must pass the Regents English Exam to receive a regular high school diploma. However, these students who enter the U.S. in 9th grade or later may take other required Regents examinations in their native languages, if the translated exam is available and if the test is taken within three years of their entering the U.S. Regents examinations are available in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Haitian-Creole, and Korean.

#### Special Education Students

The law states that students who receive special education services should be prepared to earn regular high school diplomas and meet all graduation standards and requirements.

## **Internship Program**

### Overview

As part of the school's mandate to provide "school to work" activities, all students at John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy are required to participate in a 20-hour or more a week internship at an approved internship site. The objective of the John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Internship Program is to provide our students with an opportunity to expand their experience in the career pathway of their choice. The active involvement of the workplace as a learning environment is intended to challenge students to higher academic and skill standards and help them to better identify careers of interest to them.

From a career perspective, the Internship Program is intended to:

- Expose students to a professional business environment.
- Provide entry-level experience to students by providing related tasks.
- Allow students to spend quality time in areas of interest.
- Expose students to group situations and working with minimum supervision.
- Enhance students' resumes with professional business experience.

Students should also use the internship experience to develop broader skills including:

- Developing a sound work ethic.
- Understanding professional dress and behaviors.
- Enhancing social and business behavior.
- Improving communication skills.

### **Internship Program and Academic Standards**

Internships are not just a complement to but an integral part of the learning experience at JVL Wildcat Academy. As such, students are expected to take their internship experiences just as seriously as any other academic requirement.

The school strives to establish meaningful academic connections between academic content and internship experiences. Using as guides the New York State Learning Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) and the SCANS Skills (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills), Wildcat employs recognized standards in the choice of internship sites, the oversight and monitoring of students' work at the sites and in the evaluation of that work.

For more information about New York State Learning Standards and SCANS Skills, please see the comprehensive materials provided at the end of this guidebook. Students are expected to understand how their internship work fits in with these guidelines.



## **Internship Sites and Descriptions**

An appendix to this handbook contains a listing of all Wildcat-approved internship sites. We have available sites in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan.

## **Internship Preparation and Placement**

The following sections describe how students are prepared for internships as well as the process by which they go about obtaining an appropriate placement. For comprehensive information about how job sites are chosen, screened and monitored, please refer to the John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School Internship Planner for Employers and Supervisors.

## **Pre-Admission Intake Interview**

Each student and his or her parent/guardian participate in a pre-admission intake interview during which the student discusses his/her personal and career goals. The internship program is outlined, student responsibilities and activities toward earning credit are explained and the student is introduced to the school's Internship Coordinator, a position currently held by Ms. Julissa Lopez in the Manhattan building and Mr. Javar Stirrup in the Hunts Point building.

## **Vocational Readiness Workshop**

Admitted students attend a small-group Vocational Readiness workshop during which an informal assessment of the student's work-readiness and competencies is made. In doing this, staff members rely on the Work Adjustment Inventory (WAI), a multidimensional, norm-referenced instrument designed to assess work-related temperament according to six temperament traits:

- Activity
- Empathy
- Sociability
- Assertiveness
- Adaptability
- Emotionality

At the end of the workshop, staff members use WAI results as well as observations made during other Vocational Readiness workshop activities and interviews to help students understand the type of internships for which they might be best suited, according to characteristics including:

- Perseverance
- Willingness
- Punctuality
- Receptivity to instruction
- Group functioning

- Remuneration concerns
- Suitability for the workplace
- Tolerance to criticism; and
- Consistency in work output

Additionally, during the Vocational Readiness workshop students participate in activities designed to build their work-readiness skills and knowledge and receive information about available internship opportunities from the school's Internship Coordinator.

#### Student Orientation

Immediately prior to the beginning of the school term in which they enter Wildcat, new students attend an Orientation, where they engage in academic classes and a number of group-building and acculturation activities that include a presentation by the Internship Coordinator, during which s/he articulates:

- Internship program objectives
- Basic program requirements, including:
  - Worksite attendance
  - Punctuality
  - Stipend
  - Procedures
  - Required documentation
- Credit requirements
- Detailed information about available internship opportunities, including:
  - Location
  - Supervisor
  - Job title and duties
  - Age requirements (if any)
  - Other requirements (health exam, separate application, interview, drug testing)
- Application and placement procedures

Students are encouraged to ask questions during this session so that they may better understand the Internship Program and raise any concerns they may have.

#### Other Activities

Additionally, during the first week of classes, students attend an assembly where the school Internship Coordinator reiterates and goes over the Internship Portfolio Handbook in detail, the students' responsibilities

and Wildcat's expectations (i.e. requirements for earning credit, worksite attendance, punctuality, writing of daily journal, classroom activities, documentation samples and procedures). Again, during this assembly, time is reserved for a Question and Answer period during which students are encouraged to raise issues for clarification or further explanation.

#### Preliminary Internship Choices

Once the Orientation session is complete and students have reviewed the distributed Internship Handbook, they should select their preliminary internship choices (up to three) and record their responses using a form provided in the Student Internship Planner Handbook. This sheet must be brought to the student's placement meeting with the Internship Coordinator (see below).

#### Internship Coordinator Meetings

After Orientation and once they have made their preliminary internship choices, students must meet individually with the Internship Coordinator for assistance in choosing worksites that match their interests and skills (as determined during the pre-admission interviews and subsequent Vocational Readiness workshop). Students are responsible for scheduling these interviews and are expected to come prepared with ideas about their preferred job assignments.

#### Applying for an Internship

Once the student and the Internship Coordinator have agreed on an appropriate internship choice (either at the initial meeting or in a subsequent meeting), procedures for securing the assignment differ according to the specific site supervisor's preferences.

#### Applications

All students are required to fill out a basic application for the school's records. In addition, some intern sites require that students file an additional application (i.e., hospitals usually require completion of a "Volunteer Application").

#### Interviews

All internships require that students meet with the site supervisor prior to assignment. In most cases, one of two things will occur:

1. The student is encouraged to contact the site supervisor directly, or
2. The internship coordinator contacts the site supervisor to arrange an interview on behalf of the student.

The interview itself is typically a "match" interview during which the supervisor and student determine the appropriateness of the fit. Some interviews are conducted in small group settings, while other are conducted one-on-one. In any type of interview, site expectations are outlined and students are encouraged to ask questions about the job, environment, duties, etc.

#### Selection Process

After the application is filed and all interviews are completed, the site supervisor makes the decision whether or not to place the student in the assignment. Please note that, at any time during either the application or interview process, both the supervisor and the student reserve the right to decline the placement.

### **Additional Requirements for Internships**

Some sites may require that students complete further requirements before being placed in an internship. Examples might include:

- Drug testing
- Fingerprinting
- Skills test (typing, software)
- Proof that student does not have a criminal record
- Parental permission/signature
- Health exam
- Completion of training program

In addition, some job sites (such as construction companies) require that students meet a minimum age requirement or work at times that are not within standard school hours. Students will be informed of any special site stipulations by the Internship Supervisor prior to the beginning of the placement process.

### **“Create Your Own Internship” Option**

After completion of their junior year at Wildcat, a student may create his/her own internship. The student must provide a written request to seek his/her own placement for approval by the Internship Coordinator and the Director. ONLY after this step has been completed may a student initiate contact with potential employer.

After the student and supervisor have worked out the conditions of the internship placement, the student must provide the following information to the Internship Coordinator before work can begin:

- A letter from the supervisor and/or facility head stating the job description. This letter must be typed on official company letterhead.
- Completed Student and Employer Contact forms

Please note that independent internships must comply with all guidelines established by Wildcat Academy. The Internship Supervisor will advise students to ensure compliance.

### **Student Learning Agreement**

Each student who referred to an internship site must file a Student Learning Agreement with the Internship Coordinator. This form is executed by jointly the student and the site supervisor and serves as the “contract” for the student’s term of employment, detailing information including:

- The assignment start and end date
- The student’s work schedule / hours
- Clear job title and description

- Definition of job tasks

In addition, site supervisors and students are asked to link the student's assigned tasks to student learning goals as defined by the New York State Learning Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies. After the form is completed and signed by both the student and the site supervisor, the student should return it to the Internship Coordinator, who will review the learning goals with the student and add his/her own signature.

By signing the Student Learning Agreement, students commit to the following rules:

1. Arrive at the internship site on or before the start time every day he/she is scheduled to work.
2. Attend all scheduled classes at school.
3. If he/she must be absent from the internship site due to serious illness, he/she must contact the Internship Coordinator and the Internship Supervisor prior to the scheduled start time.
4. Demonstrate honesty, punctuality, positive attitude, proper dress and willingness to learn.
5. Work with the Internship Coordinator and the Site Supervisor to achieve the internship learning goals.
6. Participate in internship workshops and complete all portfolio assignments.
7. Ask the Internship Supervisor for clarity about any assignments.
8. Talk to the Internship Coordinator and Site Supervisor about any problems
9. Follow all workplace rules and regulations and maintain confidentiality.

In turn, by signing the agreement, the site supervisor commits to:

1. Provide a meaningful, well-supervised internship experience that is commensurate with the student's capabilities and will enable the student to develop workplace skills and enhance his/her understanding of careers represented at the worksite.
2. Provide the student with an orientation to the job and worksite, including addressing safety and security issues.
3. Maintain a safe, healthy and hazard-free work environment that complies with all city, state, federal workplace safety laws and regulations.
4. Consult the Internship Coordinator immediately regarding any issues related to the internship.
5. Record attendance and sign the student's time sheet.
6. Be available to discuss student progress via telephone and/or on site visits by the program staff and to complete a student evaluation at the end of each cycle.

Finally, the Internship Coordinator's signature indicates that he/she will:

1. Work with the Site Supervisor and student to establish clarity about the learning objectives, responsibilities and expectations.
2. Communicate with the Site Supervisor on a regular basis and be available to address any issue or problems that arise.
3. Prepare students for work prior to the internship start date and provide ongoing support to help maximize learning and worksite performance.
4. Gather input from the Site Supervisor and the student in order to provide meaningful feedback and evaluation.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

As with school, students are required and expected to report to their internship sites on time every day. Once the student has been assigned, he/she must know the name and phone number of the Site Supervisor. If for any reason the student will be late for his/her internship or must be absent, the student must call the internship site to inform his/her supervisor of the reason for and length of the absence / lateness.

#### Site Monitoring

##### Daily

Once a student begins work, site monitoring and maintenance tasks are carried out by the Internship Coordinator. Daily calls are made to all Site Supervisors to:

- Check on interns' attendance and punctuality
- Answer any questions that the Site Supervisor may have;
- Monitor appropriateness of interns' work schedule, duties, activities, working conditions, etc.

##### Periodic

The Internship Coordinator makes regularly scheduled site visits to monitor interns on the job. During these visits, the Internship Coordinator meets one-on-one with students to ensure that their activities are fulfilling the requirements of the internship program and conditions outlined in the Student Learning Agreement, as well as with the site supervisor to answer questions and ensure that students are meeting expectations. The Internship Coordinator is responsible for gauging compliance with the Internship Program's guidelines and will ask specific questions and directly observe interns at work in order to gather sufficient information.

It is the school's practice to conduct internship site visits on a rotating basis through the following ten zones:

- Union Square to Battery Park building;
- Hunts Point building area;
- Downtown Brooklyn;
- East Harlem to Upper East Side;
- Pelham Parkway area;

- East Side to Sunnyside, Queens;
- South Bronx to Yankee Stadium;
- West Side; and
- East New York to Brownsville.

School Internship Coordinators also conduct unannounced "drop-in" visits, when appropriate (e.g. schools, daycare and certain social services agencies do not usually allow unannounced visits). The decision to make a "drop-in" visit is made on a case-by-case basis and is usually undertaken to assess in person, without advance notice, any problems or concerns reported by an involved party, including but not limited to the student, his or her parent/guardian or the Site Supervisor.

### **Timesheets**

For each internship week, students must submit a completed timesheet detailing dates and times worked. This form must be signed by both the student and the site supervisor. Timesheet hours and supervisor signatures are verified. Forging supervisor signatures is grounds for termination for the internship site.

Students are responsible for handing in sheets on time!

- Timesheets are due Mondays by 2:00 PM.
- Timesheets turned in after Monday @ 2:00 will be processed the following week.
- Only one time sheet will be processed per week.
- Students absent from school for any reason will not have their timesheets processed that week.

This handbook contains examples of correctly and incorrectly completed timesheets. Please review them carefully. Timesheets improperly filled out or lacking proper signatures will not be processed.

### **Stipends**

A note on stipends: Internships are provided to expose students to the world of work. As a result of this exposure, students enter the employment field after graduation in a better position for gaining employment than many other high school students. Additionally, students have experienced the "real world" in a setting in which their performance is directly related to their success on the job. Stipends are available to students not as a primary incentive to complete internship work but as an opportunity to be rewarded for exceptional commitment and achievement.

All students are eligible to earn an hourly stipend for their internship work based on successful participation at an approved worksite. This stipend begins at \$1/per hour for all incoming students. As with all other aspects of life, Wildcat Academy believes that students who perform exceptionally deserve the opportunity to increase their stipend. Students who don't perform up to standards will have their stipend adjusted accordingly. The maximum stipend is \$5.00/ hour, and there is no minimum.

#### **Stipend Amounts**

Stipends are adjusted after each marking period. The current stipend policy is as follows:

Report Card Averages	Hourly Stipend	Attendance (School and Internship) Adjustments
Above 90	\$5.15	Maximum stipend is \$5.00
Above 85	\$3.00	Perfect* Attendance \$2.00/hour 3 or fewer total absences, lates, or early dismissals \$1.00/hour
Above 80	\$2.00	Perfect* Attendance \$2.00/hour 3 or fewer total absences, lates, or early dismissals \$1.00/hour
Below 80	\$1.00	None

\* Perfect Attendance = 0 lates, 0 early dismissals, 0 absences

#### Disciplinary Infractions

The school director reserves the right to adjust stipends based on other appropriate circumstances.

#### Stipend Examples

	Report Card Average	Base Stipend	Attendance	Stipend Adj,	Other	Stipend Adj,	Total Hourly Stipend
Student A	78	\$2.00	1 absence, 2 lates	\$1.00	None	\$0.00	\$3.00
Student B	68	\$1.00	Perfect	\$0.00	None	\$0.00	\$1.00
Student C	82	\$3.00	Greater than 3 total absences/lates/early dismissals	\$0.00	None	\$0.00	\$3.00
Student D	85	\$3.00	2 absences, 1 late	\$1.00	3 discipline referrals	(\$3.50)	\$0.50

#### Stipend Distribution

- Stipends are distributed after 3:20 PM on Fridays.
- Students absent from school for any reason will not receive their stipends on the day of absence.
- Stipends are only available for pick up after 4:00 PM any day after the stipend has been issued.



- Stipend checks not picked up within a week are returned to the main office at John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy, 17 Battery Place.

### **Internship Portfolios**

In addition to preparing academic projects assigned during the internship week, students must complete in-class Career Development activities and produce an Internship Portfolio. The rating received on this collection of documents, writings, research results and activities will determine how many credits a student earns for an internship during a term (along with his/her attendance record and site evaluation results).

The Internship Portfolio has two components: the Daily Journal and weekly classroom activities. Each student's Internship Portfolio must contain the required components and number of activities to receive credit.

In order to track students' Portfolio progress, in-class facilitators monitor required internship portfolio activities. This interaction is intended to foster students' ownership of the work experience and help gauge progress towards program goals. In-class facilitators:

- Review the students' previous work week's daily journals
- Assist the students in completing class activities
- Maintain records of the students' journals and activities; and
- Assist students in maintaining their own records of journals and activities

A Facilitator Portfolio Planner is provided at the end of this guidebook and contains a list of required and optional activities, forms and information that staff facilitators should use to assist students in activity completion and keeping records of completed assignments.

Please note:

- To award credits toward graduation, JVL Wildcat Academy is required to maintain accurate records of internship and portfolio activity to ensure compliance with New York State Education Department regulations. Thus, it is essential that students submit journal entries and track activity completion in a timely and conscientious manner.
- Portfolio activities must be completed during school time. You must choose one activity per week and complete it during a weekly Career Development session or conduct research during your internship week and complete the write-up during the weekly school session.
- One activity must be completed each week of school attendance.

JVL Wildcat has also developed procedures and documents to help establish clear rubrics for assessing student portfolio work and awarding credit for student participation in the Internship Program. Please see the Rubric for Evaluating Internship Portfolio Activities in the appendix to this guidebook for further information.

### **Intern Recognition**

Formal recognition is given to student interns in the form of the Intern of the Week award for exemplary performance in the Internship Program. Students who exhibit 100% attendance are also recognized. In addition, stipend adjustments are made at midterm and at the end of the term based on academic grades, attendance and positive internship evaluations. (See Stipend section above for details.)

### **Student Internship Evaluation**

At the end of each internship term, the Site Supervisor is required to submit a Student Internship Evaluation Form. This form asks supervisors to assess student progress towards learning goals, provide feedback on skill development (as defined by the New York State Learning Standards) and rate overall job performance. The Site Supervisor must review this form with the student prior to submitting it to the school's Internship Coordinator for use in granting credit. The student and the site supervisor's signatures are both required.

#### Internship Credit

JVL Wildcat awards elective credit for the Internship Program as follows:

One credit is awarded for:

- Minimum 54 hours of internship service; and
- Satisfactory internship evaluation.

Two credits are awarded for:

- Complete journal and satisfactory portfolio activities;
- Minimum 108 hours of internship service; and
- Satisfactory internship evaluation.

#### Changing Internships

Occasionally, students decide to change internships during the term. This can be accommodated during two select time periods.

- 1 One Week before the term begins
- 2 Mid Term Week

In order to change an internship, a student must submit a written request to the Internship Coordinator during the time periods described above. Students not doing this will not be permitted to change internships.

#### Losing an Internship

When a student is "fired" from his/her internship, he/she must submit a self-evaluation regarding the internship termination. After the self-evaluation is submitted to the Internship Coordinator, the student must undergo a mandatory intervention course in which professional behavior and skills are reinforced. Only after completion of the intervention course, the student will be eligible to participate in another approved internship. No credits are awarded for terminated internships.

## **Personnel**

Please note: JVL Wildcat publishes a comprehensive Personnel Manual that supplies staff with specific information relating to employment at the school, including:

- Personnel Policies
- Benefits
- Evaluations and Problem-Solving Procedures

All Wildcat staff members are expected to sign a certification of receipt and understanding of this Manual upon employment. Copies of this guidebook are available to non-staff members upon request.

### **Overview**

Wildcat Academy is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer that will offer equal employment opportunities to individuals seeking to work in the school regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or religious affiliation. Wildcat will comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers.

The school administrators are responsible for the hiring of teaching staff. The chief administrator and the principal screen applications, interview candidates and, when deemed necessary, arrange for a model lesson and follow-up interviews. Before accepting a position, the prospective teacher meets again with the chief administrator for an orientation that specifies school philosophy, history, and expectations for staff members.

To be eligible to apply for a posted position, candidates must meet the position's minimum hiring specifications and must present a minimum of three verifiable references that support qualifications for the job. All potential school employees will undergo fingerprinting by the NYC Department of Education.

In accordance to Education Law, the number of uncertified teachers who satisfy the requirements imposed by Section 2851(2)(g) or 2854(3)(a)(1) of the Education Law and are employed by this proposed charter school will not exceed 30 percent of the school's teaching staff, or five teachers, whichever is less. The remaining teachers employed by Wildcat Academy will be certified in accordance with the requirements applicable to other public schools.

## **Teaching Philosophy**

Wildcat Academy teachers are expected to apply an "all students can learn" attitude to the classroom. Utilizing theories ranging from differentiated learning to multiple intelligences, Wildcat teachers are expected to draw upon the existing strengths of students to benefit the classroom. This philosophy runs concurrent with the school's policy of heterogeneous grouping, in which students of varying backgrounds and levels of academic achievement are grouped together in order to best take advantage of individual learning styles and response to individual teaching styles. Wildcat Academy firmly believes that an environment of cooperative learning is imperative as we prepare our students for a 21<sup>st</sup> century society in which diversity is a reality rather than a mandate.

The Wildcat Teacher uses any means necessary in the classroom to elicit quality products from students. Examples include learning portfolios, oral reports, journal writing and small group assignments.

In particular, Wildcat believes that writing is the gateway to literacy and all learning; therefore, all students produce meaningful writing products in each and every course to produce a deeper understanding of the curriculum. In addition to 12 hours of offsite assignments per term for each course, students are expected to complete 4, 6, 8 or 10 page research projects in language arts class.

Wildcat seeks teachers with a diverse range of life experience, so that students can have different role models in the classroom. Additionally, this breadth contributes to meaningful and enthusiastic lessons that act contagiously to excite students about learning.

### **Professional Development**

Wildcat Academy is committed to developing, maintaining, assessing and continuously improving a program of professional development to: (a) strengthen instruction; (b) improve teachers' knowledge of content, state learning standards and performance indicators; (c) build teacher capacity to work effectively with students and with the parents and families of students; (d) ensure that teachers are proficient in the collection, analysis and use of student data to improve instruction and student outcomes; and (e) foster a supportive cooperative professional environment in which teachers work cooperatively with peers in a school wide community of learners. Professional development will be tailored to address specific student needs identified through analysis of student data and to address specific needs and gaps in the knowledge or skills of teachers. The professional development program will be results-based, data-driven and standards-based. The goal of the professional development program is to provide teachers and other instructional staff with an array of opportunities to increase their knowledge of content and methodology and to improve their teaching practice.

The Wildcat Academy will conduct regularly scheduled in-service training sessions. The objective of these training sessions is to foster continuous enhancement of the instructional staff's teaching skills and to promote peer-to-peer dialogue regarding best practices and research-based teaching strategies. At these meetings, feedback will be ongoing and reciprocal. At each staff meeting, current research articles that are pertinent to the student population will be discussed.

In addition to the above-discussed training, teachers and other instructional staff will be encouraged to attend professional conferences beyond those offered by the school. They will also be encouraged to visit other similar programs. The professional development program will also facilitate the development of peer mentorships that enable veteran staff to mentor new staff.

All professional development activities will be research-based and consistent with the findings, principles and process in the National Staff Development Council's Standards for Professional Development and the National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching Improving Professional Development: Research-based Principles (2001). The principles that will guide the development and implementation of the School's professional development activities are:

- Professional development is a continuous process that is conducted in the long-term and in a sustained manner. To this end, the professional development program will support face-to-face

training with ongoing technical assistance. The professional development program will also be sustained through the establishment of a peer-based learning community.

- Professional development will result in improved student achievement and developmental growth, and in the enrichment of teaching and the improvement of learning. All professional development activities focus on student-centered instruction, adapting instruction to address student needs and implementing strategies to impact student achievement and developmental growth.
- Professional development consists of activities that are job-embedded, inquiry-based and incorporate current beliefs about teaching and learning. All professional development activities focus on practical, research-based strategies and practices for improving education for students at risk of personal failure due to poor attendance, disruptive behavior, criminal activity and poor academic achievement. The professional development model recognizes that educators learn most effectively when they are able to practice new skills in safe peer-supported environments and in the classroom. Training will include hands-on learning activities and will enable participants to practice new skills in cooperation with peers. It will also help participants develop skills, behaviors, strategies and resources that can be incorporated immediately into instruction.
- Professional development will address specific school needs identified through a careful analysis of multiple measures. Training will employ a cooperative learning model that incorporates participant input regarding specific school needs. Training and technical assistance will help participants integrate new strategies, skills and resources into the school's educational initiatives.
- Professional development will be aligned with NYS learning standards and performance indicators.
- Professional development will be modeled after learning experiences considered valuable for adults. The professional development model incorporates effective, research-based strategies into both content and delivery. The model is data-driven and designed to help participants understand of the research and theory that support the effectiveness and appropriateness of each new strategy, skill, activity and resource. The model employs multiple best practices in professional development, including a cooperative learning model, establishment of a peer-based learning community and ongoing technical assistance.

Student performance and teacher evaluations will serve as tools to assess the effectiveness of the School's professional development programs and activities, and to identify and address specific needs for additional training and technical assistance.

### **Participation in School Governance**

While Wildcat Academy staff will be formally represented before the Board of Trustees by the chief executive officer, the UFT representative and one other teacher, they are free to participate at public meetings of the school, serve on ad hoc committees, and meet with/make recommendations to the Board of Trustees or administration individually. All meetings are open to the general public.

## **Special Education**

### Overview

Wildcat Academy follows these overarching principles in the administration of its special education program:

- Wildcat Academy aims to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's individualized education plan (IEP).
- Wildcat Academy does not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices on the basis of a student having or suspected of having a disability.
- Wildcat Academy adheres to all applicable state and federal guidelines in the implementation of its special education program.

### Philosophy

Wildcat strives to integrate special education students into the general education setting. Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment only occurs if the nature or severity of a student's disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved. Any decision to remove a student from the general education environment is made in accordance with the IEP prepared by the Committee on Special Education of the students' district of residence.

Students with disabilities are expected to participate in, and receive credit for, nonacademic, extracurricular and ancillary programs and activities with all other students to the extent allowed by the IEP. Additionally, students with disabilities are granted access to and expected to take part in school-sponsored programs, activities and services.

### Services at Wildcat

The Wildcat Academy, in keeping with state and federal mandates concerning special education, ensures that all special education programs and services included in a student's IEP are provided directly to the student during school hours. Currently Wildcat Academy employs four full-time, certified special education teachers. These staff members provide consultation and support to classroom teachers; provide instruction in general education classrooms to special education students, both individually and in small groups; provide resource room services; and serve as special education consultants to the overall school community.

Classroom teachers at Wildcat Academy are expected to be highly knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities. In addition to understanding their responsibilities toward students with IEPs, they are required to request any support they may need to implement a student's program and to take all possible steps to implement classroom modifications/ accommodations in accordance with students' IEPs.

### **Responsibilities of Special Education Staff**

In addition to the duties outlined above, special education staff at Wildcat work in tandem with general classroom instructors and school leaders to ensure compliance with both IDEA policy and Charter Law. These responsibilities include:

- Long and short term planning to address individual needs of students;
- Evaluation of students' progress;
- Reporting on all special education issues to the Principal;
- Preparing written reports accurately and in a timely manner;
- Communicating with teachers and parents to facilitate the IEP process;
- Representing the Charter School at CSE meetings
- Remaining knowledgeable on current special education laws, rules, and regulations; and
- Maintaining the privacy of student records and information.

Special education teachers at Wildcat are also responsible for interacting with assigned students' districts of residence, including

- Seeing that referrals are made for students suspected of having a disability;
- Fulfilling reporting requirements of the resident district;
- Ensuring that all appropriate school staff participate in meetings of the resident district CSE; and
- Establishing a reporting structure in accordance with applicable law whereby the district of the student's residence is provided progress on the degree to which the services on the IEP are being provided. (The Special Education teacher will communicate directly with the Chairperson of the District's CSE).

### **Training and Professional Development**

Professional training and development for staff involved with the education of students with disabilities includes:

- Introduction to the CSE referral process;
- Developing student IEPs;
- IEP implementation;
- Evaluation of a student's progress toward IEP goals and objectives;
- Reporting requirements to parents and CSEs; and
- Discipline of students with disabilities.

Professional development is provided by the Center for Educational Innovation and the New York City Center for Charter School Excellence.

In addition to this in-house training, Wildcat provides all staff with opportunities for outside professional development in special education in collaboration with consultants who have track records of service in this area (e.g., already provide such training to existing school districts).

### **Provision of Outside Services**

In any case that Wildcat Academy is unable to directly provide services to the extent mandated by a student's IEP, it will rely on the school district of the student's residence to provide services. If necessary and feasible, the Wildcat Academy will contract with appropriately certified or licensed individuals to provide services under its direction. The services to be provided may include, but are not limited to:

- Speech language pathology and audiologist services;
- Psychological services;
- Physical and occupational therapy;
- Recreation, including therapeutic recreation;
- Early rehabilitation counseling;
- Orientation and mobility services;
- Diagnostic and/or evaluative medical services; or
- Student and/or parent counseling.

Wildcat Academy is currently in the process of identifying a provider of speech services.

### **Referral Process**

For a student to be considered for special education services, he or she must be referred for an evaluation. Upon identification of a student suspected of requiring special education services, a special education staff member completes the DOE form Initial Referral to the Committee on Special Education and submits it by mail with a cover letter to the appropriate regional CSE chairperson or other designated CSE contact person. Please note that the CSE should correspond to the student's district of residence.

This referral form provides a space for the special education teacher/coordinator to list interventions that have already been attempted in order to maintain the student in his or her current educational setting. The form also allows the special education teacher/coordinator to communicate the reasons for the referral and the specific nature of the problem that the student is exhibiting. (For those students already receiving special education services who may need a reevaluation prior to their annual review date, there is a separate reevaluation request form.)

After a referral is sent to the Regional CSE, the student's parents will be contacted by the CSE to obtain written consent for an evaluation to begin. Once the case has been opened, the CSE will conduct the evaluation, arrange a meeting to discuss the results, and determine the child's eligibility for special education services.



Please note that an evaluation referral may also be made by parents (or guardians) as well as teachers, administrators, doctors and/or other professionals involved in a child's education.

#### A Note On Child Find Requirements:

Under federal Child Find requirements, students enrolling for the first time in a New York public school will be screened by a team of teachers (including both regular and special education teachers) to identify any possible indication that the child may need a specialized or intensive education program. Alternatively, they may be referred to the CSE of their district of residence for evaluation.

#### Evaluation

An evaluation is a series of assessments designed to determine whether or not a student has a disability and needs special education services. The CSE will assign psychologists and social workers to conduct a series of evaluations that include a psychoeducational evaluation, a social history, and a classroom observation. If additional specialized evaluations are required – such as speech or psychiatric evaluations – the CSE is responsible for conducting those evaluations. Wildcat will fully cooperate with the CSE during the evaluation process, allowing for classroom observations, records exchange and the participation of the student, teachers, and/or related service providers if needed.

In addition to those students being referred for an initial evaluation, evaluations can also be conducted for children who are already receiving special education services and for whom an additional evaluation is requested (reevaluation). Additionally, students are required to have a new evaluation every three years (triennial evaluation).

#### Developing an IEP

Once an evaluation is complete and it has been determined that a student is eligible to receive special education services, an IEP Team meeting is convened. The IEP team must meet to develop an IEP for the child within 30 calendar days after a child is determined eligible.

#### Requirements and Roles for IEP Teams

Under federal law, the group responsible for developing the IEP is known as the IEP Team. IDEA mandates that a child's IEP Team include the following representatives:

- A child's parent(s) or guardian(s);
- At least one general education teacher (if the student is, or may be participating, in the general education environment);
- At least one special education teacher;
- A district representative who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education and is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and the availability of district resources;
- An instructional expert who can interpret the implications of the evaluation results in terms of designing appropriate instruction; and

- For initial referrals and reevaluations of students who are English Language Learners, a professional bilingual team member (may be a bilingual psychologist, social worker, special education teacher, general education teacher, speech teacher or guidance counselor).

#### Parents

In New York State, parents have long participated in making eligibility and placement decisions about students with disabilities. Under IDEA parents must be informed of and provide written consent to initial and periodic re-evaluations of their child; have their concerns about the education of their child considered during any evaluation; be part of the group that reviews existing evaluation data during any evaluation or re-evaluation of their child; and understand the results of evaluations. Additionally, where the IEP Team determines that no additional data is needed to determine continuing eligibility, parents must receive notice of that determination with a statement of the reasons for that decision. Parents have the right to be provided with the student's IEP and all due process notices in their preferred language or mode of communication. They also have the right to request additional assessments if they disagree with the IEP Team's decision.

The parent must be invited to participate and efforts must be made to select a mutually agreeable date for the IEP meeting; however, the meeting may proceed without the parent provided that documented appropriate outreach was conducted and attempts were made to arrange a mutually agreed upon date and time for the meeting. If the parents indicate that they will be unable to attend and cannot reschedule, they will be informed that they may participate via a telephone conference. Outreach is defined as at least two (2) attempts at telephone contact at different times of the school day, if the parent has a telephone or a follow-up letter sent to the parent by mail and also sent home with the student, if the parent does not have a telephone. All contacts with (and attempts to) contact the parent (including copies of all letters) and the reason for the rescheduled appointment must be documented on the student contact sheet in the student's file.

#### General Education Teachers

The child's classroom teacher is expected to present information about the student's performance in the general education class and to help the IEP Team make decisions about participation in the general education curriculum and other school activities. For students who have more than one general education teacher, only one of the student's teachers must attend the meeting. Input from all the student's teachers who will not be attending should be obtained and presented at the meeting. As a member of the IEP Team, the general education teacher helps the IEP Team determine appropriate behavioral interventions, strategies, supplementary aids and services and program modifications and supports for school personnel that are necessary for the student to participate to the fullest extent possible in the general education curriculum.

#### Special Education Teachers

IDEA requires that at least one special education teacher of the student participate in the IEP Team meeting. When the student's only special education service is a related service, that related service provider participates in the IEP meeting.

#### District Representative

A district representative is a representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise special education and who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and the availability of resources in the school district.

#### Other Participants

##### Student

The student, where appropriate, should participate. Students 14 or older must be invited to participate in IEP meetings where transition planning is or will be part of the IEP.

##### School Psychologist

The school psychologist must participate in CSE subcommittee meetings whenever a new psychological evaluation is reviewed or a change to a service option with a more intensive staff/student ratio is considered.

##### School Physician

A school physician is also a required participant if the parent makes a request for a physician to attend at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the IEP meeting.

##### School Social Worker

The school social worker may participate in an EPC or CSE Review meeting if he/she is involved in any aspect of the evaluation process.

##### Third-Party Parent Member of the CSE

A third-party parent member of the Committee on Special Education should participate. The child's own parent has the right to decline their right to have a parent member participate in the CSE Review. If the parent opts to decline their right for the participation of a parent member, this must be documented by obtaining the parent's signature on the Declination Letter for Parent Members declining the parent member.

##### Translator

A translator is required to attend IEP Team meetings if the parent's preferred language or mode of communication is other than English.

##### Additional Participants

In addition to the participants noted above, the following individuals should be invited to participate in IEP meetings:

- Any school personnel with contributions to make to the decision making process;
- At the discretion of the parent or the district, any individual with special expertise or knowledge of the student;

- Non-Department of Education assessment professionals or service providers involved in conducting providing services to the student.

### **IEP Process**

At the IEP meeting, participants will discuss the evaluation results and which supports and services will be most appropriate to serving a particular child. During this meeting, the IEP will be developed, detailing the services needed, and how and where they will be provided. If parents disagree with the results of their child's evaluation, they should contact their Region's CSE to review their Due Process rights. These rights include requesting an outside assessment, a mediation meeting, or an impartial hearing.

Next, an appropriate placement must be offered based on the needs outlined in the IEP and subject to the parent's consent. The charter school has 60 school days from the time of the parents' consent to evaluation to complete the IEP and offer a placement.

Every teacher of a student with a disability will be provided a copy of the student's IEP and training will be provided by the School's special education staff, as needed, to ensure their understanding of the student's needs and their responsibilities related to the student's IEP.

### **Progress Reports**

Quarterly progress reports regarding each student and his or her IEP, as well as copies of all report cards are provided to the student's parents and to the student's district of residence. The school district is welcome at any time to monitor the school's implementation of its special education program.

### **Reporting Requirements**

In compliance with New York State education law, Wildcat Academy is responsible for providing data regarding its special education program to the SED's Strategic Evaluation Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting (SEDCAR) unit. SEDCAR analyzes data to evaluate the State's progress toward accomplishing the SED's strategic goals for individuals with disabilities.

Wildcat will provide the following data as requested to SEDCAR in 2010-11:

Count of Students with Disabilities Provided Special Education (due: December 1, 2010): This information is submitted to the state via the December 1 Bi-Monthly Charter School Invoice, submitted to the Office of New Schools and is used by the state for the purposes of IDEA fund allocation.

Students Exiting Special Education (due: July 14, 2011): This form collects data regarding the manner in which students with disabilities exit special education, including students who are declassified and returned to general education programs, and postsecondary education and employment plans of students with disabilities.

Special Education Personnel (due February 2, 2011): This online-only form is designed to collect full-time equivalent (FTE) data on or about December 1, 2005, regarding special education personnel who are currently employed according to their certification status and vacancies.

Students with Disabilities Suspended for Disciplinary Reasons (due: August 11, 2011): Online report for detailing in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions and removals to Interim Alternative Education Settings of students with disabilities.

Additionally, Wildcat is responsible for submitting information regarding special education students via the state's BEDS and STEP (9-12 grades) data collection systems. Special education FTE information is also reported bi-monthly to the NYC-DOE Office of New Schools via the Bi-Monthly Invoice Form.

The special education staff in conjunction with the Principal is responsible for ensuring the collection, maintenance, and reporting of all data regarding students with disabilities.

### **Access to Student Records/FERPA**

Wildcat follows all applicable requirements of the IDEA and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") in implementing regulations relating to the confidentiality of student records. All appropriate staff is trained in such requirements, and Wildcat's special education staff will be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of personally identifiable information within student records.

In accordance with FERPA, parents are allowed to inspect and review all of their children's educational records. Upon receipt of such a request, Wildcat will adhere to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Law. In all events, the school will comply with such requests for access within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 45 days after it has received a request.

Before disclosure of any personally identifiable information relating to a student to someone other than the parent or eligible student, Wildcat will (with the exception noted below) obtain a signed and dated written consent of the parent or eligible student. Personally identifiable information may be released without the prior consent of the parent or eligible student to school officials and teachers only if Wildcat determines that such persons have "legitimate educational interests."

All files required by law to be kept confidential are kept under lock, in a place and manner that restricts access to only those individuals who are authorized to view these records. More specifically, special education records are kept in a locked file cabinet under the supervision of a designated member of the special education staff in his or her secure office. S/he maintains a list of those staff allowed to access specific files, including the respective student's teacher(s) and parent(s). A sign-out sheet is maintained by the designated teacher to keep track of record locations at all times.

### **Assessment of Students with Disabilities**

#### **State-Mandated Assessment**

All students with disabilities take state assessments except in cases where a student's IEP determines that he/she cannot participate in regular state assessments. In these instances, the State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) will be administered as required by law.

#### **Other Assessment**

Additional assessments for special education students may include but are not limited to: student learning portfolios, oral reports and videotaped sessions.

A Wildcat special education teacher will discuss each additional component of the school's assessment program with the appropriate CSE to make a determination about which, if any, of these measures are

appropriate to include in the IEP. If the CSE determines that none of the various assessments administered by the school are appropriate for a given student, Wildcat may create individualized assessment instruments based on IEP goals and objectives, which then will be submitted to the CSE for approval (or denial).

#### Discipline of Students with Disabilities

This topic is covered in the “Code of Conduct” section of this manual. However, as described in IDEA, please note the following:

- If a student with a disability is suspended or removed for more than 10 school days in a year, you must notify your regional CSE. The CSE must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop or review a behavior intervention plan.
- If a student with a disability is suspended or removed in excess of 10 school days in a school year, this constitutes a disciplinary change in placement. The CSE must be notified so a Manifestation Determination Review can be conducted
- The charter school may contact the CSE to request an expedited due process hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer to request that a student with a disability be moved to an interim alternative education setting for up to 45 days in cases where maintaining the student in the school is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others. A student can also be moved to an alternative educational setting if he or she brings a gun to school or possesses or uses illegal drugs at school.

## **English Language Learners**

### **Overview**

A student should be identified as an English Language Learner (ELL) if he or she: (1) was not born in the United States and/or has a native language other than English; (2) comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or (3) is a Native American or Alaska Native and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on his or her level of English language proficiency.

Wildcat Academy follows these overarching principles in the administration of its ELL program:

- Wildcat will serve any and all students with limited English proficiency using structured English language immersion so that they may achieve proficiency in the English language as quickly as possible
- The school complies with all applicable laws including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

At the present time, Wildcat Academy has no students in need of ELL services. However, school leadership plans to make a concerted effort in its upcoming recruitment efforts to attract more ELL students.

### **Philosophy**

All students that are English Language Learners will be expected to become proficient in the English language at a rapid pace. Wildcat believes that a structured English immersion program is most beneficial to ELL students in improving their abilities to master the language.

Wildcat ensures that ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and also that ELL students will not be assigned to special education because of their lack of English proficiency. Students of limited English proficiency will receive the same academic content as those students who are native English speakers. All instruction will be in English. However, the level of English used for instruction – both oral and written -- will be modified appropriately for each ELL student. Within the School's extended day schedule, there is ample time that may be used for additional intensive English language instruction. Additionally, all teachers will receive professional development on communicating with students designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and in techniques for detecting whether a student has English language deficiencies.

Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive notices and information from the school in their native language to encourage participation by all members of the school community. Parental outreach may also be conducted through home visits by a school official and an interpreter.

### **Services**

Wildcat plans to provide all necessary staff and specialized curricular materials to enable ELL students to achieve proficiency. The school will directly provide or make referrals to appropriate support services that may be needed by ELL students in order to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic

performance. Such services may include individual counseling, group counseling, home visits, and parental counseling. The School will seek to hire at least one full-time teacher who speaks the foreign language that is most common among its students, which in all likelihood will be Spanish. Parents of ELL students will be kept abreast of their child's progress in English acquisition via communications in their native language.

### **Identification of ELL Students**

As required by law, Wildcat mails or distributes the State Education Department's Home Language Survey to every new student's household before the beginning of the school year. All students who are identified using the survey to be of foreign birth or to come from a home where a language other than English is spoken will be subject to an informal interview conducted by school staff (in the English language.)

If this informal interview indicates that a student speaks limited or no English, the school is then required to assess this child using the LAB-R (Language Assessment Battery Revised). The LAB-R measures language proficiency in English and is used to determine ELL status. The LAB-R should be administered within a short time following the student's entry into the school. Such screening with LAB-R is not necessary if the student's ELL status is available from his or her prior school and is based on an appropriate standardized test, such as the NYSESLAT.

In addition to these formal measures, the school's teachers are responsible for observing each student throughout the class day with an eye towards detecting limited English proficiency. All teachers will receive professional development training on techniques for detecting whether a student has English language deficiencies and on communicating with students designated as ELL students. Any student suspected of having limited English proficiency will be tested to determine if and what level of services are necessary.

### **Exit Criteria**

The NYSESLAT (NYS English Second Language Assessment Test) is given in the spring and required for every ELL student. ELL students take the NYSESLAT each year to gauge their English proficiency and progress. This is the test they must pass in order to move into general English language classes. Any student classified and receiving educational services as an ELL student who subsequently tests above the established cut-off point (e.g., the 40th percentile) will be deemed no longer in need of ELL services.

Additionally, the school will regularly evaluate each student's performance in academic content areas to measure the student's progress in those core subjects. No student will be exited from the ELL program unless they can read, write, and comprehend English well enough to participate meaningfully in the school's programs.

### **Assessment / Accommodations**

All ELL students - regardless of the duration of their attendance in a US school - are required to take state-mandated tests (including math and content area exams) and Regents exams in addition to the NYSESLAT.

There are approved accommodations for ELL students on most State tests and Regents exams. Accommodations include allowing for extra time, separate test locations, use of bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, oral translations, and writing responses in the students' native language.



Students with disabilities who are also Limited English Proficient may also receive these accommodations whether or not they are in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Accommodations include allowing for extra time, separate test locations, use of bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, oral translations, and writing responses in the students' native language.

#### Accountability and Evaluation of the ELL Program

In order to ensure that the ELL program is achieving the desired results (i.e., students are making progress in the acquisition of the English language and making progress academically), the school will annually evaluate the progress of its ELL students on standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments against that of non-ELL students. The school will also track students longitudinally throughout their years at the school to determine if there is significant variation in the academic achievement of students who were once classified ELL and non-ELL students as measured by standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments. The School will track how many students are declassified as ELL and the number of instructional years it takes for this declassification to occur. Wildcat is responsible for submitting this and other information regarding ELL students via the state's BEDS, and STEP (9-12 grades) data collection systems.

## **Student Life**

### **Library**

The Wildcat Academy library provides a multitude of research tools as well as leisure reading sources. The library is intended as a quiet place for students to do research, to read, and to study. Students are required to have a pass from their teacher to visit the library during class time.

### **Internet Policy**

All students may access the internet unless expressly denied by parents in writing to the school. Students may not access inappropriate content, use instant messaging, or use the internet for non-school related business.

### **Textbooks and Supplies**

Students must provide their own materials for learning, including a 3-ring binder, two pens, and most importantly, a ready-to-work attitude. Some books and equipment will be issued on loan and some will be kept in the classroom. Please note that students are responsible for the proper care of all supplies provided by the school and are held financially responsible for disfigurement, breakage, or damage to school or personal property.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are the property of the school and loaned to students for their convenience. Students should protect their own combination and should not share their combination with anyone. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Valuables, personal items and electronic equipment should be left at home. Students are advised not to share lockers with another student.

Students should stow all coats and electronics in the morning before classes begin. Students must understand that administration has the legal right to inspect individual lockers and will make periodic health and safety inspections.

### **Lost and Found**

All items, materials, and possessions found should be turned into the main office where a lost and found will be located. Anyone losing any item should leave a written description of the item with the administrative assistant.

### **Student Government and Organizations**

Clubs are based on student interest. Information on how to form a club or participate in Student Government can be had in consultation with a faculty sponsor.

### **Getting Attention**

Notices or posters approved by the main office may be placed on designated announcement boards.

### **Dress Code**

Student dress and personal appearance should not disrupt or distract from the learning environment of the school. Students should dress for success in the school building as a manner of professional comportment.

The following items are prohibited on school or internship grounds.

- See-through or revealing clothing, which exposes abdomen, cleavage, chest, buttocks or underwear.
- Halter tops, backless shirts, half-shirts, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, sagging pants, and transparent clothing.
- Hats and coats (Both must be stored in lockers.)
- Excessive jewelry
- Excessively high-heeled shoes
- Bare feet or flip-flops
- Undershirts worn as an outer garment
- Clothing with profanity, nudity, suggestive language or obscenity.
- Drug/alcohol/tobacco logo clothing
- Bandannas, headscarves, do-rags, or hairnets
- Gang paraphernalia, colors, beads, etc. that is worn, carried, or visible.

Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to leave the building to change their clothing. Repeated offenses will result in disciplinary action. Students should put hats and coats in lockers upon building entry.

#### Money and Other Valuable Property

Any item that distracts students from learning and does not contribute to a safe school environment should be left at home. Examples include electronic games, dice, music with demeaning, obscene or profane lyrics, excessively expensive/flashy clothing or firecrackers.

Pagers, walkmans, radios, telephones, and other electronic equipment, water pistols, toys or similar items are also disruptive to the educational process and are not allowed. Students should leave them at home or in their lockers. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

#### **Emergency Phone Calls**

All emergency phone calls for students should go through the main office where the counselor will be notified and the students will be notified during the change of classes.

#### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Wildcat Academy is a drug-free and safe learning environment. Any person using, possessing or distributing alcohol or drugs on or around school property will be recommended for dismissal and the police may be called.

**Weapons**

Any person using, displaying, carrying or possessing any dangerous instrument or deadly weapon on or around school property shall be recommended for dismissal and the police will be notified.

## **Attendance**

### Overview

Serious students know that there is a close relationship between academic success and school attendance. Good attendance habits learned and developed in school will be carried over into the world of work. Since every student has expressed an interest in furthering his or her education, it is expected that students attend all scheduled classes (e.g. subject classes, electives, group counseling, tutoring, health & physical education) each day. Daily attendance at internship sites is mandatory.

### **Tardiness**

The school day begins at 9:00. Students not in their classrooms at 9:15 will be marked as arriving late. Students entering the building or not in classrooms at 9:15 will be required to make up the time missed at a mandatory detention from 5:00 – 5:30 in the lunch room on the date of the late arrival. Students arriving with a parent note will still be required to serve detention.

Any student arriving after 9:30 am without a valid, written excuse and a phone call from a parent/guardian will not be admitted to school.

### **School Arrival and Departure**

In recognizing the school's need to adequately monitor and maintain daily attendance records, Wildcat Academy CS has developed a comprehensive protocol and safeguard measures for attendance in the 2022-2023 school year.

The system has the following characteristics:

- Each student is assigned an I.D. number and card.
- Each student is required to swipe his/her card when arriving and departing school.
- Attendance monitors will receive a daily printout of students in attendance and students who are absent or tardy with an indication of when they arrived at school. These reports are available by 10AM. Attendance monitors will call the home of each student listed as absent. Monitors send letters to the parents of chronically absent students (after three and six absences).
- Daily attendance reports will be available to staff after 10AM.
- The staff is required to maintain an attendance roster for each period.

Wildcat's database has added reporting capability for attendance controls on a daily, monthly, and annual basis for each building individually and for the two sites combined. Furthermore, the database is being adjusted to flag students when a threshold is reached (e.g. three absences), so that the counselor and attendance coordinator are notified and intervention strategies can be enacted.

## **Internship Attendance**

Tracking internship attendance is the responsibility of the Internship Coordinator and the Site Supervisors who produce a daily record of student attendance and punctuality. Student attendance information from each site is collected daily by the site internship supervisor and is communicated via phone and e-mail to a

central location. Preliminary plans are in place that will enable a student to swipe his/her ID card when arriving and departing some internship sites. In this manner each internship site will be included in the database and internship attendance will be recorded in the same manner as when the students are in attendance at one of the two school sites.

#### Absence Policy

- If a student is going to be absent, a parent/guardian should contact the student's counselor before the date of the absence and provide proper documentation upon the student's return to school.
- Examples of legal absences are: medical appointments, mandated court appearances, approved religious holidays, or emergencies.
- Students are responsible for making up all missed work.
- Parents/guardians will be called daily regarding student absences.
- School-related absences and field trips will not be counted as absences for determining perfect attendance.
- Students may not participate in extra-curricular activities including dances, games, practices, etc. if they have not been in attendance for the normal school day or if they have been suspended.
- Students with perfect attendance will be eligible for stipend raises and lunch time privileges.

#### **Early Dismissal Policy**

- Students who must be dismissed from school early should provide proper documentation on the day of dismissal. Students without documentation will not be permitted to leave the building.
- Students who fall ill at school should report to the main office with a staff person or an able student.

## **Student Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct**

### **Non Discriminatory Statement**

John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy provides a learning environment where students are treated equally and do not receive different treatment based on race, color, national origin, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, religion or on any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law. Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. Anyone who feels that they have been treated differently on any such basis should speak with a counselor, mentor, or trusted staff who will inform the Principal and/or Dean. Anyone who raises any concerns of discrimination on any basis will be free from retaliation for raising such a concern.

### **Search and Seizure**

Any time a student enters the building, they will be searched electronically by front desk security with a wand. Bags and backpacks will be searched before entering the school. For the safety of the students and everyone at John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy school property that is assigned to students, including lockers and desks, remain the property of the school. Students therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from students' desks, bag, backpack, cubbies, lockers, and person by school authorities.

At John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy, we know that our students have not fit the traditional school model and come to us facing a variety of obstacles that have interfered with their academic performance. Here we look at each student's unique needs which may include managing behaviors with discipline which is viewed as an active part of the learning process. Misbehaviors happen when skills are either not taught or mastered, we use these opportunities to teach skills that are missing or have not been acquired.

Discipline is most effective when the intervention deals with the problem fairly and at the time and place where the infraction occurs. This means that when consequences are administered, the student's background and situation are considered before determining an appropriate consequence. Conflicts usually result due to ineffective communication, immature coping skills, and a low tolerance for frustration with peers and staff. We use this opportunity to teach these deficit skills since it does not benefit the student to be disciplined for a behavior that has not been mastered, this will only lead to the negative behavior being repeated.

If the conduct of a student is related to a disability, determined by the Committee of Special Education (CSE) through a Manifestation Determination Review ((MDR) this will follow the procedures outlined in Article VIII of this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and in accordance with the IDEA. This ensures the student is not disciplined based on disability.

- I.** Wildcat Academy Code of Conduct
- A.** Students will:
  - 1. Arrive to school and class on time
  - 2. Turn in all electronic devices upon entering the building.
  - 3. Arrive to class prepared and remain the entire day.

4. Remain in class during the appropriate class times.
  5. Use appropriate language.
  6. Respect all students and staff members.
  7. Show no tolerance for violence or possession of weapons or dangerous instruments.
  8. Show no tolerance for harassment, intimidation, or aggressive behavior.
  9. Do not use of illegal drugs or alcohol.
  10. Do not smoke tobacco or cannabis products on or near school grounds.
  11. Dress appropriately; no gang related clothing or accessories or revealing clothing.
- B. The Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct is meant to ensure the health and safety of students staff, to foster an atmosphere where learning can take place without distractions and to protect the school building and the property within. In addition, these rules serve to protect students from intimidation, harassment, violence (verbal and physical), and any person or behavior that may prevent them from receiving a quality education.
- C. The standards set forth in the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy apply to behavior in school during schools hours, before and after school, while on school property, while traveling on vehicles funded by the School, at all school-sponsored events and on other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or endanger the health, safety, orals, or welfare of the school community. When misbehavior involves communication, gestures or expressive behavior, the infraction applies to oral, written or electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, emailing, social networking and other online communication platforms.

## II. Code of Conduct Violations

- A. John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy adheres to the Discipline Policy set by the NYSED which provides coherent responses disciplinary responses and guidance surrounding misconduct and consequences.

### Infractions

- LEVEL 1 Infractions - Uncooperative/Noncompliant Behavior
- Unexcused absence from school
- Cutting classes
- Being late for school or class
- Bringing items to school in violation of school policy



- Engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior
- Failing to be in one's assigned place on school premises
- Behaving in a manner which disrupts the educational process
- Posting or distributing material on school premises in violation of school rules
- Failing to provide school officials with required identification
- Using school computers, fax machines, telephones, or other electronic equipment or devices without permission

LEVEL 2 Infractions - Disorderly Behavior

- Smoking and/or use of electronic cigarettes and/or possession of matches or lighters
- Gambling
- Using profane, obscene, vulgar, lewd, or abusive language or gestures
- Lying or giving false information to, and/or misleading school personnel
- Misusing property belonging to others
- Inappropriate use of electronic technology (e.g., unauthorized audio/video recording)
- Leaving class or school premises without permission of supervising school personnel

LEVEL 3 Infractions – Disruptive Behavior

- Defying or disobeying the lawful authority or directive of school personnel or school security in a way that substantially disrupts the educational process
- Entering or attempting to enter, or leave, the school building without authorization or through an unauthorized entrance
- Using slurs based upon actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability
- Shoving, pushing, or engaging in a minor altercation or similar physical confrontational behavior towards students or school personnel (e.g. pushing past another person), throwing an object (e.g., marker) or spitting at another person
- Bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter school in violation of school rules
- Engaging in gang-related behavior (e.g., wearing or displaying gang apparel and/or accessories, writing graffiti, making gestures or signs).
- Tampering with, changing or altering a record or document of a school by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or electronic means
- Engaging in vandalism, graffiti or other intentional damage to school property or property belonging to staff, students or others
- Knowingly possessing property belonging to another without authorization
- Pulling the fire alarm falsely

LEVEL 4 Infractions – Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior

- Violating the school's Internet use Policy (e.g., use of the school's system for non-educational purposes, security/privacy violations)

- Engaging in scholastic dishonesty which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarizing, or colluding (engaging in fraudulent collaboration with another person in preparing written work for credit).
- Posting or distributing libelous material or literature (including posting such material on the Internet)
- 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 (e.g. touching, patting, pinching, lewd or indecent public behavior, or sending or posting sexually suggestive messages or images)
- Posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing literature or material containing a threat of violence, injury or harm, or depicting violent actions against or obscene, vulgar or lewd pictures of students or staff, including posting such material on the Internet
- Engaging in physically aggressive behavior other than minor altercations as described under B24, which creates a substantial risk of or results in minor injury
- Engaging in an act of coercion or threatening violence, injury or harm to another or others
- Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury
- Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communications 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.
- Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communications to engage in such behavior (cyber bullying) based on an individual's actual or perceived race, weight, religion, religious practices, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; 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 controlled substances or prescription medications without appropriate authorization, illegal drugs synthetic hallucinogens, drug paraphernalia, and/or alcohol
- Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm
- Making a bomb threat
- Taking or attempting to take property belonging to another or belonging to the school without authorization, without using force or intimidating behavior
- 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, or laser pointer)
- Causing a 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, or laser pointer)
- Inciting/causing a riot
- Possessing or selling any weapon as defined in Category II
- Using controlled substances or prescription medication without appropriate authorization, or using illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, and/or alcohol

LEVEL 5 Infraction – Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

- Starting a fire
- Threatening to use or 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 personnel or school security
- Using extreme force against or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury upon students or others
- Planning, instigating, or participating with another or others, in an incident of group violence
- Engaging in threatening, dangerous or violent behavior that is gang-related
- 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
- Possessing or selling any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I
- Using any weapon as defined in Category II to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others
- Using any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I, to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others
- Using any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I or II, to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others
- Possessing or using a firearm

C. Prohibited Weapons

Prohibited Weapons – Category I

- Firearm, including pistol and handgun, silencers, electronic dart, and stun gun
- Shotgun, rifle, machinegun, or any other weapon which simulates or is adaptable for use as machine gun
- Air gun, spring gun, or other instrument or weapon in which the propelling force is a spring or air, and any weapon in which any loaded or blank cartridge may be used (such as a BB gun or paintball gun)
- Switchblade knife, gravity knife, pilum ballistic knife and can sword (a cane that conceals a knife or sword)
- Dagger, stiletto, dirk, razor, box cutter, case cutter, utility knife and all other knives
- Billy club, blackjack, bludgeon, chuck stick, and metal knuckles
- Sandbag and sandclub
- Sling shot (small, heavy weights attached to or propelled by a thong) and slung shot
- Martial arts objects including kung fu stars, nunchucks and shirkens
- Explosives, including bombs, fire crackers and bombshells

Prohibited Weapons – Category II

- Acid or dangerous chemicals (such as pepper spray, mace)
- \*Imitation gun or other imitation weapon
- Loaded or blank cartridges and other ammunition
- Stun weapons

- Any deadly, dangerous, or sharp pointed instrument which can be used or is intended for use as a weapon (such as scissors, nail file, broken glass, chains, wire)

\* Before requesting a suspension for possession of an article listed in Category II for which purpose other than infliction of physical harm exists, e.g., a nail file, JVL Wildcat Academy will consider whether there are mitigating factors present. In addition, JVL Wildcat Academy will consider whether an imitation gun is realistic looking by considering factors such as its color, size, shape appearance and weight.

### **Guns Free School Act**

Federal and State laws require the expulsion from School for a period of not less than one year for a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except the School Leader may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended). Any such expulsion must comply with the individuals with disabilities Education Act and its implementing regulations, for a student with or presumed to have disabilities. “Firearm” as used in this law is defined by 18USC921(a), and includes firearms and explosives. The School Leader shall refer to the criminal justice of juvenile delinquency system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to the school. “Weapon” as used in this context shall mean any device, instrument, material or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than two and a half inches in length.

## **D. Dignity for All Students Act Policy**

John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy is committed to providing a safe, educational environment where students are free from discrimination and harassment and are treated equitably. Under the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), School strictly prohibits harassment/bullying or discrimination of or by any student enrolled at the School. This prohibition includes harassment/bullying or discrimination based upon an individual’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. Harassment, intimidation/bullying or discrimination, whether verbal, physical, or environmental, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Schools. This includes anything within the school building or offsite such as a nearby park used for school activities, school-sponsored events such as field trips, afterschool events, or other activities. The purpose of this policy against harassment/bullying and discrimination is to educate students about what may constitute harassment/bullying and discrimination, to notify students that the School will not condone harassment/bullying or discrimination, and to explain the procedure for reporting harassing/bullying or discriminatory conduct.

“Harassment” and “Bullying” means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, verbal, non-verbal, and/or written, intimidation, or abuse, including cyberbullying, that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being, fear for physical safety and/or injury. These incidences may be in as well as outside the school environment where these incidences create an emotional and/or physical risk for the student within the school setting.

All staff at John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy as well as students and families are required and encouraged to report any incidences of bullying and/or harassment. Staff and students are also educated throughout the year about what constitutes bullying/harassment. Students have access to counselors, mentors, and advisory classes for additional support. When such incidences occur, the following process is in place:

1. The student, staff, or parent/guardian who is reporting the incident can report in two ways. They can either file a bullying/harassment incident form through the schools' websites (anonymously or not) or they can meet with the school's DASA coordinator to complete a bullying/harassment incident form in person. This is a comprehensive report that records all aspects of the incident. This can be done anonymously, in-person, through video conferencing, or phone.
2. The DASA coordinator informs the principal of the filing and then starts a full investigation within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.
3. If the investigation determines that this complaint is founded, John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy will take actions to end the harassment, bullying or discrimination. Strategies will include restorative practices, education, counseling, or other interventions that promote pro-social behaviors. Suspensions can occur depending on the severity of the incident but is considered only as a last resort. All interventions are consistent with the John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Code of Conduct and PBIS program.
4. The DASA Coordinator will follow up with all parties concerned to ensure that everyone feels safe, there is no retaliation, and students are supported on both sides.

John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination. All complainants and those who participate in the investigation must comply with all confidentiality guidelines and are acting in good faith.

The school will maintain records of complaints of harassment/bullying and discrimination as well as records of subsequent investigation of such matters. These records will be kept confidential to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances.

### III. Discipline Procedures and Interventions

The following is a non-exhaustive list of other responses and supports.

There are times when disciplinary action is needed despite pro-social supports, education, and interventions, or a student engaged in serious offenses as outlined above. When a student is found to have violated Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, they will be subject to the following process and suspensions consistent with the students' right to due process. The school principal will initiate and issue a notice of suspension and hearings. Determining next steps and interventions is made by consulting those that work and know the student and will be in alignment with the Code of Conduct. Interventions can include:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Written notification to parent
- Suspension from athletic participation
- Suspension for social or extracurricular activities

- Short term suspension (10 days or less)
- Long term suspension (11 days or more)
- Expulsion from School

A. may be used in conjunction with the disciplinary responses for each level of infraction:

- Referral to Support Services Team
- Intervention by mental health staff
- Individual/group counseling
- Conflict resolution
- Peer mediation
- Development of individual behavior contract
- Restorative practices
- Advisory classes
- Support groups
- Short-term behavioral progress reports
- Transfer to another program (with parental consent)
- Guidance Conference
- Referral to a Community Based Organization (CBO)
- Mentoring Program
- Academic sanctions for a scholastic dishonesty infraction only
- Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services

#### IV. Due Process

The degree of due process a student is entitled to receive before an intervention is imposed depends upon the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the level of the infraction and regardless of the imposed, the school personnel authorized impose the intervention must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary in connection with the imposition of the intervention. Students and teachers will give statements either verbally and or in writing. Students who are to be given interventions other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the intervention is imposed. These additional rights are explained below:

##### (i) Removal from Classroom

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "timeout" in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly with an adult; (3) sending a student to the principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

##### (ii) Suspension from School

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "timeout" in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly with an adult; (3) sending a student to the principal's or counselor's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

On occasion, a student's behavior may become disruptive to the point where these techniques are not sufficient to maintain classroom control. For purposes of this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, a "disruptive student" is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or who substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions and/or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

If the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, and after discussion with stakeholders a suspension is given with the following process followed:

- The Principal and Dean speaks to the student about the behavior and explains how the behavior is interfering learning.
- The length of suspension is given
- The parent or guardian is notified by phone and/or e-mail the same day and a suspension letter is sent home within 24 hours via certified mail. The letter includes infraction, length of suspension a scheduled time to meet, and due process.
- The parent is informed during the call and in writing that they have the right to appeal the decision.
- Meeting with parent or guardian and student to discuss the suspension is scheduled, this is by phone or in person to accommodate the parent or guardian.
- Upon return to school the student meets with the Dean and/or a counselor to set a positive tone when returning to class and to reinforce pro-social strategies.

During the meeting the parent and student will have an opportunity to ask questions and clarification as it relates to the Code of Conduct. The meeting is held in the parents and student native language.

Note on removal of special education students: Removal of a student with a disability, having a 504 other than for testing or is considered "deemed to know" under certain circumstances, may constitute a change in the student's placement. If the suspension is approaching 10 days of cumulative suspensions the procedures will follow procedures set in accordance with IDEA policies. Accordingly, no principal may remove a student with a disability from School until he or she has verified with the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under state or federal law or regulation. The Dean keeps track of all number of days of suspension.

Short-term (under 10 days) Suspension from School (In-School and Out of School Suspension)  
When the suspending authority proposes to suspend a student charged with misconduct for 10 days or less the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally. If the student denies the misconduct,

the suspending authority must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The suspending authority must also notify the student's parents/guardians in writing that the student may be suspended from school. The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, in addition to an email or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension at the last known address for the parents. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parents. Students will be given any class work to work on so they do not fall behind.

#### Long-term (more than 10 days) suspension from school

When the principal determines that a suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parents of their right to a fair hearing. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against him or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his or her behalf. The principal shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, at his or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths in conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the principal. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the principal may accept all or any part thereof.

An appeal of the decision of the principal may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before with appeals submitted to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the school Board. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the principal. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the New York State Education Department.

John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy will follow procedures and policies set by the Department of Education A-443 regarding alternate instruction. A student who is suspended by the principal-for more than 10 days who is awaiting his/her suspension hearing, will be provided with alternative instruction at a site other than the School. Students who have IEP services will receive their related services as stated on their IEP as well as alternate instruction.

#### (iii) Permanent Suspension or Expulsion

Permanent Suspension or Expulsion is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as when a student's conduct poses a life-threatening danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

When the principal determines that a permanent suspension or may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parents of their right to a fair hearing. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against him or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his or her behalf. The principal shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, at his or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in



conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the principal. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the principal may accept all or any part thereof.

As set forth in Article V, Section A, an appeal of the decision of the principal may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the Board within ten (10) business days of the date of the principal's decision, unless the parents can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the principal. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the New York State Education Department.

#### Weapons on School Property

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, any student found guilty of bringing a firearm (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)) onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing as set forth in this section. Students with a disability or having a 504 with a classification will follow guidelines and procedures set by all federal law and procedures.

The principal and the Board of Trustees have the authority to modify this one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the principal or Board may consider the following:

- The student's age
- The student's grade in school
- The student's prior disciplinary record
- The principal's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective
- Input from parents, teachers and/or others
- Other extenuating circumstances

A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

### **V. Appeal Process for Disciplinary Actions and/or Grievances with John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy School**

This Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct is to be distributed to parents and guardians once every year and upon enrollment in John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter High School. It outlines the disciplinary appeals process and grievance procedure in the event a parent or guardian would like to appeal a disciplinary decision or feels that their needs or the needs of their student have not been addressed in an appropriate matter.

#### A. Appeals

Any disciplinary action that results in a student's removal from School (out of school suspension (short term and long term) or expulsion) may be appealed to the School's Board of Trustees by submitting the appeal in writing to the Board of Trustees at the following address:

Harvey Newman, Board Chair  
John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy  
17 Battery Place  
New York, NY 10004  
[hadakami@yahoo.com](mailto:hadakami@yahoo.com)

A student and/or parent who is not satisfied with the outcome of the review by the Board of Trustees, may appeal to the authorizer, the New York State Department of Education, by submitting the appeal in writing to the New York State Education Department at the following address:

New York State Education Department  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Room 5N Mezzanine  
Albany, NY 12234  
(518) 474-1762

All appeals must be made in writing and must clearly state on what grounds the appeal is being made.

## **Grievances**

Any school parent or teacher, other interested person, or agency may file a grievance or complaint. All complaints must be:

- Written (in the event the person is unable to write, the school will supply them with a scribe or to document it is a verbal complaint);
- Signed by the person or agency representative filing the complaint;
- Specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated and the related issue, problem, and/or the concern;
- Complete with information/evidence supporting the complaint; and
- Written with a statement describing the nature of the corrective action desired.

### **Step 1:**

Complaints regarding the school's administration and implementation of any of its educational or after school programs should be sent to the Executive Director at the address below.

Ronald Tabano  
CEO/Principal  
John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter High School  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
17 Battery Place  
New York, NY 10004  
[rtabano@jvlwildcat.org](mailto:rtabano@jvlwildcat.org)

The Executive Director has a 30 day period in which to resolve the complaint and respond in writing.

**Step 2:**

In the event the Executive Director fails to resolve the complaint within 30 days, or fails to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint should be sent to the John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter High School Board of Trustees at the address below.

Harvey Newman  
Board Chair  
John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter High School  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
17 Battery Place  
New York, NY 10004  
[hadakami@yahoo.com](mailto:hadakami@yahoo.com)

**Step 3:**

Appeal to the school's authorizer (the education organization in charge of your school).

If after your appeal you are not satisfied with the Board of Trustees' decision, and if your complaint involves a violation of either the school's policies or its charter, you may submit a formal complaint to the Charter Authorization Team at the NYCDOE via email, [CharterOversight@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:CharterOversight@schools.nyc.gov).

Please make sure to include the name of the school and your contact information.

**Step 4:**

Appeal to the New York State Board of Regents

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome after going through the first three levels of the complaint process, you may write to:

The NY State Board of Regents  
NY State Education Department  
Charter School Office, Room 465 EBA  
[89 Washington Avenue](http://www.nysed.gov),  
[Albany, NY 12234](http://www.nysed.gov)  
518-474-1762

Or send an email to [charterschools@nysed.gov](mailto:charterschools@nysed.gov) (subject line should include the name of the school and the word "Complaint").

VI. Discipline of Students with Disabilities

- A. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities must be in accordance with IDEA regulations and are in addition to the policies and procedures outlined above. Among the special rules that apply are the following:
- If a student with a disability attending a charter school is suspended or removed for more than 10 school days in a year, the School must notify the CSE (Committee on Special Education). The CSE may conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop or review a behavior intervention plan.

- If a student with a disability is suspended for 10 days or more, cumulative or due to a single incident the school will notify the Committee on Special Education as 10 days are approaching or is at the 10 day mark.
- If a student with a disability is suspended or removed in excess of 10 school days in a school year, this constitutes a disciplinary change in placement. The CSE must be notified so a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) can be conducted. (See below for details.) The CSE will conduct an FBA and create an FBA.

#### B. Manifestation Determination

Manifestation determination is a determination of whether there is a relationship between a student's disability and a behavior that is subject to disciplinary action. This determination must be made by the CSE and other qualified individuals in a meeting that includes a representative from CSE, the parent, members of the student's IEP team. The parent has the right to bring an attorney or advocate to this meeting. The requirement to conduct a manifestation determination comes into play only when school officials seek to impose a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement (i.e., a suspension or removal of a student with a disability from his or her educational placement for more than ten consecutive days; or a suspension or removal for a period of ten consecutive days or less if the student is subjected to a series of suspensions or removals that constitute a pattern because they add up to more than ten school days in the school year and because of such factors as the length of each suspension or removal, the total amount of time the student is removed and the proximity of the suspensions or removals to one another).

Conversely, the CSE is not required to conduct a manifestation determination for suspensions or removals of ten days or less in the school year, or for subsequent short-term suspensions or removals (less than ten cumulative days) than do not constitute a pattern of removal. CSE is notified if a student approaches ten days of suspension.

Specifically, the CSE must convene a meeting to make a manifestation determination whenever:

- School officials impose a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement
- The principal decides to place a student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances

If the CSE determines that the student's behavior was a manifestation of his or her disability, the students may return to School. The psychologist from CSE will conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and either develop or review a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) for the student.

If the CSE determines that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, the removal from school will continue until the end of the determined period. During such suspension, the student shall receive appropriate special education services that will allow him or her to continue to participate in the educational curriculum and progress towards the student's IEP goals.

A parent may appeal the manifestation determination by requesting an expedited impartial hearing.

#### IX. Reporting Crimes and/or Disruptive Behavior

It is important that all students and staff of John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School understand that certain criminal and/or disruptive behavior must be reported to appropriate police authorities by law. The following incidents will be reported.

- Capital Crimes
- Assaults or Threats of Assault
- Possession of Weapons
- Robbery or Theft
- Sexual Abuse
- Property Damage
- Drug or Alcohol Use

Additionally, the principal has the discretion to report any other incident occurring within the regular operation of the school.

Any student who is formally charged with a felony by a proper prosecuting attorney for an incident which is shown to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline, or welfare in the school in which the student enrolled shall, following an administrative hearing conducted pursuant to rules of the SED and after due notice to the parents, parent, or guardian, and when suspension is recommended, be suspended from all classes until the determination of his or her guilt or innocence, or the dismissal of charges, is made by a court of competent jurisdiction.

## **X. Required Reporting**

### **Violent or Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR)**

JVL Wildcat Academy Charter School is required to file a report for each individual Violent or Disruptive Incident that occurs at the school and then submit an annual summary report to the SED. A violent or disruptive incident includes any of the following: kidnapping, homicide, sexual offences, assaults with serious injury, arson, robbery, reckless endangerment, criminal harassment, bomb threats, and drug or alcohol use, possession, or sale. Any staff witnessing such acts must immediately file a report with the principal's office.

#### **A.**

Any information concerning sexual misconduct involving students by school staff, board members, officers, employees, or others connected with school programs or services, including volunteers and contractors, must be reported immediately to the Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District. This obligation extends to sexual misconduct on and off school premises. The principal must also immediately contact the student's parent. The principal should not gather any information or conduct an investigation of the allegations. Complete reporting obligation information can be found at:

<http://www.nycsci.org/public/Reporting%20Obligation.pdf>

## **Parent Involvement and Communications**

Wildcat Academy believes that parents play an integral role in the education of their children, and that parental involvement in Wildcat Academy is critical to the school's success.

### **Participation in School Governance**

To meet the educational and social needs of our students, to obtain feedback and direction from parents on how to best serve children, and to assist parents as they help their children be successful in school, Wildcat plans for and expects an active role for parents in the governance of the School. Specifically:

- At least one seat on the Wildcat Academy's Board of Trustees shall be filled by a parent of a student in the School;
- Wildcat Academy will establish and maintain a Parents' Association, which shall consist of all parents of students enrolled in the School who wish to participate. The Parents' Association will be involved in a variety of School activities, including fundraising events, field trips, and promotion of Wildcat Academy throughout the community. The Parents' Association also will be involved in the governance of the School, selecting a delegate to work with and advise the Principal and Board of Trustees on policies and practices of the School, plans for providing information to parents, and strategies for arranging staff interaction with parents.
- At each regular meeting of the Wildcat Academy's Board of Trustees, a selected delegate from the Parents Association shall be allotted a set amount of time to present any issue to the Board, if the Parents Association so desires.
- From time to time, as the Board of Trustees or Principal requests, the Parents' Association will be asked to participate in or comprise advisory committees to study or implement a specific policy or action of the School. For example, committees may be formed to study and advise the Board on building expansion plans, budget issues, or student recruitment activities to help the Board determine how the School could best proceed.

Participation in the Parents' Association is voluntary and open to all parents, and a parent need not formally belong to or participate in the Parents' Association to participate at public meetings of the School, serve on ad hoc committees, or meet with or make recommendations to the School's Board of Trustees or administration.

### **Other Parental Involvement Measures**

In addition to including parents in the governance of the school, Wildcat also provides a variety of other avenues for participation and involvement, including:

- Providing comprehensive information on policies and activities in a timely fashion through a newsletter distributed to the entire school community;

- Holding parent information meetings, workshops, open houses and orientations that keep families informed about the activities of the school as a whole ;
- Communicating with parents openly and frequently about their child's individual progress via direct interaction between parents and teachers;
- Enabling parents to monitor their child's academic progress through progress reports and teacher updates;
- Making available parent volunteer activities such as assisting the school's staff with field trips, attending cultural and/or sporting events, and taking part in special in-school events;
- Allowing parents to establish committees under their own initiative to enrich the life of the school; and
- Soliciting candid feedback from parents in terms of their child's academic progress in the form of a questionnaire. (Parents who do not choose to submit a written evaluation are offered the opportunity to express their views in a personal interview.)

## **Health and Physical Education**

### Overview

The John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School (Wildcat Academy) shall comply with all health services requirements applicable to other public schools including, but not limited to, all immunization requirements and diagnostic testing requirements. The School shall provide on-site health care services similar to the extent that such health services are available to children attending other public schools in New York City. This will be done, if possible, through a contractual arrangement with the district to supplement the level of health services mandated to be provided by the district to the Charter School in accordance with §2853(4)(a) and §912 of the Education Law.

### **Staff**

The Wildcat Academy may seek to employ a nurse either on staff or through contract to supervise the disbursement of medication, the treatment of students who are ill, the treatment of students who are injured, and to train faculty and staff in first aid, including but not limited to, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The nurse will additionally be responsible for all record keeping and correspondence related to these responsibilities.

### **Hearing and Vision Testing**

Hearing and vision testing will be done on all new students by a qualified individual. A review of student immunizations requirements and the proper supporting documents shall be completed for all new students. School staff will work with the county health department, the NYC-DOE, and other appropriate authorities to provide these services.

### **Immunization Requirements**

New York State law requires that each student entering kindergarten or a new school district in grades 1-12 have a certificate of immunization at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school. State immunization requirements include: Diphtheria [Toxoid Containing Vaccine (DTP, DTaP) 3 doses]; Polio [(IPV) (OPV)3 OPV or 4 IPV]; Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella [(MMR) Born before 1985:1 dose of MMR; born on or after 1985:2 doses of measles containing vaccine and 1 dose each of mumps and rubella (preferably as MMR)]; Hepatitis B [Born on or after 01/01/93:3 doses, 7<sup>th</sup> graders entering school after 9/1/00 – 3 doses of RecombivazHB, Engerix B or 2 doses of adult hepatitis B vaccine for children 11 to 15 years old]; Varicella [Born on or after 1/1/98:1 dose].

Before a child can be permitted to enter or attend school, parents or guardians must present documentation that their child has received all required doses of vaccines or that their child has received at least one dose of each of the required vaccines and is waiting to receive the subsequent doses at the appropriate time intervals.

Parents may waive immunization by complying with §2164 of the Public Health Law with respect to exemptions to immunizations of the Charter School's student population.

Exceptions shall be granted, in consultation with legal counsel, if a licensed physician or nurse practitioner certifies such immunization may be detrimental to the student's health, or the student's parent or guardian hold genuine and sincere religious beliefs contrary to such immunization.



### **Physical Form**

A recent physical form must be on file in the main office. It is expected that all students come prepared to participate in all activities to the level of their ability.

### **Defibrillator**

The Wildcat Academy, in accordance with §917 of the Education Law, maintains on-site automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment to ensure ready and appropriate access for use during emergencies and shall ensure that a staff member is trained in the operation and use of such equipment for use in the School and at any School-sponsored events at other locations.

### **Counseling Services**

The counseling department exists for the benefit of every student at Wildcat Academy. Counseling services are designed to serve the needs of individual students in preparation of academic schedules, long-range school programs, vocational and college planning, course adjustments, and personal matters. Each counselor is available to help anyone who has issues with school, teachers, friends, family or him/herself. Among the types of issues counselors deal with are sexuality, housing, substance abuse, parenting, depression, conflict resolution, suicidal feelings, world of work, sexual abuse, peer pressure or any factor that interferes with a students' ability to learn. A school psychologist is also available to address students' needs.

Case Management Referrals for Services Personal Development	Counselor A
Internships Career Planning and Development	Counselor B
College Student Organization Student Government Academic Development	Counselor C

### **Fire Drills/Emergency Procedures**

To ensure the safety of all students, students should evacuate the building in a quiet and orderly fashion upon the sounding of the fire alarm. Students should also follow the instructions of those in charge.

## **Food Services**

Wildcat Academy currently contracts out to the New York City Department of Education Office of Nutrition and Food Services for food services. The school reserves the right to negotiate with other food service providers, initiate its own program, or continue to work with the current provider.

Breakfast and lunch are available to Wildcat Academy students on a daily basis. The school participates in the Federal Free- and Reduced-Priced breakfast and lunch programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and adheres to all applicable requirements including but not limited to:

- Meal pricing;
- Determination of eligibility;
- Nutritional value; and,
- Reporting requirements.

Any and all food service subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs are used exclusively for the purpose of providing meals to eligible students, and for no prohibited purpose.

Wildcat Academy has its own food service facilities, including kitchen and cafeteria accommodations. Absent these facilities, however, the school will ensure that food services are provided to students directly in the classroom or in other suitable common areas in arrangement with the Office of Nutrition and Food Services.

## **Transportation Services**

Wildcat Academy works via the New York City Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation to provide school bus service for eligible special education students and Metrocards for eligible 9-12 students.

All Wildcat students are issued Metrocards that entitle them to free transportation to and from school. This Metrocard also allows for one additional trip per day and free transfers to all buses.

Any student who for any reason does not qualify for free Metrocard transportation will be given tokens for their travel. Wildcat Academy will secure funds from outside sources to cover the costs of these additional tokens.

Transportation for Special Education Students will be provided in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws.