LHA Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy

Arkansas Lighthouse Academy is committed to an education that balances the cognitive, social, and emotional development of scholars. Teachers and staff support our scholars in their capacity to engage collaboratively, be disciplined in their academic and personal pursuits and contribute in meaningful ways to their community. For our scholars to grow into self-managed scholars and adults, it is essential that the school and home work together promoting the high expectations for behavior established in the ALA Code of Conduct.

All scholars are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will contribute to the best interest of the school and not infringe on the rights of others. School staff has the authority and the responsibility to take customary and reasonable measures to maintain proper control and discipline among scholars placed under their care and supervision. Such measures may include the use of reasonable force in the exercise of lawful authority to restrain or correct scholars and maintain order.

Preventive and Restorative Practices

At Arkansas Lighthouse Academy, we employ preventive and restorative practices[1] and logical consequences to avoid more counterproductive practices that limit a scholar's time in school. We attempt to avoid out of school suspension and expulsions. In response to disciplinary infractions or conflict, the school uses a continuum of strategies that are restorative[1] rather than punitive. School staff works with all scholars to encourage and foster new skills and improved behavior, and recognizes that changing scholar behaviors involves a range of recognition, guidance, and intervention. In the event of poor behavioral actions, all stakeholders who are impacted are involved in finding solutions to repair harm and restore relationships.

Intervention Tiers and Supports

To prevent misbehavior, we use a three-tiered approach to support scholars in making appropriate choices. ALL scholars benefit from Level One interventions which focus on building a healthy classroom and school community. Some scholars, who are not responsive to Level One interventions, will participate in Level Two interventions and support to correct behavior and prevent future incidents. Level Three intervention is reserved for the few scholars who do not respond to Level One and Two interventions and supports.

Level One- Universal Intervention Includes:

- Clearly stated expectations that are applied to all scholars
- Classroom communities built through intentional teaching of social/emotional skills
- Acknowledgement of positive behavior and celebrations of scholar achievement and goal attainment

Examples of Level One Interventions would be: Social/emotional curriculum, Morning Meeting or Circle of Power and Respect, Town Hall meeting, or Advisory.

Level Two- Targeted Interventions Focuses on:

- Specific interventions for scholars who do not respond to universal (Level One) efforts
- Targeted groups of scholars who require additional support
- Interventions that are part of a continuum of behavioral supports in schools

Examples of level Two Interventions would be: Parent/Guardian conference, conflict resolution, peer mediation, Restorative circle, or short-term behavioral progress reporting.

Level Three- Intensive Individualized Interventions Focuses on:

- The needs of individual scholars who exhibit a pattern of problem behavioral actions
- Diminishing problem behaviors and increasing the scholar's social skills and functioning
- Interventions involving functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans

Examples of Level Three Interventions would be: Scholar is assigned to in-school restoration, out of school suspension or when extreme circumstances warrant, expulsion.

When school staff and principals respond to scholar misbehavior, they are expected to consider: the age, health, decision-making ability and disability or special education status of the scholar; the appropriateness of the scholar's academic placement; the scholar's successes and challenges of behavior; the scholar's need to repair the harm; and the impact of the incident on the school community.

Restorative Approach

We believe that approaches to scholar behaviors should be logical and appropriate to the age of the scholar and the situation. Scholars are expected to avoid all unacceptable behaviors and illegal actions.

Scholars are prohibited from engaging in actions that will endanger or threaten to endanger the safety of others or oneself, or that will damage property or that will impede the orderly conduct of the school program. Scholars who violate this code will make restitution and repair the community whether the violation is directed against school staff, scholars or any other persons.

The following actions are violations of the code of conduct whenever they occur on school grounds, on school buses, during school-sponsored field trips, in connection with school-related events and activities wherever held, when directed against scholars en route to or from school, or when done with intent to disrupt or impede the orderly conduct of any school class or activity.

Unacceptable actions are not permitted under the School's Code of Conduct. Illegal Actions are not permitted by law and may need to be reported by the School to local authorities. Illegal Actions are also Unacceptable Actions.

Unacceptable Actions include, but are not limited to:

- Physical touching of another person with or without the intent to cause injury
- Fighting
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Posing a physical threat to oneself or others (e.g., banging head, making a threat)
- Possession of weapon, drugs, or alcohol
- Coming to school or to any school activity under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other foreign substance
- Refusal to stay within the teacher's sight
- Verbal harassment of a teacher (e.g., cursing, name calling, or mocking)
- Use of profanity
- Tantrum at a volume that inhibits the flow of the class
- Destruction of school property
- Theft
- Sexual touching, language, gestures or actions which cause injury, fear, and/or emotional harm to another person, with or without the use of force

Consequences for unacceptable actions are left to the discretion of the building principal and may include, but are not limited to:

- Conference with scholar
- Conference with parent/guardian
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion (with school board approval)

Illegal actions are prohibited by state, federal or local statutes. This includes, but is not limited to, acts of violence, intentionally causing any type of harm to another, possession of weapons, drugs or alcohol, theft and activating the school's fire alarm system in the absence of an emergency. Possession of a firearm or drugs will result in referral to community authorities. Other illegal acts may also result in a referral to local authorities.

State Laws vary regarding scholar discipline*. Each School will follow the law of the appropriate state. Where state law mandates a certain minimum consequence, the School will comply. These state laws often leave final discretion to the School authority. Thus, if the Executive Director determines there is a reason to reduce a consequence otherwise mandated by law, he/she will do so only if the state law permits that change.

For example, Arkansas generally requires that a scholar be "expelled" from school for one year for bringing a weapon to school.

Arkansas Law 6-17-106 states that it is unlawful for any person to use profane, violent, vulgar, abusive or insulting language toward any public school employee during the course of their duties. Said person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction be liable for a fine of not less than $100 no more than $1,500. No unauthorized person (non-scholar) shall purposely enter or remain unlawfully in a school or vehicle on the school premises. (Criminal trespass — A.C.A. 5-39-203)

Offenses deemed as "illegal actions" will be reported to the proper authorities and may include up to out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

Any scholar who gives false information or wrongfully accuses another scholar or staff member may be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents/guardians are our partners when it comes to implementing restitution to change scholars' behaviors. Parents/guardians should expect to receive calls and attend meetings with teachers and administrators when scholars have misbehaved. The purpose of these calls will be to solve problems together and to make sure that restitution at school and at home are consistent. Parents should also expect to receive calls with good news!

Afterschool Support/Restorative Sessions
An Afterschool session might be used for a scholar to work on missed classwork that did not get completed because the scholar was avoiding the work or engaged in an action that did not allow him/her to complete classwork. All decisions regarding Afterschool will be made by the Principal or designated school leader.

Pick-Up: Scholar's parent/guardian will be responsible for picking up the child promptly after Afterschool Sessions.

The school will notify a scholar's parent/guardian of the date and time the Afterschool session will occur.

Emergency Removal
Where the School has a reasonable belief that a scholar is creating an unsafe environment to another person, the School may place the scholar on an emergency suspension, pending an investigation by the School. This investigation will be completed within one school day when possible. Examples of creating an unsafe environment would include: bullying, verbal or written threats to a staff member or other aggressive/hostile actions.

Out of School Suspension
If a scholar receives out of school suspension, it is important that they do not fall behind academically. While suspended, the scholar will be required to complete all assignments that were scheduled during that time. The Principal, Culture Coordinator, or other designated building administrator will conduct check-ins with the scholar daily to ensure they are completing assignments and offer assistance if needed.