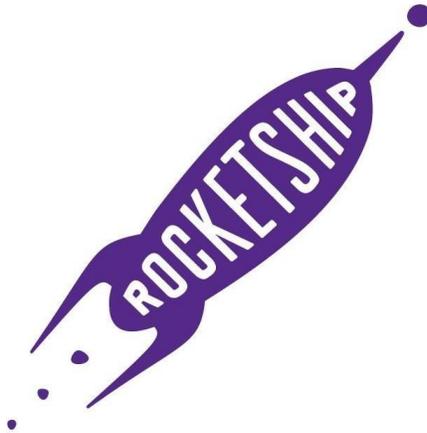


**Student/Family Policies Guide
for the 2019-2020 School Year**



**Rocketship Rise Academy
2335 Raynolds Place SE
Washington, DC 20020
(202) 750-7177**

**Rocketship Legacy Prep
4250 Massachusetts Ave SE
Washington, DC 20019
202-803-7004**

Joey Slotter, Board Chair

2019-2020 Rocketship DC Student/Family Policies

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY	2
SUSPENSION & EXPULSION POLICY	6
ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY POLICY	19
GENERAL COMPLAINT POLICY	24
DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, & BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY	28
FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY	34
OPEN MEETINGS POLICY	37

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Rocketship. Rocketship expects all students to behave in a way that fosters a safe and welcoming environment for other students, Rocketship staff, and community members.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct while on school property, when attending any school-sponsored activity, or while in transit going to or coming from a Rocketship campus. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Some disciplinary infractions are so serious that they may subject a student to suspension and/or expulsion. A list of these infractions can be found in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy, along with the procedures that Rocketship will take when considering suspension or expulsion of a student. This Policy outlines the Rocketeer Creed that we expect students to follow; expectations for students; examples of prohibited conduct that will subject a student to in-school disciplinary action; and disciplinary actions that Rocketship may take in response to behavioral infractions. It applies to Rocketship schools in all regions.

I. **Rocketeer Code of Conduct**

The Rocketship Code of Conduct includes the following non-negotiable expectations for our Rocketeers:

- Adherence to the Rocketship Commitment to Excellence.
- Adherence to the Rocketship Core Values: Respect, Responsibility, Persistence, Empathy, and the fifth campus-specific Value chosen by each school.
- Adherence to the **Rocketship Creed**:

I am a Rocketship Rocketeer at home, at school, and in my community

I show respect to myself, my neighbors, and the environment

I take responsibility for my learning and actions

I have empathy, supporting others in need

I show initiative by solving the problems I see

II. Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited by Rocketship and may subject a student to in-class disciplinary action.

- Engaging in acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying as defined by Rocketship's Bullying Prevention policy.
- Insubordination (including, but not limited to, refusing to follow directions, refusing to identify oneself to a staff member, running away from a staff member, talking back to a staff member).
- Fighting or engaging in behaviors that threaten the safety of oneself or others.
- Disrupting school activities.
- Playing in the hallways or bathroom.
- Dishonesty/lying to staff members.
- Theft of property.
- Damage to property, including electronics (i.e. Chromebooks).
- Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or cheating.
- Inciting or attempting to incite others to violence or disruption.
- Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of violence on another.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Recording or photographing students or staff members without their prior knowledge and consent.
- Using computers for non-school related activities, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.
- Using cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on school property, during school hours or during school functions, except when under express permission and supervision of a staff member

- Trespassing (including being on school grounds while school is not in session, being in unauthorized areas of the building, and use of the bathroom without permission)
- Leaving the classroom, school building, school property, or school activity without permission
- Intentionally altering, falsifying, destroying, or fabricating any official document (including 9-1-1 phone calls and setting off fire alarms).
- Repeatedly violating Rocketship's Dress Code.
- Violating Rocketship Public Schools' Code of Conduct, as described above.

III. In-school Disciplinary Actions

Rocketship relies on proactive, preventive supports to promote positive behavior at school. Rocketship has implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in all schools. The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive and safe. Key PBIS practices include clearly defined behavioral expectations and consequences, systems for recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors, data-based decision making, multi-tiered systems of support, and the implementation of core social-emotional learning curricula.

Rocketship classrooms also use a variety of management systems to address behavioral issues. These may include color-coded card chart systems and other tiered consequences.

In the event that Rocketship's PBIS infrastructure and classroom management systems are insufficient to prevent disciplinary infraction, or a disciplinary infraction is serious enough to immediately warrant additional discipline, Rocketship may take alternative in-school disciplinary action. These actions depend on the circumstances of the offense and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sending the student to the Principal's office.
- Excluding the student from classroom activities or privileges through a "time out" or temporary placement in another classroom.
- Calling or writing/emailing the student's parent/guardian.
- Arranging a conference with the student, parent, teacher and/or administrator.
- Implementing an individualized behavior plan for the student.

- Implementing counseling sessions with a designated staff member.
- Sending the student to a peer mediation.
- Requiring that the student complete a reflective essay or assignment.
- Requiring that the student take actions to counteract/ameliorate a problem (i.e. fixing something the student broke).
- Referring the student to a Student Support Team.
- Restricting the student's participation in after-school/extra-curricular activities or field trips.
- Holding the student for detention or additional instructional time during lunch or before/after school.
- Confiscating inappropriate items related to the disciplinary infraction.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. "Corporal punishment" includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, "corporal punishment" does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property. (See also Rocketship's regional Seclusion and Restraint Policy.)

As described above, severe infractions that threaten the safety or health of students, staff or others, may be cause for suspension or expulsion, as outlined in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion policy.

IV. In-School Suspension

In-school suspension ("ISS") provides an alternative to out-of-school suspension. ISS allows students to be counted present and provides an in-school opportunity for them to complete and receive credit for class assignments. During ISS, students will complete school work in a location separate from their class. ISS is not intended to be an alternative to or long-term replacement of the student's regularly scheduled class.

ISS may be used in the event that a student is engaging in prohibited conduct that is making the classroom environment physically or emotionally unsafe for other students or that severely disrupts a class or school-sponsored activity;

Only the Principal or Assistant Principal or his/her designee, shall assign a student to ISS. Principals and Assistant Principals must first obtain approval from their supervisor. Students assigned to ISS must have written notification of the date and duration of the ISS assignment.

Assignment to ISS and the scheduling of the days assigned are at the Principal's discretion. Principals should place the student in ISS as soon as possible after the infraction is reported. The principal will ensure that:

- Students assigned to ISS are provided a safe, positive environment
- Students assigned to ISS are properly supervised; and
- Students assigned to ISS are allowed to complete class work assigned during his/her placement in ISS.
- All class work for students is obtained, academic assistance is provided as necessary, and completed work is returned to the student's classroom teacher.
- Activities of academic value are provided for the student when the classroom teacher's work is not provided or is insufficient for ISS time assigned.

Additionally, classroom teachers will:

- Provide classwork commensurate to the work missed for a student in ISS.
- Record a student in ISS as present. There will be no attendance-related penalty for assignment to ISS.
- Evaluate the student's work completed in ISS and give credit for work completed in ISS.
- Ensure that students in ISS receive credit for attendance and full credit for work completed.

The student's parent/guardian must be notified of a student's assignment to ISS at the time that the ISS placement is scheduled. The Principal should contact a parent/guardian by phone or in-person meeting. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached in this manner, the Principal or his/her designee may make contact through email.

SUSPENSION & EXPULSION POLICY

When disciplinary infractions occur on campus, our Principals are expected to respond in accordance with our Student Discipline Policy, which encourages positive behavioral interventions and supports and outlines available in-school disciplinary actions. Suspension should only be considered in cases of egregious behavioral infractions – and, even then, should be viewed as a last resort—as we believe that our students are best served when they are present at school every day. Recommendations for expulsion should not be pursued except in the most extreme cases, as our policy is to do whatever it takes to serve every student who enrolls in a Rocketship school.

If a situation does arise where a Principal feels that the student should be suspended or recommended for expulsion, this policy was written to guide the process. The policy has been written in accordance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations. It addresses grounds for suspension and expulsion; suspension and expulsion procedures; the maintenance of disciplinary records; student appeal rights; rehabilitation and readmission; and special procedures for the consideration of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities.

I. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at a Rocketship school or at any other school or a school-sponsored event at any time including but not limited to: while on school grounds; while going to or coming from school; during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; and during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity. Students may also be subject to suspension or expulsion for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Grounds for Suspension or Recommendations for Expulsion

Students in DC may, at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with his/her supervisor, be *suspended or recommended for expulsion* for any of the following offenses:

- Possessing a bomb/facsimile or making a bomb threat.
- Possessing, selling, or attempting to sell a weapon (including, but not limited to, firearms, knives, razor blades, mace/tear gas/pepper spray, or any other dangerous objects) including replicas, toys, and fakes.
- Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person, or willfully using force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- Making terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. purposes of this Policy, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of \$1000, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

- Possessing, using, selling or otherwise furnishing, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- Offering, arranging, or negotiating to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then selling, delivering or otherwise furnishing to any person another substance or material represented to be a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Possessing, using, selling, or attempting to sell tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
- Possessing, offering, arranging, or negotiating to sell any drug paraphernalia.
- Committing or attempting to commit robbery or extortion.
- Stealing or attempting to steal school property or private property.
- Knowingly receiving stolen school property or private property.
- Abusing, destroying, or attempting destroy school property or private property.
- Gambling.
- Gang-related incidents and/or evidence of Gang affiliation (including, but not limited to, engaging in Gang-related activities, Gang-related attire, Gang-related graffiti, evidence of Gang-affiliation, the writing of anything Gang-related). For the purposes of this policy, “Gang” is defined as a group of individuals that are involved in illegal, intimidating or harassing conduct.
- Hazing or attempting to haze. the purposes of this policy, “Hazing” means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective student. For purposes of this Policy, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- Harassing, threatening, or intimidating a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- Engaging in Bullying/Harassment. For the purposes of this policy, “Bullying” and “Harassment” are defined as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that may be based on an individual’s actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political

affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on an individual's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics in a manner that can reasonably be predicted to place the individual in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property, cause a substantial detrimental effect on the individual's physical or mental health, substantially interfere with a student's academic performance or attendance or a staff member's performance of his/her job duties, or substantially interferes with the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school. Discipline for bullying/harassment will be issued in accordance with the "Sanctions" section of Rocketship's Bullying Prevention Policy.

- Engaging in arson or firesetting or possessing matches, lighters, or any other incendiary device.
- Committing or attempting to commit a Sexual Act or Sexual Harassment. For the purposes of this Policy, "Sexual Act" has the same definition as in the DC Criminal Code. "Sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes sexual violence, which the Rocketship defines as physical sexual acts

perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent.

Grounds for Suspension

Additionally, students may be *suspended* for any of the following offenses. (Alternatively, students may be subject to in-school discipline as described in Rocketship's Student Discipline policy.)

- Inciting or attempting to incite others to violence or disruption.
- Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of violence on another.
- Engaging in behaviors that threaten the safety of oneself or others.
- Intentionally contaminating the food of another.
- Administering medication to self or others for purposes other than student treatment under authorized medication administration plans.
- Disrupting school activities or otherwise defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, or other school staff members or personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.

- Recording or photographing students or staff members without their prior knowledge and consent.
- Using computers for non-school related activities, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.
- Using cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on school property, during school hours or during school functions, except when under express permission and supervision of a staff member.
- Trespassing (including being on school grounds while school is not in session, being in unauthorized areas of the building, and use of the bathroom without permission).
- Leaving the classroom, school building, school property, or school activity without permission.
- Intentionally altering, falsifying, destroying, or fabricating any official document (including 9-1-1 phone calls and setting off fire alarms).

Suspension and Expulsion of Pre-K Students

Under DC law, out-of-school suspensions of pre-K age students are prohibited except for the following limited situations:

- A school may suspend a pre-K student for up to three days if the student willfully caused or attempted to cause bodily injury, unless the injury was caused in self-defense.
- A school may suspend a pre-K student for up to three days if the student threatened seriously bodily injury, unless the threat was made in self-defense.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

“Pre-K age” is defined as children who are 3 or 4 years of age, and children who turn 5 after September 30th)

Out-of-school suspension is defined as any removal of a student from school attendance for an entire school day or longer.

“Bodily injury” is defined as a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement; physical pain; illness; impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary.

“Serious bodily injury” is defined as bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

II. Suspension Procedures

A suspension is a temporary dismissal of a student from the regular school program and school-sponsored events for the allotted time assigned by a school administrator. Suspensions can range from one to five school days, depending on the seriousness of the violation. Students are expected to complete all work assigned while they serve their suspension.

Suspensions at Rocketship will adhere to the following procedures:

Conference

When feasible, suspension may be preceded by a conference conducted by the Principal or designee with the student and his/her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor, or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference in an emergency situation, both the parent/guardian and student shall be given the opportunity to conference within two school days.

At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her and shall be given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in his/her defense.

Absent an emergency situation, the conference must occur before the student is sent home on suspension.

No penalties may be imposed on a student for failure of the student's parent/guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended student shall not be contingent upon attendance by the student's parent or guardian at the conference.

Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time that the decision is made to suspend a student, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall also be notified in writing of the suspension, the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, the student's right to return to school at the end of the suspension, and any conditions for that return (i.e. a return conference with the parent/guardian) and the date of return following suspension. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

A copy of this notice will also be filed in the student's cumulative folder in the school. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five consecutive school days per suspension. In calculating days of suspension, days served will not include days when school is not in session for students, including but not limited to school closure days, school holidays, spring break, and summer break. If the student leaves school on the day that the suspension was imposed, this day will be counted as part of the suspension if the student was denied class participation prior to 12 noon of that day. The suspension shall terminate at midnight on the day listed as the last day of the suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian or representative will be invited to a second conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: (1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or (2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Students who are suspended shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension.

III. Authority to Expel

An expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from the Rocketship program. If an expulsion is approved, the parent/guardian has the responsibility to place the student in another school. The full authority of the Rocketship governing Board of Directors ("the Board") to hear and conduct expulsions shall be granted to the Academic Affairs Committee, a committee of the Board. The Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of three board members. The Academic Affairs Committee may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense as listed in Section II above.

Instead of conducting the hearing itself, the Academic Affairs Committee may appoint an impartial administrative panel of three or more persons, none of whom is a member of the Board or employed on the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled.

IV. Expulsion Procedures

Hearing

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing shall be held within 20 school days after the Principal

or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense, unless the student requests, in writing, that the hearing be postponed.

In the event an administrative panel hears the case, it will, within 10 days of the hearing, make a recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee for a final decision whether or not to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the student makes a written request for a public hearing three days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the student. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based, along with a summary of the evidence against the student;
- A copy of Rocketship's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

Rocketship may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of a statement from the victim or witness, which shall be examined only by Rocketship or the hearing officer. Copies of these statements, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the student.

Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel and decision by the Board to expel must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and written declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and shall be made within three school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall be returned to his/her educational program or become subject to discipline or suspension in accordance with this policy.

Written Notice to Expel

The Principal or designee, following a decision of the Board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

- notice of the specific offense committed by the student and
- notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Rocketship.

Right to Appeal

The student/family shall have the right to appeal the decision to expel the student from Rocketship directly to the Academic Affairs Committee. If the Academic Affairs Committee made the final decision on the expulsion, the appeal shall go directly to the Executive Committee of the Board. The request to appeal must be made in writing and shall be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee or Executive Committee within five business days of being made aware of the decision to expel the student. The appeal shall be heard by the Academic Affairs Committee or Executive Committee within 15 days of receipt of the appeal.

Expelled Students/Alternative Education

With the exception of students with disabilities under IDEA, students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within their school district of residence.

Rehabilitation and Readmission

At the time of the expulsion order, students who are expelled shall be given a rehabilitation plan, to be developed by the Academic Affairs Committee in conjunction with Rocketship staff, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the student may be reviewed for readmission to a Rocketship school.

The decision to admit a pupil who has been expelled from a Rocketship school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Principal and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon Rocketship's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

The decision to admit a pupil who has previously been expelled from another school, school district or charter school shall be in the discretion of the Principal following a meeting with the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. Where applicable, the Principal may also consider whether the pupil has completed any rehabilitation plan or other improvement measures prescribed by the pupil's previous school. The Principal shall make a recommendation following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's admission is also contingent upon Rocketship's capacity at the time the student seeks admission.

V. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Services During Suspension

Students with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act ("IDEA") suspended for more than ten school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and

behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, a manifestation determination shall take place. "Change of Placement" includes a recommendation for expulsion, consecutive removal of more than ten school days, or a cumulative removal of more than ten school days in a school year. Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any

relevant information provided by the parents to determine: (1) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:

- (1) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the school had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- (2) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- (3) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

Due Process Appeals

If the parent of a child with a disability disagrees with any decision regarding a disciplinary change in placement, or the manifestation determination, or the school believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the parent or school may request an expedited administrative hearing through the regional administrative hearing office.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the school, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the 45- day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.

Special Circumstances

Rocketship personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for

not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC § 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the Rocketship's behavioral policies may assert the procedural safeguards

granted under this administrative regulation only if Rocketship had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

Rocketship shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists prior to the behavior at issue:

- The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of Rocketship, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to §§ 300.300 through 300.311; or
- The teacher of the child, or other Rocketship personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

If the school knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the disciplinary protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities.

If the school had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The school shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by Rocketship pending the results of the evaluation.

Rocketship shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

VI. Data Collection

Pursuant to DC law, Rocketship will collect the following data related to student discipline:

- Total number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions for the student each school year.
- Total number of days excluded from school.
- Whether the student was referred to an alternative education setting.
- Whether the student was expelled.

- Whether the student voluntarily or involuntarily transferred or withdrew from the school during the school year.
- A description of the behavior that led to each suspension or expulsion.

The following data will be submitted to OSSE by August 15th of each year:

- Students suspended for one to five days.
- Students suspended for six to 10 days.
- Students suspended for more than 10 days.
- Students who received more than one suspension in a school year.
- Students who were expelled.
- Students who voluntarily or involuntarily transferred or withdrew from the school during the school year.
- Students who were referred to an alternative education setting during a suspension.
- Description of the behavior that led to each suspension or expulsion.

The data must be disaggregated by campus, grade, gender, race, ethnicity, special education status, ELL status, and at-risk status.

ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY POLICY

Tardiness and absences can be detrimental to a student's academic and social progress. Rocketship makes every effort to ensure that students are on time and present every school day. This policy addresses excused and unexcused absences, late arrivals and early departures, and the definitions and consequences of truancy. The policy applies to Rocketship schools in all regions, with the exception of the definitions and consequences of truancy, which are written in accordance with applicable state laws.

I. **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

All students are expected to be on time and present in school every day. In DC, an absence is a full or partial school day that a student is not physically in attendance at scheduled periods of

instruction. A “partial school day” is defined as at least 20 percent of the instructional hours regularly provided on a single school day.

Proper notification and/or documentation is required for a student’s absence from school to be marked as excused on the student’s attendance record. Documentation must be presented within 48 hours of the student’s absence.

Excused Absences

The chart below explains the type of notification and/or documentation required to excuse absences.

Reason for Absence	Documentation Needed	Other Notes
Illness	Written notice from parent/guardian; A physician’s note is required for three or more consecutive sick days.	
Health-Related Appointments/Treatments	Signed note from physician’s office [R3]	
Death in the Family	Written notice from parent/guardian.	
Extracurricular Activities	Participation approved by Principal.	Approved at the discretion of Principal
Personal/Family Emergencies	Written notice from parent/guardian.	Approved at the discretion of Principal
Head Lice	Written documentation of head lice.	Return to school subject to note and inspection under Rocketship’s Head Lice Policy.
Religious Holiday/Ceremony	Parent/guardian call to school required	
Exclusion due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other, conditional requiring, separation from other students for medical or health reasons	As directed by local health department.	
Parent/guardian serving in the armed forces	Written notice from parent/guardian. For longer absences, additional documentation may be required.	One day for deployment; one day for return; up to 10 days when service member is granted temporary rest/recuperation leave.
Lawful Suspension	Documentation of suspension pursuant to Rocketship Suspension & Expulsion Policy.	

Unexcused Absences

Some kinds of absences may not be considered excused, even with proper documentation. These include , but are not limited to, the following: non-documented appointments, sick days with no parent notification of the school, oversleeping, car problems, cutting classes, errands, babysitting, and vacationing outside of scheduled school breaks. The Principal, in consultation with his/her supervisor when necessary, has the discretion to determine whether an absence should be excused or unexcused.

Notifying Parents of Unexcused Absences

Rocketship will make reasonable and diligent attempts to make personal contact with a student's parent/guardian on the same day and each time a student has an unexcused absence, with daily follow-ups as necessary.

II. Leaving School During the Day

Under no circumstances may a student go home without the permission of a parent or guardian. We expect that parents/guardians will make every effort to schedule appointments after school. However, if an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the student must bring a signed note from his/her parent/guardian at the beginning of the day that includes the reason for the partial absence, the time of departure from school, and the estimated time of the student's return to school. If the student has a doctor's appointment, the student must bring a note from the doctor upon return. Whenever possible, students are expected to return to school after the appointment.

Early departures for reasons that do not directly involve the student (i.e. appointment for another family member) are generally not allowed but may be approved at the discretion of the Principal. Students who become ill at school must check in at the office and remain at school until the child's parent/guardian arrives or gives permission for the student to leave campus in accordance with Rocketship's Student Release Policy.

III. Vacations

Rocketship builds vacations into its school calendar. Family vacations should be planned around these dates. Students who take additional vacation time are not assured make-up work or credit.

IV. Chronic Late Arrivals, Absences, and Truancy

Recurrent Late Arrivals

Recurrent late arrivals may subject families to interventions. After a student accumulates five late arrivals(excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to participate in an Attendance Expectations Meeting at the school. After a student accumulates ten late arrivals (excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to attend a meeting with a School Leader and to sign an attendance contract. The Principal has the discretion to waive the intervention requirement in rare cases, depending on the circumstances. If a parent/legal guardian does not show up or refuses to attend an attendance meeting when ample time has been provided, an intervention plan may still be enacted. A copy of the contract will be sent or delivered to the student's home on file.

Truancy Procedures

In DC, “truancy” is defined under DCMR tit. 5 § A2199 as any absence from school without a valid excuse. The chart below describes the procedures for responding to truancy in accordance with DC law.

<p style="text-align: center;">FIVE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within two school days after a student has accumulated five or more unexcused absences, the student and the student’s parent/guardian will be referred to a school-based student support team, to meet within five days of the referral, to review the student’s attendance, address underlying causes, discuss any appropriate school and community resources to abate truancy, and develop an action plan. The Student Support Team will include the Principal, a classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student’s parent/guardian. Depending on the circumstances, the Student Support Team may also include a school nurse or psychologist, special education personnel, the McKinney-Vento homeless liaison, a guardian ad litem, and/or representatives of CFSA. (DCMR § A-2103.2(c)(3))
<p style="text-align: center;">CHRONICALLY TRUANT (10 OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within two school days after a student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences, the Student Support Team will notify the Principal of a plan for immediate intervention, including delivery of community-based programs and any other assistance or services to identify and address the student’s needs on an emergency basis.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school must provide written notice to the student’s parent/guardian warning of the legal consequences of being a chronic truant and insisting that the student be compelled to attend school immediately. (60 DCR 9839 (§ 101(c)) • Within two school days after a student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences, Rocketship may refer the student’s parent/guardian to OSSE. • Truancy charges may be filed against the student alleging that the student is a “Person in Need of Supervision,” and parents may be convicted of violating the compulsory school attendance law and face fines and possible incarceration. (D.C. Code § 4-1321(a-1) (2012 Supp.))
--	---

“No Shows”

In order to ensure that we are being equitable and affording all students a fair opportunity during the enrollment process at Rocketship Rise Academy, we review enrollment requests on a rolling basis. During this time of the year, student attendance is imperative. If a student accumulates 3 consecutive unexcused absences during the beginning of the school year he/she may forfeit his/her seat from the roll and will be asked to re-apply through MySchoolDC. In the event that this happens the next student on the MySchoolDC waitlist will be offered a seat. If a student is dropped from the roll because of consecutive absences, they will be allowed to automatically reenroll according to MySchoolDC protocol.

If a student accumulates 20 or more consecutive unexcused absences *without notifying the school* of the reason for the absence, and Rocketship is *unable to get in touch* with the student’s parent/guardian after reasonable and good faith efforts, Rocketship will drop the student from the school’s roster and his/her space will be given to a student on the waitlist.

GENERAL COMPLAINT POLICY

Rocketship values the concerns of our parents, staff, students, and community and takes all concerns and complaints seriously. The following complaint procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

I. Use of General Complaint Process

Rocketship's complaint process should be used as follows:

- (1) to deal with complaints and concerns pertaining to the educational environment, employment arrangements, or interpersonal conflicts;
- (2) to allege violations of federal or state law, or of the school's charter;
- (3) for personnel to resolve complaints against other personnel pertaining to discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or membership in another protected class arising under federal or state law.

II. Who May File a Complaint

The procedures set forth below may be used by complainants who are employees, students, parents, or visitors.

III. Confidentiality

All documentation and information related to an investigation conducted as a result of a complaint is considered confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not involved with the complaint or decision-making process.

IV. Informal Complaints

Because most difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or complaint promptly and candidly with their immediate supervisor, student's teacher, or the school principal. The complainant is not required to discuss his/her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal complaint.

V. Complaint Process Regarding School Site Procedures, Practices, and Policies

Complaints should follow the process outlined below when they wish to file a formal complaint pertaining to items (1) or (2) described in Section I above. This process is available to complaints against employees, students, parents, or visitors.

(1) Fill out a Complaint Form, available at the school's front office. In the Complaint Form, complainants should describe the nature of the complaint and any steps taken so far to resolve the issue. The Complaint Form should be submitted to the school Principal.

Complaint Forms must be submitted within 90 days of encountering the issue that is the subject of the complaint.

(2) The Principal will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining any relevant documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. The investigation is considered highly confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the decision-making process.

The investigation will be concluded within 10 school days of receiving the complaint unless "exceptional circumstances" justify a more expedited response. The amount of time granted for an exceptional circumstance will be determined on an individual case basis.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Principal shall also promptly notify the designated Rocketship Regional Director.

(3) The Principal will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for recommendation. The Principal should keep the final report on file and provide a copy of this report to the complainant. The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to compliance@rsed.org within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.

(4) If the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal's response, he/she may appeal to the Principal's direct supervisor. All appeals must be in writing and include the reason for appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the appropriate party within 10 school days of receiving the response.

(5) The Principal's supervisor will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The supervisor will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal.

(6) If the complainant is not satisfied with the supervisor's resolution, he/she may file a final appeal with the Chief Schools Officer, or his/her designee. Vice President of Schools. The Chief Schools Officer or designee Vice President of Schools will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The Chief Schools Officer Vice President of Schools will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal.

(7) Rocketship Education's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has the discretion to hear complaints beyond the Chief Schools Officer/ Vice President of Schools' resolution. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Chief Schools Officer/Vice President of Schools' response, he/she may appeal to have the CEO hear the complaint. Note that the CEO is not required to entertain the complaint. Any resolution by the CEO shall be final.

If the original complaint pertains to the school Principal, complainants should begin by filing their complaint with the Principal's direct supervisor as described in Steps 4-5 above. Appeals will go to the Vice President of Schools as described in Step 6.

VI. Complaint Process Regarding Discrimination and Harassment

In the event that informal resolution is not successful, complainants should follow the process outlined below when they wish to file a formal complaint pertaining to item (3) described in Section I above (i.e. discrimination or harassment). This process is available to complaints against employees, students, parents, or visitors.

(1) Fill out a Complaint Form, available at the school's front office. In the Complaint Form, complainants should describe the nature of the complaint and any steps taken so far to resolve the issue. The Complaint Form should be submitted to Rocketship's Human Resources department. Complaint Forms must be submitted within 90 days of encountering the issue that is the subject of the complaint.

(2) A representative from Human Resources will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining any relevant documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation is considered highly confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the complaint or decision-making process.

The investigation will be concluded within 10 school days of receiving the complaint unless "exceptional circumstances" justify a more expedited response. The amount of time granted for an exceptional circumstance will be determined on an individual case basis.

(3) Human Resources will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of

the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for recommendation.

(4) If the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal's response, he/she may appeal to a review committee to be comprised of at least three impartial members of Rocketship Education's Senior Leadership Team.

(5) The Review Committee will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The supervisor will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal. Any decision of the Review Committee shall be final.

VII. Prohibition Against Retaliation

Rocketship will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, Rocketship will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

VIII. Modification

Rocketship may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the modification is for good cause and does not violate the due process rights or the complainant or any policies of Rocketship.

IX. Contact Information

The contact information for the school principal can be found on the school's website. The school principal shall assist any complainant in obtaining the proper contact information for the principal's supervisor and/or the Chief Schools Officer/designee, should the complainant wish to pursue an appeal as described in Section V above.

X. Other Remedies

This complaint process does not bar complainants from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state and federal law.

In the event that a grievance cannot be resolved between a family and school leadership, Ms. Rena Johnson serves as the board member that handles community complaints at the school level. Ms Johnson can be reached at rjohnson@citybridge.org and (540) 760-5936.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, & BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Rocketship prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying as defined in this policy. This includes discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student based on the student's actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Additionally, in accordance with state and federal law, Rocketship will not exclude or deny any student from any educational program or activity because of pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination or pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Rocketship will, as necessary, make reasonable accommodations to a lactating pupil on a school campus.

Additionally, Rocketship will adopt curriculum and instructional methods and materials, and electronic communication policies that promote a safe environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. In response to increasing public awareness of childhood bullying and the adverse health effects associated with it, nearly all states and the District of Columbia have enacted anti-bullying legislation requiring schools to have policies that address and prevent bullying. Rocketship's policy has been written in accordance with the relevant DC laws and regulations. It addresses definitions of bullying and harassment; prohibitions against bullying; requirements for reporting incidences of bullying; procedures for investigating incidents; and sanctions, remedies, and appeals.

I. Definitions

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(1), "bullying" is defined as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

- May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national

origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, y ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense,

place or residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and

- Can reasonably be predicted to:
 - Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
 - Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
 - Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
 - Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

"Cyberbullying" includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. "Cyberbullying" also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

II. Prohibitions Against Bullying

Acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, whether by youth, volunteers, or staff, are prohibited:

- On Rocketship grounds and immediately adjacent property, at Rocketship -sponsored or related events on and off Rocketship grounds, on any vehicle used for Rocketship business, at any transit stop at which youth wait to be transported to Rocketship business, or through the use of any electronic devices owned by Rocketship, leased by Rocketship, or used for Rocketship business; and
- At a location or function unrelated to Rocketship, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by Rocketship, if the acts of bullying or cyberbullying create a hostile environment at the agency for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at Rocketship, or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of Rocketship.

Retaliation against a youth, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited. (DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(2-3;9))

III. Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation



In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(1)(6), Rocketship expects all staff members and volunteers to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or are made aware of. \ Staff members should immediately report all such incidents to the Principal, who will create a written report of a bullying incident.

Youth, parents, guardians, and community members are encouraged by Rocketship to report any incidents of bullying that they witness or become aware of. Reports of bullying may be made to the school Principal, or through an anonymous drop box at the front office of the campus.

Reports of bullying by youth, parents, guardians and community members may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action cannot be taken by Rocketship solely on the basis of an anonymous report. However, such a report may trigger an investigation that will provide actionable information. All oral reports received as part of this process will be transcribed into writing and included in Rocketship's bullying database, further described below.

Rocketship will ensure that there are reporting materials available in a wide variety of languages and that information about reporting is communicated to youth connected to Rocketship in an age appropriate manner. Information on how to report incidents of bullying will also be included as appropriate in Rocketship mailings to youth and their families. The school Principal is available to assist in reporting incidents of bullying.

Reports of bullying not received by the Principal will be transmitted to the Principal within one day of their receipt or creation by the staff member who reported the initial incident.

Note that, at any time, individuals may file a formal complaint regarding an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying through Rocketship's Complaint Policy. Any such complaint will be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Complaint Policy.

IV. Data Collection

All Rocketship schools in DC will collect the following pieces of information about reported incidents of bullying and provide aggregate data annually as determined by the Mayor pursuant to DC Code § 2-1535.07(a):

- Name(s) of the victim, bully, and any witnesses
- Reliable contact information for the victim, bully and any witnesses
- Relevant attributes about the victim, bully and any witnesses including:
 - Any prior incidents involving either the victim or bully

- Connection of the victim, bully, and any witnesses to the incident (i.e. are they students, staff, volunteers, etc.)
- The nature of the bullying incident
- Where the incident took place
- What time the incident took place
- What type(s) of bullying it was (physical, verbal, cyber, relational, etc.?)
- What factors drove the incident of bullying (social status, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, etc.)
- What adult supervision was in place
- Context of the incident

Rocketship will only attempt to collect this information insofar as it does not jeopardize the safety of the victim and witness(es) and allows non-staff reports of bullying to be made anonymously.

V. Investigating Incidents of Bullying

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(1)(7), prior to the investigation of an incident, the school Principal will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in a reported bullying incident. These steps will be designed to restore a sense of safety to the victim and to protect them from further incidents if necessary. Examples of such steps taken include designating a staff member to serve as that alleged victim's "safe" person, altering the alleged bully/bullies' seating or schedule to reduce access to the alleged victim or creating a safety plan in consultation with the alleged victim. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.

Once a report of bullying has been received by the school, the following groups will be notified as needed by the Principal so long as, in the absence of legal imperative, the parent or guardian's written consent is obtained prior to notification.

- Parents and guardians: Rocketship will notify the parents or guardians of victims, bullies, and if appropriate, witnesses to an incident of bullying behavior about the nature of the incident and the procedures and steps in place for responding to it. The school Principal will determine if parents or guardians should be informed prior to or after the investigation of an incident.
- Law enforcement agencies: If Rocketship determines that the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. As part of making this determination,

the Principal may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel. Law enforcement shall only be contacted if all other available remedies have been exhausted.

Rocketship will notify these groups of incidents of bullying only to the extent allowed by law. Notification will be undertaken solely to ensure that services are provided to victims and bullies and to protect victims from further or sustained victimization. Rocketship will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents.

The school Principal is responsible for investigating reports of bullying. An investigation of an incident will be initiated no more than one day after the Principal receives a report of bullying and will conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation, the Principal will interview any involved or relevant parties including alleged victims, bullies, witnesses, staff, parents or guardians.

The school Principal will provide confidentiality as far as possible to relevant parties as part of the investigation, and inform all relevant parties that retaliation for reporting acts of bullying is

prohibited. Written records of the investigation process should be maintained and may be included in the bullying database to generate a more accurate picture of bullying behaviors at Rocketship. Where necessary, provisions will be made to include the advice of legal counsel.

In investigating an incident of bullying, the Principal will seek to ensure that the reported incident is one of victimization, a sign of bullying, rather than of conflict. Thus when investigating a reported incident the Principal will attempt to determine, through interviewing the victim, what mechanisms the victim had and has access to for halting the incident that occurred, and preventing future such instances. If the victim reports a few or no mechanisms for ending the incident or constructively dealing with future instances, that information will serve as compelling, though not conclusive evidence that the reported incident was an incident of bullying.

The Principal is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the Principal determines that an incident of bullying has occurred, they should take response steps to prevent the recurrence of an incident and restore the safety of a victim.

If the Principal determines that additional support is needed to conduct a thorough and equitable investigation, he/she will contact Rocketship's Legal team and/or the citywide prevention coordinator.

The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to compliance@rsed.org within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.

VI. Sanctions

Rocketship Public Schools recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying prevention plan, they must be applied consistently, fairly, and equitably. To this end, Rocketship Public Schools shall ensure that staff follow these guidelines as closely as possible, while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. (DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(5)). Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be applied on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense, the disciplinary history of the youth involved, and the age and developmental status of the youth involved. Responses to incidents of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Reprimand
- Deprivation of Rocketship privileges
- Bans on participating in optional Rocketship activities
- Deprivation of Rocketship services
- Suspension or expulsion, in accordance with Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Sanctions will be applied within one day of the determination that an incident of bullying has

occurred, unless an appeal of the incident by the bully has been received in that time as described in the Appeals section of this policy. To ensure that single incidents of bullying do not become recurring problems, Rocketship will always refer victims and bullies involved in an incident to services in addition to imposing sanctions on bullies.

Rocketship does not endorse the use of punitive strategies associated with "zero-tolerance" policies when applying sanctions to an incident of bullying.

Rocketship shall communicate to youth in contact with Rocketship, the consequences that youth can expect for participating in bullying behavior.

VII. Appeals

Pursuant to DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(8); § 2-1535.04, parties dissatisfied by the outcome of a bullying investigation may appeal the determination to Rocketship's Vice President of Schools. This appeal should be submitted no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Schools must conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. This 30 days may be extended up to an additional 15 days if the Vice President of Schools sets forth in writing the reasons why more time is needed to conduct an investigation. Additionally, upon the receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Schools must inform the party making the submission of their ability to seek additional redress under the DC Human Rights Act.

VIII. Publication and Contact Information

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(f), this policy will be made available on Rocketship's website. The policy, and age appropriate versions thereof, will be distributed to youth and parents of youth in contact with Rocketship annually, and Rocketship will emphasize that the policy applies to participation in functions sponsored by Rocketship.

The Principal of each Rocketship campus is responsible for coordinating Rocketship's bullying prevention efforts. All questions, comments and concerns about the bullying policy and Rocketship prevention efforts should be able to be directed to the campus Principal.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 5 days after the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to

inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

(3) Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(4) The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (“PII”) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the School board. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service of function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in

performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student’s enrollment or transfer.

(5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students’ education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student —

(1) To other School officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).

(2) To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2)).

(3) To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35).

(4) In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4)).

(5) To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7)).

(6) To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8)).

(7) To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9)).

(8) To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10)).

(9) Information the School has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11)).

"Directory Information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. "Directory information," which is defined as set forth below, may be released to requestors in limited circumstances by Rocketship Public Schools, without additional notice to parents/guardians, unless the parent/guardian timely "opts out" of such disclosures, in writing.

State and federal law allow directory information to be disclosed to any requestors, except those who intend to use the information for commercial purposes. However, Rocketship's policy is to not release directory information to any requestor, for any purpose, without specific prior

parent/guardian consent in each situation, EXCEPT we will release such information to requestors that engage in political advocacy, lobbying, or information dissemination related to charter schools. In its discretion, the School may disclose directory information without a parent's prior written consent. The School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Student's address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Parents'/guardians' names
- Parents'/guardians' address
- Parents'/guardians' electronic mail address

If you do not want the School to disclose directory information without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment.

***Note: FERPA is a federal law that applies to all states. Many states have also enacted their own statutes related to the confidentiality, maintenance, release, and transfer of student records, which are designed to supplement FERPA requirements and apply to students enrolled in charter schools.*

OPEN MEETINGS POLICY

Rocketship DC PCS holds board meetings in compliance with local and federal board regulations. At this time, Rocketship DC PCS does not have open meetings. Schedules for public meetings will be posted to Rocketship DC PCS website, prior to the meeting date. We are anticipating that the May 2020 board meeting will be open to the public.