



INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

# Parent Handbook 2019—2020



Infinity Charter School  
5405 Locust Lane  
Harrisburg, PA 17109  
(717) 238-1880 (phone)  
(717) 238-1190 (fax)  
[www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org)

## Contents

2019-2020 School Calendar.....	4
2019-2020 Infinity Staff & Board of Trustees.....	5
General Information.....	6
Charter Schools .....	6
Infinity Charter School .....	6
Governance .....	7
Infinity Staff.....	8
School Profile.....	9
Mission, Vision, Goals.....	10
Mission Statement.....	10
Vision.....	10
Infinity Goals and Objectives .....	10
Core Values.....	11
Educational Program.....	12
Program Components (current or planned) Include: .....	12
Other Support Services .....	17
Assessing & Communicating Student Progress.....	18
Reading .....	18
Math .....	18
Themes .....	18
Homework.....	19
Grades .....	19
Report Cards .....	20
Student Portfolios.....	20
Checklists.....	20
Personal Learning Plans (PLPs).....	20
Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences .....	21
Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA).....	21
Monday Folders/Take Home Folders .....	21
Parent Involvement .....	21
Partnership .....	22
Infinity Volunteer Committees .....	22
Volunteer Code of Conduct .....	22
Volunteering as a Speaker/Mentor.....	24
Infinity Staff Suggestions Regarding Parent participation .....	24

Conflict Resolution .....	25
Resolving Conflicts Productively .....	26
Enrollment Information .....	27
Admissions.....	27
Boundaries .....	27
Placement of Students.....	27
Office Information .....	28
Change of Address/Telephone Number/Email Address .....	28
Transfer/Withdrawal .....	28
Telephone Use .....	28
Visitors.....	28
Notices/Announcements .....	28
Lost and Found .....	29
School Lunch .....	29
Attendance/Absence .....	29
Attendance .....	29
Excused Absences.....	30
Unexcused Absences .....	31
Unexcused Absences .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Inclement Weather/Early Dismissal .....	31
Arrival & Dismissal Procedures .....	32
School Hours.....	32
Arrival and Departure .....	32
Building Access .....	32
Before and After School Care.....	32
Tardiness and Early Departure.....	32
Transportation/Carpooling.....	33
Release of Students .....	33
Late Pickup .....	33
Health Services .....	33
Health and Medication at School.....	33
Health Screening.....	34
Student Behavior.....	36
Infinity Behavioral Expectations .....	36
Student Behavior Standards.....	37
Student Rights And Responsibilities .....	38

---

Recess Guidelines .....	40
Enforcement Procedures: .....	40
Student Expulsion, Suspension and Due Process .....	41
<b>Student Conduct Report</b> .....	43
Miscellaneous .....	44
Dress Code .....	44
Student Activities.....	45
Safety Drills .....	46
Emergency Plan for Incidents at Three Mile Island .....	46
Special Education.....	47
Notice to Parents .....	47
Evaluation Process .....	48
Appendices.....	50
Appendix A: Resources .....	50
Appendix B: A Bill of Rights for the Parents of Gifted Children .....	51
Appendix C: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) .....	52
<b>Parent/Student Agreement</b> .....	53

**NOTE: ALL POLICIES APPROVED BY INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.INFINITYSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.INFINITYSCHOOL.ORG)**

# 2019-2020 School Calendar

Monday, August 19 <sup>th</sup>	Teachers Report to Work	
<b>Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>First Day of School</b>	
Fri., August 30 <sup>th</sup> - Mon., September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	No School	Labor Day Weekend
Monday, October 14 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Teacher In-Service
Thursday, November 7 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, November 8 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Thurs., Nov. 28 <sup>th</sup> – Mon., Dec. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	No School	Thanksgiving Break
Mon., December 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Fri., January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	No School	Winter Break
Monday, January 20 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Day
Thursday, January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Monday, February 17 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Presidents' Day
Mon., March 9 <sup>th</sup> – Fri., March 13 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Spring Break
Thursday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, April 10 <sup>th</sup> – Monday, April 13 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Easter Holiday
Monday, April 20 <sup>th</sup> – Friday, May 8 <sup>th</sup>		PSSA Testing
Monday, May 25 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Memorial Day
<b>Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Last Day of School</b>	
Friday, June 5 <sup>th</sup>	Portfolio Sharing	
Tuesday, June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Teachers' Last Day	

# 2019-2020 Infinity Staff & Board of Trustees

## STAFF

<b>Director/CEO</b> .....	Suzanne Gausman
<b>Assistant Director</b> .....	Anthony Boyer
<b>School Secretary</b> .....	Tracie Miller
<b>Business Manager</b> .....	Kornelia Hartwig
<b>Director of Development</b> .....	Dawn Brotherton
<b>Community Resource Coordinator</b> .....	Mickey Grey
<b>Nurses</b> .....	Lisa Teach
.....	Kathleen Yaninek
<b>Kindergarten-First Grade Teachers</b> .....	Erin Confer
.....	Beth Roberts
<b>First-Second Grade Teachers</b> .....	Emily Lewis
.....	Melissa Kohr
<b>Third-Fourth Grade Teachers</b> .....	Katie Gehman
.....	Kaitlyn Stanton
<b>Fourth-Fifth Grade Teachers</b> .....	Catherine Schairer/
.....	Julia Isherwood
.....	Cynthia Walker
<b>Sixth-Seventh Grade Teacher</b> .....	Erin Doyle
.....	Dylan Linhart
<b>Seventh-Eighth Grade Teacher</b> .....	Heath Lettich
.....	Suzy Gruber
<b>Learning Specialist</b> .....	Keri Hess
.....	Faith Barrett
<b>Guidance Counselor</b> .....	Sadaka Archie
<b>Art Specialist</b> .....	Mary Grissett-Havrilak
<b>Foreign Language Specialist</b> .....	Yelena Harrison
<b>Music Specialist</b> .....	Addison Rymar
<b>P.E. Specialist</b> .....	Ross Kaufman
<b>Library Specialist</b> .....	Stacie Lejcar
<b>Paraprofessionals</b> .....	Kiel Eckert
.....	Donna Leuschner
.....	Wendy Reynolds
.....	Sharon Williams

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

<b>President</b> .....	Michelle Coleman
<b>Vice President &amp; Parent Representative</b> .....	Megan Mines-Hall
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	Matthew Blaylock
<b>Secretary</b> .....	Michelle Haring

# General Information

## **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

Charter schools embody a new approach to public education. Since 1991, 43 states and the District of Columbia have authorized the creation of charter schools in response to public demands for more effective and more accountable public schools. Many view charter schools as exciting and innovative initiatives that are changing and improving the educational landscape across America. Some argue that charter schools introduce a competitive dynamic into the public school system. Others prefer to think of charter schools as the research and development division of the public school system by providing a new stimulus and vehicle for innovation. There are those who see charter schools as a threat to the conventional public school system. The fact is charter schools are increasing in number. According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, in 2016-17, there were more than 6,900 charter schools, enrolling an estimated 3.1 million students.

A charter school is an independent public school, custom-designed by local citizens. It is typically endorsed or chartered by a public agency and has more freedom and flexibility than it would have as a magnet school or through waivers. A charter school may not charge tuition and it may not discriminate. Charter schools typically focus on a special curriculum approach, a new school organization approach, or some other feature that sets them apart from regular public school offerings.

## **INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL**

Infinity was conceived by Nancy Hall and Doug Morrow. In the fall of 2000, Ms. Hall, Mr. Morrow and two Central Dauphin parents, Cynthia Doherty and Kathleen Jessop, wrote a planning grant for Infinity and submitted it to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This grant was successful and helped fund the initial application process.

The actual charter application was submitted to the Central Dauphin School Board on July 30, 2001. The School Board held three public hearings. Many parents and students attended, and a number spoke to the Board in support of the school. In spite of this, the Central Dauphin School Board denied the application on November 19, 2001.

Organizers began the appeal process immediately. This started with obtaining over 1,400 signatures of Central Dauphin residents within 60 days. These signatures were then submitted in January 2002, to the Court of Common Pleas to be verified. This process dragged on until August of 2002, when a sufficient number of signatures were approved. This allowed us to submit our information to the state Charter Appeals Board and get scheduled on their agenda.

Our hearing in front of the CAB took place in October of 2002, and many parents and students attended. On November 21, 2002, the state Charter Appeals Board voted unanimously to overturn Central Dauphin's denial and to approve Infinity's charter application.

Since Central Dauphin refused to sign the charter, it needed to be signed by the Secretary of Education. However, due to the gubernatorial election, there was soon to be a change in administration. Fortunately, we were able to get the Interim Secretary of Education to sign the

charter without having to wait for the new Secretary of Education to be approved. This occurred in late January of 2003.

Throughout this long process, many of our parents stood by us. Unfortunately, some had children who had grown too old for the school, while others became discouraged by the contentious process, or perhaps lost faith, that we could open. By the end of June, even the Board did not believe we had enough students to begin. However, a small group of committed parents refused to let this dream die and began a grassroots effort to recruit more students and raise more money. Encouraged by their efforts, the Infinity Board voted on July 8, 2003, to move forward to open the school. Between July 8th and August 26th, we secured and renovated a building, enrolled students, hired staff, and purchased materials and equipment, and did the million other things it takes to start a school. Parents, students and staff worked together to make the vision a reality, and in so doing, created a caring community.

Infinity Charter School has been in continuous operation since 2003. Despite a challenging beginning, we have had an excellent relationship with our chartering district, Central Dauphin School District. Since opening our doors, our charter has been renewed three times: 2007 (5-year renewal), 2012 (5-year renewal), and 2015 (early renewal at the request of ICS, in order to pursue funding for a new facility).

## **GOVERNANCE**

Infinity Charter School is organized as a Pennsylvania Non-Profit Corporation and has been granted recognition as a tax-exempt public charity, as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The Charter School Act calls for a body to govern each charter school. For Infinity Charter School, that governing body is called the Board of Trustees. As of August, 2019, board membership consists of four voting members. Membership cannot include any employees of the school. It does consist of one parent who currently has a child enrolled in the school. All Board members are unpaid.

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the school. While the board hires the CEO to manage all day-to-day operations, the board is responsible for oversight of the CEO, budgeting, and governance.

Specifically, the Board of Trustees has legally mandated responsibilities, which include:

- Evaluating the school's management, and appointing or dismissing as necessary,
- Fixing salaries or compensation of administrators, teachers and other employees of the charter school,
- Overseeing and approving the school's annual budget,
- Enacting policy,
- Locating new buildings or changing locations of old,
- Approving curriculum, adopting courses of study and/or textbooks,
- Adopting the school calendar,
- Entering into contracts on behalf of the school.



In addition to the legally mandated responsibilities, the Infinity Board is responsible for:

- Carrying the vision,
- Serving as advocates for the student body, as a whole,
- Evaluating its own performance,
- Serving as a focus group for the management,
- Bringing stakeholder concerns to the management ,
- Problem-solving, as requested,
- Serving as key communicators to the parents and staff,
- Serving as “cheerleaders” for the school, as warranted, and
- Serving as good-will ambassadors to the larger community.

The exact rules under which the Board operates are described in the school Bylaws. Notice of Board meetings is posted on the entrance to the school and on our web site. All regular Board meetings are open to the public. Executive sessions, to discuss legal and personnel issues, are closed.

### ***INFINITY STAFF***

Reporting to the Board and responsible for the overall management of the entire school is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO/Director). This individual is, in effect, the “principal” of the school. The CEO/Director is the school's educational leader, and focuses on curricular and instructional issues. Reporting to the CEO/Director is the school's Business Manager. The Business Manager is responsible for financial aspects of the school's functioning.

# School Profile

## DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL:

**1. Name, address and phone number of school:**

Infinity Charter School  
5405 Locust Lane  
Harrisburg, PA 17109

Voice: (717) 238-1880

Fax: (717) 238-1190

Web Site: [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org)

**2. Grades served:** K through 8

**3. Average class size:** 21.3

**4. Educational philosophy:** Utilizing state and national curriculum as a base, teachers implement different and innovative instructional strategies appropriate for gifted students.

**5. Reading program(s) and strategies:** Teachers use a variety of methods to help students learn to read and develop critical reading skills. The Learning Specialists are available to assist those children who need extra support in this area.

**6. Tests and measures used:** Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA), student portfolios, skills checklists, and diagnostic assessments.

**7. Special educational program(s):** The Learning Specialists provide direct services to students and assists staff in working with special needs students. Infinity also works with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to provide additional specialized staff and services to students. These include, but are not limited to, students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or those covered by Section 504 of the Federal ADA legislation.

**8. Student discipline philosophy, strategies and program(s):** We emphasize clear behavior expectations, rule setting with consequences, discussions with students and communication with parents.

**9. Child care:** Infinity does not currently offer its own before-and-after school options.

**10. Highlights unique to this school:** Addresses the needs of intellectually and/ or academically gifted students, foreign language at all levels, continuous progress, portfolios, checklists, Personal Learning Plans, multi-age classrooms, frequent field trips and speakers, two Learning Specialists, and direct parent involvement.

**11. Opportunities for parent participation:** Board of Trustees membership, parent volunteering in/on the—library, office, playground, classrooms, fund raising, school committees, computers, and so on.

# Mission, Vision, Goals

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Infinity Charter School is to operate and maintain a world-class charter school in the Central Dauphin School District that addresses the intellectual, academic, and social-emotional needs of mentally gifted children.

## **VISION**

The “vision” of Infinity Charter School is to inspire, challenge, and engage the hearts, minds, and spirits of gifted children in Central Pennsylvania. It speaks to our belief in, and commitment to, serving the whole child, and of finding ways to give these individuals, as Carl Sandburg said, “... the deepest possible roots and the highest possible flowering...”

## **INFINITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Academic**

- To increase and improve pupil learning,
- To ensure that each child meets or exceeds local, state and national academic standards,
- To increase appropriate learning opportunities for each child by providing full-time instruction geared to their special needs and abilities,
- To provide ongoing professional opportunities for staff, including staff development in diverse and innovative teaching and assessment methods appropriate for gifted children, and
- To utilize different and innovative teaching and assessment methods.

### **Non-academic**

- To prepare each child to be a lifelong learner,
- To work with parents and students concerning the students' unique social-emotional needs,
- To actively and consistently encourage parental involvement with public school education,
- To provide parents and students with expanded choices in available public educational opportunities, which may result in enrollment of children currently in home-schooling or private education settings,
- To facilitate student service to, and involvement in, the community, *and*
- To blur the boundaries between school and community and actively promote the concept that the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other.

# Core Values

As the school grows, we are creating a school culture that includes the values, symbols, beliefs and shared meanings among parents, students, staff and the Board. The more understood, accepted and cohesive the culture is, the better the school community is able to move toward achieving its mission, vision and goals. The following are the core values embraced by the Infinity learning community:

## **1. Education First**

At Infinity, education is our primary business. Activities that seek and support educational excellence shall be given priority over those which do not. The role of teachers is to help children learn.

## **2. Quality**

Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through school, the subject of quality and how it relates to schoolwork is discussed with students. Students, parents and teachers will challenge students to do their very best. It is not our goal to have students merely completing assignments without attempting to produce a quality product.

## **3. Hard Work**

Creating high quality work is not always easy. Our staff is committed to making learning interesting, exciting, and even fun, as much as possible. However, we recognize, and want parents and students to recognize, that learning, while necessary, is not always easy.

## **4. Life-long Learning**

We recognize learning does not begin or end with school. We want students to learn skills, which will allow them to continue to direct their own learning. The essence of this is independence and self-reliance.

## **5. Love of Learning**

Children need to learn to love learning as its own reward. We work to encourage students to rely on internal rewards and motivations, while acknowledging some external rewards may be necessary.

## **6. Self-esteem**

We believe self-esteem is built upon competence. We can, and will, praise children appropriately, but we will not engage in false praise. We will actively assist and encourage children in their journey toward competency. We want them to take pride in what they do well. We also want them to believe they can make a difference in the world.

## **7. Respect**

We strive to create a climate of mutual respect among students, parents, staff and community members. Students will be expected to show respect to others, and can, in turn, expect to be treated with respect by others.

**8. Personal Responsibility**

We expect students to take personal responsibility for their own learning. We cannot teach them anything, if they are determined not to learn. We also expect them to take personal responsibility for their actions and to be willing to accept the consequences.

**9. Responsibility to Others**

Any member of a community has some responsibility to his neighbor. Our students have some special abilities that carry with them greater opportunities to serve. We want students to understand the contributions they can make to society and to act responsibly.

**10. Role Models**

We have high expectations for our students. We, as parents and staff, are committed to serving as appropriate role models for our students. We need to demonstrate our values to our students on a daily basis in our own behavior. We can't reasonably expect from them that which we are not willing to do ourselves.

**11. Diversity**

We live in a diverse society. Students need to understand and respect differences, while seeking to find common ground. Students also need to understand and evaluate different opinions and intellectual perspectives. All of this is an integral part of our curriculum.

**12. Continual Improvement**

We have adopted the Japanese philosophy of *Kaizen* or continuous improvement. We acknowledge and recognize effort, celebrate the achievement of benchmarks and milestones, and strive to get better each day.

## Educational Program

Utilizing the Pennsylvania core standards as a base, the teachers implement different and innovative strategies appropriate for gifted students. Infinity has set high, rigorous standards for pupil performance to commensurate with student ability, and expects students to meet or exceed state and district standards. We utilize a variety of methods to assess student achievement, as well as several measures to assess programmatic success. These include individual learning plans, student portfolios, standardized achievement tests and parent surveys.

### **PROGRAM COMPONENTS (CURRENT OR PLANNED) INCLUDE:**

**Competency-based Progress:**

Students will be able to advance based on achieving mastery of content or skills instead of being required to submit to an arbitrary amount of seat time. For example, if a 4<sup>th</sup> grader demonstrates competency in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level of fractions and decimals, s/he will be able to start learning the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level skills and concepts in this area.

**Flexible Ability Grouping for Skills Instruction:**

Students will be assessed regularly in math and reading. Based on these assessments, they will be grouped with other students of similar abilities for instruction. For example, if a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade child is reading at a 6<sup>th</sup> grade level, s/he will be grouped with other students who are performing at the same level (most likely from the same class). Groups are likely to change over the course of the year, as students improve their skills at different rates. We will not track children, forcing them to always remain in the same group.

**Broad-based Interdisciplinary Themes:**

Helping students to understand how various subject areas are interconnected is beneficial at all grade levels; therefore year-long interdisciplinary themes (incorporating smaller sub-themes) are implemented. The primary integration is with history, geography, civics and government, economics, science, technology and health, but efforts are also made to bring in math, language arts, music, art, physical education and foreign language. The integration of disciplines is more reflective of the real world, reinforces concepts and skills, and is perceived as more relevant by students.

**Personal Learning Plans:**

Teachers work with parents and students to develop a personal learning plan for each child. The plan incorporates measurable goals that pertain to the student's school performance, but do not duplicate the curriculum framework checklists. These goals are reviewed at each conference during the year.

**Curriculum Compacting:**

Curriculum compacting is a strategy enabling a student to complete required learning objectives in a shortened period of time. Normal practice assignments may be reduced and students may test out of particular units of study.

**Acceleration:**

It is our goal to appropriately challenge our students both intellectually and academically. The majority of the "acceleration" needs normally exhibited by gifted children in a regular classroom can be accommodated at our school by homogeneous skill groupings within the classroom necessitated by the continuous progress philosophy. Guidelines and procedures for grade skipping are being refined.

**Some Curriculum Based on Student Interests:**

Gifted students often have passion areas, which do not always intersect with the required curriculum. Therefore, time may need to be set aside for students to pursue their own interests. The student should not be left to his own devices, but should have access to the teacher or other adults for assistance.

**Guidance and Counseling for Gifted:**

The school has a part-time counselor who understands the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted children. This is very important, but finding the right person is critical. The wrong person can do more harm than good. The counselor also works with students on career exploration and leadership.

**Metacognition Skills:**

Metacognition involves students examining how they and their classmates think, as well as the variety and effectiveness of the processes and strategies they use. This can help students not only to have a larger repertoire of thinking strategies, but also to evaluate which strategies may be most effective in different situations.

**Creative Thinking Skills:**

Skills, processes and attitudes can be modeled and taught, which result in greater creativity expressed by students. This includes encouraging divergent thinking, teaching and using brainstorming and creative problem solving models, and presenting activities that stimulate fluency, flexibility, and elaboration.

**Critical Thinking Skills:**

Our students are constantly bombarded by information from a wide variety of sources. Students must be able to analyze and evaluate the pieces of information, the sources of information, and the claims or assertions they encounter, if they are to navigate successfully through the sea of data.

These skills include:

1. Distinguishing between verifiable facts and value claims
2. Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information, claims, or reasons
3. Determining the factual accuracy of a statement
4. Determining the credibility of a source
5. Identifying ambiguous claims or arguments
6. Identifying unstated assumptions
7. Detecting bias
8. Identifying logical fallacies
9. Recognizing logical inconsistencies in a line of reasoning
10. Determining the strength of an argument or claim

**Problem-Finding/Problem-Solving:**

Gifted children bring, perhaps, the greatest potential to problem-solving situations. Just as gifted athletes must train and exercise their bodies to maintain and improve their performance, our students must train and exercise their minds. We want our students to be able to synthesize their creative, critical and communication skills, as well as utilize specific problem-solving strategies, in addressing a variety of issues. But beyond problem-solving, gifted children often have the ability to recognize problems—to detect a discordant situation, a gap that needs to be filled, or a contradiction that begs for resolution. We want to encourage our students to be sensitive to anticipating situations that could become problems, and learn how to determine which problems are important and worth solving.

**Self-Directed Learning/Lifelong Learning:**

We do not expect our students to be solely dependent on their teachers for learning, since school eventually comes to an end, but learning never should. We strive to keep our students' joy in learning alive and teach them how to access and evaluate a variety of information sources.

**Research Skills:**

There are times when students need to be able to gather information produced by others. This type of research also requires a set of skills, such as selecting a topic, locating sources, evaluating sources, selecting sources, reading for information, taking notes, organizing information, presenting information, and crediting sources.

We also want our students to learn skills that will assist them in becoming idea producers, who are able to conduct real research. This might include scientific experimentation or collecting survey data.

**Independent Study:**

Sometimes it is appropriate and important for a gifted child to work alone. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that s/he has the skills to do so productively.

**Teaching of Prerequisite Skills:**

Too often in gifted education, teachers' attempts to be creative and challenging overreach the skills of the child. For example, requiring a student to write a play without first teaching the child the elements of a play, how to write dialogue and so on, is unfair to the student and generally results in superficial products. We attempt to provide sufficient depth of instruction to facilitate a student's success in creating a quality product.

**Brain-compatible Learning:**

We incorporate actual brain research related to the teaching/learning process. One aspect of this involves building on one of the strongest brain impulses a child has: to make sense of her world. Teachers can facilitate this by providing massive input and helping students detect and recognize patterns.

**Communication Skills:**

There is an obvious need for all students to be able to communicate orally and in writing. It is of little value for a gifted child to have great ideas if s/he cannot communicate these ideas to others.

**Futures Orientation:**

The future is "where" our students will live. They need the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them shape that future. Being able to critically evaluate complex issues and creatively approach problems, understanding they can make a difference, and accepting civic responsibility for participating in our democracy, are all contributing factors to creating a positive future.

**Multi-age Grouping:**

Children are grouped in classes that encompass what would normally be a two-grade level span. These are not treated as combination classes, in which a clear demarcation is made between students at each grade level and the delivery of instruction is based on the child's grade level, rather on performance level.

**Experiential Learning:**

It is often said children learn best by doing. A wide variety of instructional materials and equipment are used, but our curriculum is not textbook-based.



**Utilization of Community Resources:**

Education at Infinity is not just campus-based. There is a vast array of resources available to students throughout our local communities and beyond. Sometimes the community will come in to the student, and sometimes the student will go out to the community. Field trips and speakers are an integral part of the educational program, with goals and objectives clearly tied to the curriculum.

**Mentorships/Internships:**

While gifted students can be very advanced in one or more subjects, the teacher cannot be expected to be an expert in all areas. However, a student's education in a specific area can be continued through a careful matching with a non-staff member who is an expert in that specific area. This mentorship relationship can be established face-to-face or through technology.

An internship usually provides an opportunity for a student to explore or pursue their passion area by working part-time with professionals in that field. An internship generally takes places over a specified period of time, is unpaid, and is available only to older students.

**Artist-in-Residence/Scientist-in-Residence:**

This involves having a practicing professional at the school. This person is generally contracted for a specific period of time, during which s/he teaches classes or conducts workshops with students, and continues his/her own work part of the day. This can be done through existing programs or can be designed by the school.

**University/College-School Partnerships:**

College level instructors can be guest speakers in classrooms; they can offer more advanced classes; they can offer classes we couldn't otherwise provide, all of which are directly beneficial to students. This could occur at either site. Our teachers and university professors can design curriculum and/or team-teach, and student teachers can be trained at the school, which would be beneficial for staff development, and presumably students. Other possibilities would only be limited by the imagination of the parties involved.

**Outdoor Education or Extended Field Trips:**

Some sort of outdoor education or extended field trip is offered at each grade level. These experiences not only provide an opportunity for social development, but are also an outgrowth of the academic curriculum. These experiences are articulated across grade levels, just as the regular curriculum is.

**Community Service Projects:**

As stated in our goals and objectives, we believe the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other. While we hope our students will be able to take advantage of a wide variety of community resources to enhance our curriculum, we also want our students to use their time and talents to give back to the community. Ideally, each class would participate in some type of community service activity on a regular basis.

**Appropriate Technology:**

Students and staff must be empowered with modern tools to multiply learning and increase productivity. "High tech" has the potential to enable more effective "high touch" interactions between staff and learners. However, Infinity does not embrace technology for

technology's sake. We see technology as a tool, but it is not the right tool for all situations. We believe it is critically important for adults and children to learn how to assess which tool is most appropriate in a given situation. The school will carefully assess the specific needs of its learners and its community to determine the optimal combination of technologies.

**The Internet:**

The Internet has become an essential way to gather, exchange and disseminate information. Gifted students need to learn how to constructively use technology to serve themselves and society, rather than becoming expert "hackers".

We have delineated above the major components of our educational program, our teaching methods, if you will. However, this is, of necessity, an abbreviated, rather than an exhaustive, list. Joyce and Weil (1986) have identified more than 80 models of teaching. We could, perhaps, narrow this down somewhat, since less than 25 percent of these have been designed specifically for gifted students. Even so, June Maker (1995) has stated that "No single model or way of teaching the gifted can provide the comprehensive curriculum needed by the students."

Beyond the numerous teaching models, there are an even greater number of specific instructional strategies. One important element in successful teaching is the teacher's ability to effectively utilize a variety of instructional strategies. One of the central reasons for this is the fact that children don't all learn the same way. Even among the gifted, there can be significant differences in learning styles.

Consequently, the instructional staff at Infinity will continually review and evaluate models, strategies, and curriculum materials that will be most effective with our students.

**SPECIALS**

In addition to the core curriculum, students at Infinity have the opportunity to participate in art, foreign language, music and physical education classes at all grade levels. Instruction in the subjects takes place either one hour once per week or one-half hour twice a week.

These specialists design their lessons to meet state standards, to enhance the core curriculum, and to engage the students.

**OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES****Learning Specialist**

Infinity's Learning Specialist works collaboratively with the classroom teachers to address a variety of student needs. She is certified in special education, so she can work with students who may need learning support as part of an IEP or 504 Plan. In addition, she works with students who may have uneven academic development and need additional instruction in specified areas.

**Counselor**

The Counselor will meet with classes on a weekly basis. At this time, she works with students regarding social emotional needs, leadership skills, career exploration, etc. As needed, the Counselor may also meet with small groups or individuals, after receiving parental permission to do so.

**Community Resource Coordinator**

Infinity's commitment to create a symbiotic relationship with the community is also reflected in our staffing. Our Community Resource Coordinator is an integral part of the educational program at the school. She is primarily responsible for assisting classroom teachers to enhance the educational experience by coordinating speakers, field trips, assemblies and other resources in the community. She is also responsible for arranging community service activities.

## Assessing & Communicating Student Progress

Student evaluation at this school is primarily for the purpose of individual improvement. Assessment measures are used to diagnose student strengths and weaknesses, and are then utilized in tailoring instruction and developing an appropriate plan to make progress on specific goals. Evaluation measures are also utilized in assessing the extent of the student's progress in relationship to those goals. These measures are designed to teach as well as test. We are not primarily interested in how students compare to each other.

**At Infinity, we use the following procedures:**

**READING**

Teachers begin the year with a diagnostic reading test to assess the reading level of the child and then set up flexible ability groups to work with the children on those levels. Infinity is firmly committed to continuous progress, which means that each child starts working at the assessed level and progresses at his or her own pace.

**MATH**

Diagnostic measures are used at the beginning of the year to assess skills and concepts. Then flexible ability groups are formed for instructional purposes. Children are often uneven in their mastery of math skills from one standard to another, and so it is typical to assess children as teachers begin each standard. Of course, teachers also assess progress after a particular unit. However, teachers usually do not conduct this testing immediately after the finishing the unit. Rather, they wait until at least one more unit is taught, to determine how much the student has really retained. Teachers often use PSSA released items to design their pre-and post-tests in math.

**THEMES**

For themes, in which we combine history, geography, civics, economics, science, technology, environment, ecology and more, we also follow the state content standards. Assessment in these areas is not always as cut and dried. Often, the focus is on particular projects that students are doing related to the theme, and these projects are evaluated. Teachers have a checklist or rubric to evaluate these projects, often on both content and presentation.

## **HOMEWORK**

Many schools assign homework on a daily basis, with the amount of time dependent on the grade of the student. Infinity does not do this.

First of all, we require the students to work hard during the school day. Everyone needs some “down time,” especially younger students. Furthermore, many of our students are occupied with various lessons, such as ballet or piano or family activities after school, so they do not always have time to complete homework.

As you are probably aware, Infinity provides significant differentiation in daily math and reading instruction. Classroom teachers are generally planning for four math groups and four reading groups per day. It takes a substantial amount of time to prepare for both the direct instruction and for the independent work that students complete when not receiving direct instruction. It also takes a considerable amount of time for the teacher to evaluate the work done by students at school on a daily basis.

For homework to be meaningful in these areas it would also have to be differentiated, which creates a significant amount of additional planning and evaluating. We believe it is more important for our teachers to focus on what students do during the school day.

Your child may have homework, if s/he has not used class time effectively, and has not completed work that should have been done in school. Students often have homework related to theme projects that are primarily completed at home. There will be more homework at the middle school level. Of course, there are also general things that students can do at home, such as practice math facts or read, even if not assigned.

At Infinity, since we encourage students to become self-directed learners, we believe students can be involved in learning activities outside of school that are not assigned by the teacher/s. Furthermore, we find that students who are really interested in learning about something don't need external motivation to do so.

## **GRADES**

Letter grades are not used at Infinity. The research on grades indicates they are not reliable indicators of student performance. Letter grades are often assigned based on how the student compares to other students in the classroom. An “A” or a “D” in a subject does not convey what content or skills the student has learned or the level of difficulty of the work, nor does it indicate what skills s/he has mastered, or on which skills s/he is working. A “B” in one school may mean something entirely different than a “B” in another school. The letter grade does not indicate what criteria were used to evaluate student learning. Nor does a letter grade, with a brief comment, tell a student specifically what s/he must do to improve.

We believe letter grades are not effective in communicating with parents or other schools (should a student transfer) about content or skills learned. We also believe letter grades do not help students identify specific strengths they need to build on, nor specific weaknesses they need to improve. Therefore, we use other more qualitative measures of evaluation, as noted below.

## REPORT CARDS

Students at Infinity do not receive report cards. We use portfolios instead. Portfolios are updated each quarter for each child, including Language Arts, Math and Writing Checklists and Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). Copies of the Conference Record Form completed at each conference are sent home to parents following the conference.

## STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

Infinity's student portfolios are **cumulative**. They are passed on from teacher to teacher. Work that is purged is sent home to the parents. Infinity's student portfolios are **growth** portfolios. They do not always show a student's best work. Through samples taken throughout the year, they do show the progress a student has made. Sometimes work from an entire process, such as the writing process, is included.

Infinity's student portfolios are also **documentation** portfolios. Skills marked on the checklists, either as introduced or as proficient, are backed up with evidence in the portfolio, as much as possible. For example, the concept of synonyms can be covered at a variety of levels. The teacher will include some student work to indicate to which level the student has progressed.

As students mature, they begin having more ownership of their portfolios and start taking more responsibility for selecting what goes in them. They will be able to include written comments about why they selected each item and what they learned. (However, this will not alleviate the teacher of his/her responsibility to ensure that necessary samples are included.)

## CHECKLISTS

At Infinity, we have checklists for language, math and writing. These checklists are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards and include the skills our students are working on in grades K - 8. These checklists also indicate at which grade level these skills would normally be mastered by the average student. In this way, we, as teachers, are able to address any gaps our students have, and parents can rest assured that their child is learning what s/he needs at each grade level.

Including the checklists for more than one grade level in a student's portfolio allows us to show when a student is working on skills at a higher, or lower, grade level. It also means these checklists are cumulative and will follow the student from class to class. The checklists are divided by school quarter. Teachers will indicate whether the student exceeded, met, approached, or worked below the standard each quarter.

## PERSONAL LEARNING PLANS (PLPs)

In addition to the checklists, each student has a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) developed in conjunction with the student herself, the parents and the teachers. This plan will be reviewed quarterly, with the aforementioned parties, and revised as necessary. Although specific academic goals may be included, we do not want to simply restate all the skills from the checklists. Therefore, for the most part, PLPs focus more on behavioral goals, self-directed learning goals and goals related to theme and theme projects.

Teachers send home blank PLP forms before the first conference. We do not expect families to complete the entire form, but we do ask them to sit down and discuss, as a family, what kinds of goals they want for their child/ren during the year. When they bring these ideas to the

conference, they are able to discuss them with the teacher and come to an agreement. The teacher is also prepared with goals s/he believes each student should be working on during the quarter, or during the year, and shares those with the family. In this way, we try to make the PLPs more of a working document and more useful to everyone.

### **PARENT/TEACHER/STUDENT CONFERENCES**

Because we believe it is important to meet with parents to discuss these evaluations, we schedule four conferences during the year. The first three conferences are 30 minutes long, because we really do want to be able to discuss your child's progress with you. The majority of the conferences times are during the scheduled release times on the calendar and include evening times for those parents who cannot come during the day.

Students are encouraged to attend. Even at the younger grades, we feel it is important for the child to be aware of his/her progress and to take responsibility for his/her own learning. As the children mature, they will take on more responsibility for conducting the conferences themselves.

The fourth conference of the year is held shortly after the last day of school and is student-led. It is more of a portfolio review and celebration of the year's learning. Teachers are available to answer questions, but up to six students may be scheduled during the same two-hour block of time. Morning and afternoon times are available.

### **PENNSYLVANIA STATE SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT (PSSA)**

To ensure that each child meets or exceeds local, state and national academic standards, our students participate in the state PSSA and any other mandated assessments. Moreover, consistent with our goals, our teaching staff will continue to participate in professional development to become more skilled in using a variety of assessment measures. They are also encouraged to explore and experiment with different types of assessment, with the goal of improving student learning.

### **MONDAY FOLDERS/TAKE HOME FOLDERS**

These are folders that were sent home with your child/ren every Monday. Traditionally, included in these folders were weekly newsletters from the classroom teacher, a weekly school-wide letter from the Director, student papers and other notices. Monday letters, calendars, and notices are now sent to parents via email each Monday. We still use the folder to send home student papers, forms, etc.

## **Parent Involvement**

From the beginning, parents have been involved in the school in a multitude of ways. Infinity would not be the same without the commitment and efforts of its parents. Parents have devoted many hours of their time and labor to the school, and have also donated a variety of materials.

Productive partnerships allow us to provide more for the children than any of us could accomplish alone. We welcome parents' talents, skills and energies toward that end.

## ***PARTNERSHIP***

I dreamed I stood in a studio,  
and watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind,  
and they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher; the tools he used  
were books and music and art;  
One was a parent with a guiding hand,  
and a gentle, loving heart.  
Day after day, the teacher toiled with touch,  
that was careful, deft, and sure.  
While the parent labored by his side,  
and polished and smoothed it o'er.  
And when at last their work was done,  
they were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child,  
could never be sold or bought.  
And each agreed he would have failed,  
if he had worked alone.  
For behind the parent stood the school,  
and behind the teacher, stood the home.

***Unknown***

## ***INFINITY VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES***

The Infinity Volunteer Organization's (IVO) purpose is to strengthen and enhance the school community while supporting the mission of Infinity Charter School. The goal of the IVO is to foster healthy partnerships between parents, teachers, students, and staff by working together, socializing, and expanding the growth opportunities for our students. The IVO works closely with the Infinity Director and Board, and is responsible for organizing all extracurricular events and activities, as well as staff appreciation initiatives, and other volunteer efforts at Infinity Charter School. Infinity parents, teachers, staff, and Board are welcome as IVO members; there is no formal membership process. If you wish to contribute in some way at Infinity, IVO can help involve you with one of the many opportunities available.

To get involved with the IVO, or for more information, contact Jessica Lane at [ivo@infinityschool.org](mailto:ivo@infinityschool.org).

## ***VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT***

### ***Volunteering in General***

- Be a courteous, considerate representative of the school.
- Do not use volunteer time to discuss your child. Please make other arrangements.
- Maintain the confidentiality of staff, students and families.



- Follow the school dress code, to set a good example for the students.
- The use, possession or distribution of tobacco, alcohol or any controlled substance is forbidden during school hours, on school property or at any school-sponsored event.
- It is the policy to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment in any form. The term harassment includes, but is not limited to, repeated, unwelcome, and offensive slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, or handicap/disability that create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Ethnic harassment includes the repeated, unwelcome, and offensive use of any derogatory word, phrase, or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

- Volunteers are required to obtain child abuse clearances before working with children. Please contact Mickey Grey, Infinity's Community Resource Coordinator, for details.

### **Volunteering in the Classroom**

- The teacher is the classroom authority.
- Volunteers participate exclusively at the direction and discretion of the teacher.
- Teachers may or may not choose to use classroom volunteers.
- Volunteers should not be involved in classroom discipline or other conflicts.
- Do not take time away from the students by excessive socializing with the teacher or other volunteers.
- Due to liability issues, non-enrolled siblings should not be in the classroom during the school day.
- Unless on a field trip or acting as a yearbook photographer, please refrain from photographing students.
- Please do not share food with students while volunteering, as we have many students with food allergies.

### **Volunteering Outside the Classroom**

- Staff is the authority on their responsibilities and on their need for volunteer help.
- Be a courteous, considerate representative of the school.



- Be supportive of staff. Ask how you can help instead of offering unsolicited advice.
- Maintain the confidentiality of staff, students, and families.
- DO NOT post pictures of any child, other than your own, on social media. In addition, due to concerns about non-custodial parents, we ask that any references made on social media regarding student activities (field trips, for example) be made *after* the conclusion of the activity.
- Socializing is not appropriate in most volunteer positions. Please don't distract staff and other volunteers from their duties.
- Due to liability issues, non-enrolled siblings should not be in the building or on the playground during the school day.

### ***VOLUNTEERING AS A SPEAKER/MENTOR***

Utilizing community and parent resources is an integral part of the educational program at Infinity. To meet the needs of our students, we need to identify resources and area experts who are willing to become involved with the school as speakers, information sources and mentors. If you are interested in helping, or know someone who might be, please contact our Community Resources Coordinator, Mickey Grey (717) 238-1880 or e-mail her at [mgrey@infinityschool.org](mailto:mgrey@infinityschool.org), so she can include you or your information in our resource database. She will use this to assist the teachers in enhancing the classroom experience by coordinating speakers, field trips, assemblies and other resources in the community.

### ***INFINITY STAFF SUGGESTIONS REGARDING PARENT PARTICIPATION***

As teachers and staff at Infinity, we want parents to know that we understand how special you are. As is true for all parents, not only is your child very special to you, but you have a child who has unique educational and socio-emotional needs. We recognize you have already gone beyond the interest most parents take in their child's education by choosing a different school. We understand many of you want to continue to be closely involved in your child's education. We welcome you and recognize that, as partners, we are able to do more for the children than we could ever accomplish on our own. In order to work together most effectively, we have set forth some reminders.

- Our first goal, as teachers, is to teach your child and the other children in the classroom. Anything you can do to aid us in this goal is appreciated. When we are with children, the children are our first priority. Teaching is our job. We want to do our job well.
- Help us maintain a focused learning environment. Interruptions are distracting to the children. Unless you are working as a classroom volunteer, staying with your child in the classroom for more than a few moments does not help him/her focus on learning.
- If you are volunteering to cover lunch/recess and are bringing food to have with your child during lunch, please do not bring the food in early and sit in class. This is very distracting to your child, as well as to the rest of the class.

- We understand the school is not the only place children can learn, nor do we believe our every word is a pearl of wisdom. However, we do try to make every moment your child is in school worthwhile. Please try to get your child to school on time, and don't take him/her out unnecessarily. Many learning activities cannot be made up easily.
- While we are happy to set up times to talk with you, we are usually not able to do this while we are with the children. If we try to visit during class time, we are not doing our jobs, and we will not be able to give you the attention you deserve.
- If you need to meet with a teacher, please schedule an appointment with him/her. We are not necessarily available when the children are out of the classroom. These are our planning periods, and we usually need to use them as such. Before and after school times are generally available when scheduled ahead of time.
- If you have a problem or question about something related to your child's classroom, please meet with the teacher. If you gossip with other parents, you only feed on each other's concerns. Please talk directly to the person who can do something about it.
- Treat teachers with respect, particularly in front of the children at school and at home. Think about the behavior you are modeling for your child and other children.
- If you have made a volunteer commitment, please honor that commitment. We are counting on you. However, we understand emergencies and illnesses will occur. Please be sure to notify your child's teacher as soon as possible if you are unable to fulfill your volunteer commitment on a particular day.
- Please respect the privacy of the teacher and other students. Do not remain in the classroom without the teacher present unless you have permission to do so.
- We are happy to have you visit in the classroom, but we would appreciate it, if you would notify us and schedule a time to do so. We would like to be able to help you schedule a time that would enable you to see what you are looking for. For example, watching your child take a test is probably not what you had in mind.
- We always welcome your feedback and input about what you believe is best for your child. Please remember we sometimes have other factors to consider, including the needs of the other children, district, state, and national education standards, and the limits of what is humanly possible.

If we can keep in mind that we all want what is best for each child, we will be able to work together to do great things for our children.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

If you have a conflict with your child's teacher:

- Please don't discuss it with other parents or children—contact the teacher.

- Make an appointment with that teacher to discuss it. (Don't interrupt a teacher during class time or try to catch him/her during a planning period, in the hallway, or in the parking lot.)
- At the meeting, be specific about your concerns and what you feel would be an appropriate resolution.
- Remember to treat the teacher the way you would want to be treated.
- Give the teacher an opportunity to reflect on what you have said.
- When a solution/option is agreed upon, be sure you have set a time for you and the teacher to communicate about how it is working. At that time, you may need to meet again to try an alternate solution.
- If you do not believe the teacher's response is improving the situation for your child, you may want to contact the Director and set an appointment to discuss your concerns.
- The Director may arrange a meeting with you and the teacher.
- If you are not satisfied with the Director's handling of the situation, you may wish to contact the chair of the Board of Trustees.

### ***RESOLVING CONFLICTS PRODUCTIVELY***

The following is a list of suggestions published by the Colorado School Mediation Project that you may want to keep in mind when trying to resolve conflicts:

- Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Express your feelings in a non-blaming way. Use "I"-messages.
- Take ownership for your part of the problem.
- Listen and seek to understand the other person's point of view before giving or defending your own.
- Look for needs behind the stated positions or solutions.
- Don't rush into solving someone else's problem; take time outs when needed.
- Encourage different points of view, controversy, and honest dialogue—and then respect those ideas.
- Focus on what can be done, not what can't.
- Solve the problem and build the relationship.
- Use objective criteria when making decisions.

# Enrollment Information

## **ADMISSIONS**

Charter schools in Pennsylvania cannot make admissions decisions based on intellectual and/or academic abilities. After learning about the school, parents decide if Infinity is an appropriate choice for their child/ren.

If more students apply than we have space available, we are required to conduct a lottery. Information packets (as well as details regarding lottery dates and deadlines) are available on the school website and in the Infinity School Office. Once a child is enrolled at the school, s/he does not have to go through the lottery process again. Infinity is a public school and as such, is open to all students, regardless of physical disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

## **BOUNDARIES**

Infinity Charter School must give first priority to students who reside within the boundaries of the Central Dauphin School District. Students from outside the District can be admitted if there is space available.

## **PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS**

Each child is placed in a multi-age classroom, based on a number of factors determined by the teaching staff. These factors may include a student's demonstrated achievement, work and study habits, level of independence, discipline needs, leadership abilities, learning styles, and gender ratio. We do not consider placing friends together a high priority. Children are adaptable and will make friends in any classroom. Furthermore, friendships can be mercurial; a child's best friend one month may be his/her worst enemy the next. Class placement is a complicated process and is based on the staff's best educational assessment of each child and their needs.

After your child has been attending Infinity for at least six weeks, if you believe s/he needs to be accelerated to a higher grade, please make an appointment to meet with the Director. She can provide you with the guidelines for the acceleration process request.

## **REGISTRATION**

At the time of registration, the following information is required:

- |                        |                             |                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • ICS Enrollment Form  | • ICS Home Language Survey  | • PDE Enrollment Form             |
| • Proof of Residency   | • Applicable health forms   | • Verification of any sibling     |
| • Birth Certificate    | • Proof of attendance at an | attending Infinity, if applicable |
| • Immunization Records | informational meeting       |                                   |

A child transferring into Infinity School from another school must also complete a records request form, so that we can obtain his/her records.

# Office Information

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER/EMAIL ADDRESS**

Please notify the school office if you change your address or telephone number, email, or if you change employment. In addition, it is important to keep all emergency names and telephone numbers current, so we can reach you in case of an emergency.

## **TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL**

Please notify the school office at least one week in advance, if your child will be transferring or withdrawing from school. If possible, please provide your forwarding address, and the name and address of the school your child will be attending. Student records will be forwarded upon receipt of the request from the new school as long as there are no fines or other school property outstanding.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Infinity has a telephone in every classroom. Student use of the telephone is at the discretion of individual teachers. In general, school telephones are for educational use by the students and business use by the staff. Only emergency messages will be delivered to your child. The office telephone is not for the personal use of students, except in emergencies.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors are welcome at Infinity. However, please call first to set up an appropriate time to visit, to ensure the class you wish to observe is in the building.

All visitors are required to sign in at the school office upon entering the building. Each visitor will be given a visitor badge to wear. At the end of the visit, visitors must return to the school office to sign out and leave the visitor badge in the office. Please note that parents, or other authorized volunteers, must also sign in and out at the school office and wear a volunteer badge. **These procedures are designed to protect our children from unauthorized individuals, and also to document total volunteer hours.**

## **NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Infinity School Office publishes a weekly Calendar of Events, including items of interest to the school community. This is a regular means of communicating important dates, such as parent/teacher conference days, committee meeting times, fundraisers, and school release days. Also included may be reminders, thank-yous and celebration notices. This weekly calendar is emailed each Monday. Please read it to stay up to date with news and changes at school. To submit an item, call Tracie Miller at (717) 238-1880, before noon on Thursdays, so it can be approved by the Director and included in this publication.

Also, the Director writes a biweekly letter, which will be emailed with Monday folder items. This letter is used to communicate additional school news, information on many aspects of raising and educating gifted children, staff activities, as well as reprints of items of related interest. Also included with the Monday Folder items is the Infinity Volunteer Organization newsletter.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Every effort is made to return lost articles to the rightful owner. Clothing and other items worn, or brought, to school are easier to return, if marked with your child's name. Found items are placed in a 'Lost and Found' box. Students and parents may check the box for lost articles at any time. All unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of the school year.

## **SCHOOL LUNCH**

Infinity does not have the facilities to prepare hot lunches on site. Please be sure to pack a lunch for your child/ren. If a child forgets a lunch, we do have peanut butter, jelly and bread available. Students have an option of ordering up to two slices of pepperoni or cheese pizza for lunch on Fridays. Students may also order subs or pretzel sandwiches the first and third Monday of the month.

# Attendance/Absence

## **ATTENDANCE**

A significant part of your child's educational experience is derived from classroom participation, activities, discussion, and relationships. **Daily attendance is crucial for your child to attain the maximum benefit from the school experience.** It is the responsibility of the child and the parent to maintain the child's attendance in accordance with the Infinity calendar. Poor attendance may necessitate a meeting with the Director to come to a mutual agreement on how to improve your child's attendance at Infinity. **State law requires that after ten consecutive days of unexcused absences, the child must be dropped from our rolls and will no longer be allowed to attend Infinity.** Please see Infinity's Student Attendance Policy (#303) for details.

## **ABSENCE**

A child who is ill should not be sent to school. This may result in his/her health becoming worse and it exposes other children to the disease if it is communicable. "Rest at home is best."

For the protection and safety of our students, we ask parents to email or call the school at (717) 238-1880, before 8:45 a.m., on the day their child is absent from school for any reason. The office will call the parents, if not notified. If a child will be absent for more than one day, we request that parents notify the school **each day** the child is absent.

If your child will be absent for any reason other than illness (doctor's appointment, religious observance, family trip, etc.), please make arrangements ahead of time with the office and with your child's teacher.

When students miss classroom instruction, much of the content may not be able to be made up. However, your child's teacher will be able to inform you whether or not missed work and assignments can be made up.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

A student absence is considered excused under the following circumstances::

- Illness
- Family Emergency
- Death of a Family Member
- Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit for an event or funeral. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with note in advance of the absence indicating the date, location and time of the event or funeral.
- Medical or Dental Appointments (though the Charter School encourages these visits to occur outside of school hours whenever possible)
- Authorized School Activities
- Pre-approved religious instruction (limit 36 hours per year)
- Bona Fide Religious Holiday
- Prearranged absences for purposes of accompanying parents on trips upon receipt of a written request from the parents. (The written request by the parents shall include the purpose of the trip, an itinerary of travel, and the period of absence. Students will be required, at the convenience of the teacher, to complete all work missed due to prearranged absence for a trip. Preapproved educational trips/activities are limited to a total of five (5) days per school year. Trips may not be taken during the first, or last, seven days of the school year, nor during the days PSSA tests are scheduled.)

**NOTE:** We STRONGLY discourage week-long trips, due to our unique curriculum. Since we do not use textbooks at Infinity, it's extremely difficult for students to make up missed work. We simply don't have textbooks for the children to read and 'catch up.' This causes an unnecessary burden for students, parents, and teachers. We would greatly appreciate if you scheduled vacations during our two-week winter break, our week-long spring break, or over summer vacation.

- Excusals for "Other urgent reasons" shall be determined at the sole discretion of the CEO.
- When the student is required to leave school for the purposes of attending court hearings related to their involvement with the county children and youth agency or juvenile probation office.
- If the student is absent due to participation in a project sponsored by an organization that is eligible to apply for a grant under the Pennsylvania Agricultural Fair Act.
- If a student is dismissed from school during school hours for health-related reasons by a certified school nurse, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse or a school administrator.
- For the purpose of obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.
- Where the CEO or his/her designee has approved an attendance plan necessitated by rare and extraordinary circumstances.



## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

All absences are considered unexcused until the School receives a written note or email documenting a valid reason for the absence, as detailed above

Parents/guardians and students shall submit the required excuse note within three (3) calendar days of the absence. The failure of the parent/guardian to provide written excuse within three (3) calendar days of this notice will cause the absence to be permanently categorized as “unexcused” and will trigger the procedures set forth below.

- **First & Second Unexcused Absence**

The school CEO, assistant principal, or designee shall send a notice of unexcused absence to the student’s parent/guardian, which describes the consequences of a child violating compulsory school attendance requirements. In addition, the name and telephone number of a designated school official shall be included so that parents/guardians are able to contact a specific person to request assistance in resolving the child’s absenteeism.

- **Third Unexcused Absence**

Within ten (10) school days of a child’s third unexcused absence, the school principal, assistant principal or designee shall send an Official Notice of Truancy. Included in this notice shall be a description of the consequences if the child becomes habitually truant. This notice may include the offer of a school attendance improvement conference, and shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the parent in parental relation to the child. When transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, such notice shall also be provided to the child’s biological or adoptive parent if the parent’s mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER/EARLY DISMISSAL**

Infinity complies with the Central Dauphin School District regarding the closure or delay of schools due to inclement weather. Only the Director may authorize school closure. If this happens before the school day, it will be announced via local media outlets (television and radio stations). You will also receive an automated call and/or text message. In addition, check for school delays on Infinity’s website, [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org).

If we close for any reason after the beginning of school, we will only release students according to our **“Release of Students”** procedure. In the event of inclement weather that affects dismissal, each school district generally dismisses at a different time. Therefore, to avoid confusion, we send an automated message to each family living outside Central Dauphin School District to give them specific information. Families living in Central Dauphin School District will also receive an automated call/text. In the event of an early dismissal, students will be sent home via their normal means of transportation, unless otherwise notified. (For example, if an early dismissal is called on a Tuesday, and your child is typically a bus rider on a Tuesday, we will send him/her on the bus, unless parents notify the office.)



# Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

Classes are in session from 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Arrival time is 7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. Departure time is 3:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Since there is no one to supervise children before or after the arrival and departure times, we ask that you do not drop your children off early or pick them up late. Children arriving early or leaving late are at risk in terms of health and safety, as they are unsupervised.

If you will be driving your child/ren to school, there are two options for drop-off. We have staff available to receive the children at 7:45 a.m., but we prefer, if possible, you wait until 8:00 a.m.

1. If your child/ren can exit your vehicle without assistance ("Kiss and Go"), please drive directly behind the building and drop your child/ren children off at the back of the building, along the sidewalk. (This is where the buses used to stop in the past.) Be sure to pull up as far as possible, to allow others to stop behind you.
2. Parents who need to assist their child ("Stop and Help") should drive into the parking lot, and park in the area just past the first light post. Kindly walk your child to the building. Please cross the Kiss and Go land AT THE CROSSWALK.

There is only one pick-up option for car riders. If you will be picking your child/ren up at dismissal (3:15 p.m.), you must park at the bowling alley and walk over to meet them, as we do not allow vehicle traffic in the parking lot at dismissal. Again, please use the sidewalks at all times, **DO NOT cut through yards or parking lots.**

You must contact Mrs. Miller **no later than 2:00 p.m.** on the day you will be picking your child/ren up from school. The best way to do this is via e-mail. She will respond to every e-mail, so you are sure your child/ren will be in the pick-up line and not placed on their usual bus. If you will be picking your child/ren up on a regular basis (every day or a set day every week), please contact Mrs. Miller and she will put them on the "Everyday Pick-Up List". This alleviates the need for you to contact the office each time.

## **BUILDING ACCESS**

For security reasons, all entrances to the building are locked. The official school entrance is in the front of the building. There is a security camera at this entrance. Ring the buzzer, and the school secretary will let you in after you have identified yourself by name. You must sign in and obtain a visitor's badge prior to going to classrooms or other locations in the building.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Currently, Infinity does not provide this service.

## **TARDINESS AND EARLY DEPARTURE**

If your child arrives to school late (after 8:15 a.m.), or leaves early (before 3:15 p.m.), a parent must come into the school office to sign the child in or out.

## **TRANSPORTATION/CARPOOLING**

School districts, that provide transportation for their own students and whose boundaries are within a ten-mile radius of Infinity, are required to provide bus transportation for their students who attend Infinity. If you are interested in contacting other parents who live in your area about carpooling options, please contact the office at (717) 238-1880.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

As a school staff, we need to know to whom we are releasing each child. If a child wishes to go home with someone else, we must have **written permission** for this, unless the pick-up person is listed on your child's emergency card. We are unable to release students via verbal permission (over the phone) or by fax. Students who walk or ride bicycles to and from school do so at their own risk, and we need written permission for this also. The school does not provide crossing guards.

## **LATE PICKUP**

There are infrequent occasions when a child is not picked up. If that happens, we will call the parents/guardians listed on the emergency card and then the emergency contact person. If no one can be reached, and an hour has passed, the school has no choice but to call the police and have the police pick up the child. In most cases, the police will then turn the child over to Social Services.

# Health Services

## **HEALTH AND MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**

Infinity employs a part-time nurse to provide health services for the school. The nurse is at the school for approximately four hours a day, including over the lunch and recess times. However, we may contact the nurse or our school physician at other times, if necessary. First aid kits are located in every classroom, and teachers are familiar certified in First Aid and CPR.

If your child is ill or injured to an extent that requires care beyond first aid, or simple comfort measures, the parent or other designated adult indicated on the child's emergency card will be notified to take the child home or to the doctor. **It is essential that you keep the school informed of any change in address and/or telephone numbers so a responsible party can be reached in an emergency.**

If a contagious disease is suspected, the school will notify the parents, and the child will be sent home from school.

Parents should bring special health concerns to the attention of teachers, the school nurse, and the school office.

Please do not send your child to school if s/he is ill. If s/he has had a fever, 100° or more, s/he should remain at home until his/her temperature has been <100° for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. There should be no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.

If your child is to take prescription or over-the-counter medication during school hours, you must do the following:

- Submit the "Authorization for Medication during School Hours" form. (This form is available on our website, or you may request a hard copy from the school nurse or office.) The form must be signed by both the physician and the parent.
- All medication must be hand-delivered to the school by the parent/guardian or other adult. Please give the medication and signed "Authorization for Medication during School Hours" form to the school nurse or to the administration upon entering the school. Under no circumstances should a child be permitted to carry any type of medications (prescription or over-the-counter), such as Advil, Tylenol, cough drops, eye drops, or the like.
- Student name, instructions for dose, and time of administration must be clearly marked on the medication label. The container must be labeled by the physician or pharmacist.

The medication will be for school use only. When getting the prescription filled, request a separate container labeled For School Use Only, with the information above. If your child uses an inhaler to treat asthma, also request a doctor's prescription to obtain an inhaler for school use.

The above procedures are for prescribed medications that must be administered during school hours. If your child needs medication, let your doctor know it can be administered most easily during the lunch hour. Special arrangements for other medication administration times can be discussed with the school nurse.

## **HEALTH SCREENING**

Health screenings consist of the following:

- Vision (K-8)
- Hearing (K, 1, 2, 3, 7)
- Height (K-8)
- Weight (K-8)
- Body Mass Index (BMI) (K-8)
- Scoliosis (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade only)

Our school nurse conducts these screenings. They are done based on state guidelines and requirements. If you do not want your child to participate in these screenings, please contact the Director.

# Student Behavior

## **INFINITY BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

It is Infinity's goal for behavior expectations to work in conjunction with academic standards to create a total learning environment for all students, at all grade levels. The eight behavior expectations are:

### **1. Work Habits/Time Management:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will develop and use productive work habits.*

#### **Indicators:**

- Complete work to the best of their ability
- Strive for excellence in all their work
- Honor time commitments
- Arrive at school prepared to work
- Work cooperatively with others and independently when appropriate
- Persevere even when tasks are difficult

### **2. School Climate:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will behave in a manner that fosters a positive school environment.*

#### **Indicators:**

- Participate actively in the learning process
- Encourage parent/community involvement
- State expectations clearly
- Show sensitivity toward others
- Use courteous and polite language and behavior
- Exercise self-discipline
- Follow school rules

### **3. Dress:**

---

*Students, staff and parents will dress appropriately for the school environment.*

#### **Indicators:**

- Dress in a clean, neat, and safe manner
- Dress in a manner that is non-demeaning to self or others
- Dress in a manner that promotes practices that are consistent with Infinity policies (See Infinity Dress Code)
- Dress in a manner that is conducive to the activity in which engaged

### **4. Physical and Emotional Safety:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will promote, create, and maintain an environment free from physical and emotional harm.*

#### **Indicators:**

- Ensure conflicts are resolved through non-violent means
- Ensure school is free from weapons

- Ensure school is free from harmful substances
- Ensure that school is free from intimidation, discrimination, and harassment

**5. Respect for Grounds and Property:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will be thoughtful caretakers of the school property and the property of others.*

**Indicators:**

- Use property and materials for their intended purpose
- Take responsibility for maintaining school property
- Show respect for the personal property of others

**6. Integrity and Responsibility:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will accept personal responsibility and accountability for their actions or inactions.*

**Indicators:**

- Accept responsibility for one's actions
- Be honest in communications with others
- Promote excellence by setting challenging and attainable goals
- Serve self and others through community involvement
- Take the initiative to help others
- Determine the right thing to do and do it

**7. Diversity:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will respect the unique attributes and qualities of every individual.*

**Indicators:**

- Treat others with fairness, respect, and compassion
- View diversity as enhancing the school environment and community
- Promote and encourage increased knowledge and understanding of diversity in the curriculum

**8. Communication:**

---

*Students, staff, and parents will communicate effectively to build a more positive school environment.*

**Indicators:**

- Communicate with positive intent
- Communicate in an open, trusting, and truthful manner
- Express ideas clearly
- Communicate in a timely and ongoing manner
- Discuss misunderstandings or concerns directly with the source

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR STANDARDS**

Infinity's Behavior Standards are what most schools call a discipline policy. We have purposely not used that terminology because we want to focus on a more positive approach. We have

included student rights and student responsibilities. It is important to make sure the students understand the expectations and abide by them, so we can all work together constructively.

We ask that you sit down with your child/ren and discuss these Behavior Standards. If you do not agree with our standards, please contact the Director and make an appointment to discuss your concerns.

At Infinity, we believe children who learn to solve problems constructively at an early age develop lifelong skills that will help them solve more complex problems as they get older. Our behavior plan is based on the following principles:

- Children should learn from their experiences.
- Children should solve their problems without making additional problems for anyone else.
- Children should do as much, or more, thinking about their behavior than adults do.
- Children should think, make decisions, and live with the consequences of their actions.
- Children who experience consistent, logical and realistic consequences learn that they have positive control over their lives.

In order for school to be a safe, happy place for learning, we need to honor everyone's rights, act responsibly, and follow certain rules.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **❖ Safe Environment:**

- ***I have the right to learn in a safe environment.***
  - School should be a place where I can feel comfortable and not be afraid.
- ***I have a responsibility to help create a safe environment at school.***
  - I will not intentionally hurt other children or adults. I will not bring these things to school: weapons, real or imitation, or weapon-type items (guns, swords, knives), skates, roller-blades, or skateboards.

### **❖ Fairness:**

- ***I have the right to be treated fairly at school.***
  - I should be treated fairly regardless of my abilities or differences, whether I am tall or short, boy or girl, have blond, brown, red or black hair, have red, brown, white, or yellow skin, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.
- ***I have the responsibility to treat others fairly at school.***
  - I should treat others fairly regardless of their abilities or differences, whether or not they look like me, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.

### **❖ Respect:**

- ***I have a right to be treated with respect at school.***
  - I deserve to be treated with respect. Other children or adults should not laugh at me, make fun of me, or intentionally hurt my feelings.
- ***I have the responsibility to treat others with respect at school.***
  - I have the responsibility to treat other children and adults with the same respect I expect. Name-calling, put-downs, insulting words and gestures are not allowed at Infinity.

### **❖ Property:**

- ***I have the right to expect that my personal belongings will be safe at school.***
  - I expect that my personal belongings will not be intentionally damaged or stolen.

➤ ***I have the responsibility to respect the property of others.***

- I will not intentionally damage or steal things that belong to another student, a staff member, or the school.

❖ **Communication:**

➤ ***I have the right to tell my side of the story.***

- When I have a disagreement with another person, I may talk about or write down my behaviors, ideas and feelings without being disrespectful to, or about, anyone else.

➤ ***I have the responsibility to listen to the other person's side of the story.***

- I need to listen/read carefully to what the other person says/writes about the situation and to think about what s/he said/wrote.

❖ **Mistakes:**

➤ ***I have the right to make mistakes.***

- I have the right to try new skills, explore new ideas, and make mistakes without having others criticize or make fun of me. School should be a place where I can "fail" in a safe environment.

➤ ***I have the responsibility to stretch myself.***

- If I only repeat skills I have already mastered, and I only repeat information I already know, I will never learn anything new. In order to grow, I must take some risks.

❖ **Education:**

➤ ***I have the right to a free appropriate education.***

- I will not have to pay to go to school. My teachers will work hard to address my intellectual, academic and social-emotional needs.

➤ ***I have the responsibility to actively participate in my education.***

- No one can teach me anything, if I am determined not to learn. I will attend school regularly, I will arrive at school on time, and I will make my best effort to learn and participate in class and homework.

**DUE PROCESS:**

All students are entitled to:

1. Verbal or written notice of the charges, or of the rule, that has been broken,
2. An explanation of the evidence, and
3. An opportunity to present his/her side of the story.

**WE DO NOT TOLERATE THESE BEHAVIORS AT INFINITY:**

- Intentional hitting or physical abuse,
- Damaging or stealing property,
- Throwing inappropriate objects or bringing dangerous objects to school,
- Leaving room/school grounds without permission,
- Disrespectful/abusive language or gestures/name calling,
- Defiance or refusing to follow directions,
- Threats to self or others,
- Damaging/stealing property, and
- Continuous disruptive behavior that interferes with students' rights to learn and teachers' rights to teach.

**CONSEQUENCES**

If there is a problem, one or more of the following strategies may be used to correct it:

- Warning
- Written reflection by student
- Conference with teacher
- Loss of privileges
- In school suspension/detention
- Conference with Director
- Formal Remedial Discipline Plan
- Modification of personal learning plan goals and objectives
- Out-of-school suspension
- Opportunity to cool off
- Written Behavior Contract
- Meeting with counselor
- Conflict resolution with those involved
- Work detail
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement

## **RECESS GUIDELINES**

In addition to the general behavior expectations and standards, the following are guidelines for recess. To maximize the safety of each student at Infinity, the following behaviors are to be observed by all students.

- Leave playground only with permission. Inform an adult when you return.
- Use toys, games, and equipment for their intended purpose.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Make sure all participants wish to join your game (Don't force anyone to play.).
- Be safe.
- Follow supervising adults' directions.
- Be respectful and kind to others, trees, plants, flowers, toys and equipment.
- Follow all Infinity School Behavior Standards.
- Take all games and toys inside at the end of each recess.
- Take found items to Lost and Found.

## **ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES:**

- Physical or verbal aggression and/or harm—immediate referral to staff member on duty.
- All other inappropriate behavior:
  - First Offense: verbal prompt or warning
  - Second Offense: walking along the play area perimeter or time-out for ...
    - 2-5 minutes for younger students
    - 5-10 minutes for older students.
    - Length depends on both age of student and seriousness of problem.
  - Third Offense: referral to designated staff member

\*Playground supervisors have access to a first aid kit, if needed, in case of injuries.



## ***STUDENT EXPULSION, SUSPENSION AND DUE PROCESS***

### **Purpose**

At Infinity, all students will be afforded due process.

The Board of Trustees shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain exceptional students shall be governed by all applicable sections of the Public School Code (relating to discipline). If a student commits such an offense, the following procedures are followed.

### **Guidelines**

#### **I. In-school Suspension:**

- A. In-school suspensions may be imposed only by the CEO/Director or the Board of Trustees.
- B. No student should receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- C. Parents or guardians shall be notified of the suspension action by the school.
- D. If an in-school suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive days, an informal hearing with the CEO/Director shall be offered to the student and the student's parents or guardians prior to the eleventh (11th) school day in accordance with the following informal hearing procedures.
- E. The informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event(s) for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents or guardians to meet with the CEO/Director to discuss ways in which future offenses can be avoided. The informal hearing shall have the following due process elements:
  1. Notification of the reasons for suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student;
  2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given;
  3. A student shall have the right to question any witness;
  4. Educational assignments will be given to the student during the period of the in-school suspension.

#### **II. Out-of-school Suspension:**

- A. Out-of-school suspensions may be imposed only by the CEO/Director or the Board of Trustees.
- B. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- C. The parents shall be notified in writing when the student is suspended.
- D. If a suspension exceeds (3) school days, the student and parents shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the informal hearing requirements set forth previously with respect to in-school suspensions.
- E. Out-of-school suspensions may not be made to run longer than ten (10) consecutive school days.
- F. Students have the responsibility to make up examinations and work missed and shall be permitted to complete their assignments in compliance with administrative practice.

**III. Formal Hearing/Expulsion**

The Board of Trustees is permitted to expel a student. Expulsion is the exclusion from school for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and includes permanent expulsion. All expulsions require a formal hearing.

During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except if an in-school or out-of-school suspension is imposed in accordance with this Policy, or if it is determined after an informal hearing that the student's presence in his normal class will constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension.

Whenever any student is referred to the Board of Trustees, a formal hearing is to be held before the Board or a duly authorized committee of the Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board. When the hearing is conducted by a committee of the Board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire Board is required to expel a student.

The following due process requirements are to be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

- A. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
- B. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- C. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
- D. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- E. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- F. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his or her own behalf.
- G. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder.
- H. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
- I. The proceeding must be conducted with all reasonable speed.

## INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

# Student Conduct Report

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Date Parent Contacted \_\_\_\_\_

By phone \_\_\_\_\_ By note home \_\_\_\_\_

Report Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Parents will be notified as soon as possible, if their child is involved in any situation requiring a student conduct report. After notification, parents will be asked to become involved with Infinity staff in correcting the problem(s). Efforts will be made to ensure consequences will be logical, reasonable, and respectful, designed to help the student change his/her behavior.

## Inappropriate Behavior (including, but not limited to):

\_\_\_\_\_ Disrespectful/abusive language, gestures/name-calling \_\_\_\_\_ Cheating/Lying  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Bringing dangerous objects/weapons to school \_\_\_\_\_ Threats to self or others  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Intentional hitting, or physical abuse \_\_\_\_\_ Damaging/stealing property  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Defiance/refusing to follow directions \_\_\_\_\_ Throwing inappropriate objects  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Continuous disruptive behavior that interferes with students' right to learn and teachers' right to teach  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other. Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

## Summary of Behavior/Incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Taken/Strategies for Resolution (may include, but are not limited to):

_____ Warning	_____ Conference with teacher
_____ Opportunity to cool down/reflect	_____ Conference with counselor
_____ Written reflection by student	_____ Conference with Director
_____ Loss of privileges	_____ In-school suspension/detention
_____ Written behavior contract	_____ Out-of-school suspension
_____ Conflict resolution with those involved	_____ Modification of personal learning plan goals/objectives
_____ Formal remedial discipline plan	_____ Other _____
_____ Referral to Law Enforcement	

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent Phone Number

# Miscellaneous

## **DRESS CODE**

School is a place where learning takes place. Dress can positively or negatively affect a student's attention to the educational process. Dress can also reflect the pride a student takes in her/himself and her/his school. Students are required to adhere to the following dress code, while in school and when attending school functions. **If a student violates the dress code at school, parents may be called to bring in more appropriate clothing for their child, or the child may have to wear something from the lost and found to remedy the situation. If the child violates the dress code at a school function, s/he may be required to leave.**

We ask that all adults, at the school, during the day or for school functions, follow this code as well, **in order to provide consistency and to set a good example for the students.**

1. Shirts must be long enough to touch the top of the pants when the person is involved in normal school movements. Please remember that students may raise their hands or kneel on the floor for projects. Please be sure midriffs or bottoms will not be exposed in these positions either.
2. No spaghetti strap shirts; no muscle shirts. Straps must be at least 3 fingers wide.
3. Shorts/skirts/dresses must be at least mid-thigh length. When a student's arm is down at his/her side the fingertips must reach the bottom of the clothing.
4. Clothing must not be revealing.
5. No pajamas may be worn to school.
6. Ripped jeans, or other ripped articles of clothing, are not allowed.
7. Clothing or accessories with improper or objectionable pictures, sayings, gestures, or language, or which promote substances prohibited by Board Policy or state law, must not be worn.
8. Shoes must be worn at all times. No flip-flops or heelies are allowed. Crocs and clogs may only be worn, if straps are used.
9. Sunglasses, hats, and gloves are for outdoor use, and are not to be worn indoors.
10. Students wearing leggings or other tight-fitting pants (such as yoga pants) must wear a shirt or top that provides sufficient coverage of their backside. Leggings must be opaque and not see-through.
11. No tails or animal ears are to be worn. Headbands may not have ears, pom poms, unicorn horns ,etc.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Although the classrooms are generally occupied after school by our very dedicated teachers, we would be happy to work with parents who are interested in organizing some types of school activities. For example, parents have organized and run Destination Imagination, Odyssey of the Mind and Technology Student Association (TSA) teams. Parents wishing to organize an after school activity are asked to submit a proposal to the Board of Trustees for approval.

### **Class Parties**

There will be three school-wide parties during the year; one in the fall near Halloween, one before Winter Break, and one for Valentine's Day. These parties will start at 2:30 p.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Parents may attend, bring treats and/or organize activities for these parties, in conjunction with the classroom teacher.

### **Student Birthdays**

We understand that a birthday is an important day in the life of a child. Classroom teachers will choose a way to recognize each child on his/her birthday. One example would be to have the class sing "Happy Birthday." Parents are welcome to send in a special treat for snack that day, to share with the class. If sending a treat to share, we ask you not to send a whole cake, rather send individual, easy to distribute treats, such as cupcakes or fruit snacks. Please check with your child's teacher before sending a treat. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate parents and/or family members for a birthday celebration in the classroom.

If you want to invite the child's classmates to a party outside of school, you need to send invitations through the mail, rather than distribute them at school, unless inviting every child in the class. This will minimize hurt feelings for children who are not invited.

### **Spelling Bee**

Infinity students in grades 4 – 8 are eligible to participate in the local Spelling Bee competition, organized by WITF.

### **Geography Bee**

Infinity students have participated in this competition in the past.

### **Instrumental Music Lessons**

Instrumental music lessons have been offered to interested students in certain grades by qualified instructors. There is a fee for these lessons.

### **Chess Club**

The Infinity Chess Club was established to provide an opportunity for chess play and instruction to Infinity Charter School students and siblings, grades K-8. Chess Club members enjoy the many benefits of chess play, as well as enjoy an extracurricular opportunity for Infinity students to interact socially, across grade/ chess ability levels. There is no enrollment fee or formal registration associated with the club, and members can come to as many, or few, meetings as they like. Meetings are typically held twice a month, at a local library or Giant grocery store community room. Watch the school calendar for more information.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire Drills and safety drills are held periodically throughout the school year. Students are advised to listen carefully to instructions issued by their teacher and the director.

These drills are extremely important and require the assistance and cooperation of students and staff.

Students need to abide by the following procedures during a fire drill:

- Do not talk.
- Proceed to the designated exit in a quick and orderly fashion.
- Listen for emergency directions.
- Stay with your class in the assigned area for the teacher to take roll.
- Return to the building quietly and quickly when instructed.
- During a school safety drill, students in the hallways or bathrooms must proceed to the nearest populated classroom.

## **EMERGENCY PLAN FOR INCIDENTS AT THREE MILE ISLAND**

The Emergency Planning Zone consists of an area of about ten (10) miles in radius around the fixed nuclear facility at Three Mile Island (TMI). Since Infinity is just outside this area, our students will **not** be evacuated to a special location. Depending on the situation, Infinity students may be dismissed at the regular time and transported according to their normal schedule. However, it is possible transportation schedules may be delayed because some schools in the Central Dauphin School District (and possibly other districts) may be evacuated. It is possible Infinity students may be evacuated early. It is also possible parents will be requested to pick up their child/ren at school. Given the different possible scenarios, we urge you to listen to the Emergency Broadcast System (listed below) for the most accurate information. Infinity will post our most current information on our web site at [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org). **Please do not try to call the school, since we will probably be using the phones to contact all the parents.**

Take time to review your plan of action with each member of your family if an order to evacuate be issued. Should an incident at TMI be announced, two of the most critical problems will be communications and transportation. Parents are urged to listen for public announcements released through the Emergency Broadcast System by the Dauphin County Emergency Management Agency. In the event of a Three Mile Island incident, parents should turn their radios to The Cumulus Media and The Clear Channel Stations and television stations 8, 21, 27, Fox 43 and WITF. Additionally, the school will use the parent notification system to provide information on the status of the incident and the steps being taken to comply with the directives from the Dauphin County Emergency Management Agency or the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

Your cooperation in implementing this plan will be absolutely necessary, if we are to protect the health and safety of our children.

## **EMERGENCY CLASSIFICATION**

An Emergency Classification is one of a set of names or titles established by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for grouping off-normal events or conditions according to (1) potential or actual effects or consequences, and (2) resulting onsite and offsite response

actions. The emergency classification levels, in ascending order of severity, are Notification of Unusual Event (NOUE), Alert, Site Area Emergency (SAE), and General Emergency (GE).

- **NOTIFICATION OF UNUSUAL EVENT** - Unusual events are in process or have occurred which indicate a potential degradation of the level of safety of the plant or indicate a security threat to facility protection. No releases of radioactive material requiring off-site response or monitoring are expected unless further degradation of safety system occurs.
- **ALERT** - Events are in process or have occurred which involve an actual or potential substantial degradation of the level of safety of the plant or a security event that involves probable life threatening risk to site personnel or damage to site equipment because of HOSTILE ACTION. Any releases are expected to be limited to small fractions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Protective Action Guide exposure levels.
- **SITE AREA EMERGENCY** - Events are in process or have occurred which involve actual or likely major failures of plant functions needed for protection of the public or HOSTILE ACTION that results in intentional damage or malicious acts; 1) toward site personnel or equipment that could lead to the likely failure of, or 2) prevents effective access to equipment needed for the protection of the public. Any releases are not expected to exceed EPA Protective Action Guide exposure levels beyond the site boundary.
- **GENERAL EMERGENCY** - Events are in process or have occurred which involve actual or imminent substantial core degradation or melting with potential for loss of containment integrity or Hostile Action that result in an actual loss of containment integrity or HOSTILE ACTION that results in an actual loss of physical control of the facility. Releases can be reasonably expected to exceed EPA Protective Action Guide exposure levels offsite for more than the immediate site area.

## Special Education

### Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs, Services for Gifted Students, and Services for Protected Handicapped Students

#### NOTICE TO PARENTS

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts (SDs), intermediate units (IUs) and charter schools (CSs) are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, parents may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, parents may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout Infinity Charter School of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. Children age three through twenty-one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that their



child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the staff member identified for their school district of residence, listed at the end of this public notice.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need Special Education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas. (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact the Learning Specialist at Infinity Charter School.

## **EVALUATION PROCESS**

Infinity Charter School has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the Learning Specialist at Infinity Charter School. Telephone numbers and addresses can be found at the end of this notice. Parents of preschool age children, age three through five, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to Eric Bostick, Supervisor of Preschool/Early Intervention, Capital Area Intermediate Unit #15.

### **Consent**

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, [www.Pattan.net](http://www.Pattan.net). Once written parental consent is obtained, the school will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation results, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

### **Program Development**

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the Individualized Education Program team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, charter school staff will issue a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN). Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

### **Confidentiality of Information:**

Infinity Charter School maintains records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under state law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in

Parent Handbook–2018-2019



Pennsylvania is age 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

- PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.
- PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

For additional information related to student records, parents can refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. **For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child, contact the responsible school entity listed below. For preschool age children, information may be obtained and screenings and evaluations may be requested by contacting the Intermediate Unit.** The addresses are as follows:

Infinity Charter School  
5405 Locust Lane  
Harrisburg, PA 17109  
717-238-1880

Eric Bostick  
Supervisor of Preschool/Early Intervention  
Capital Area Intermediate Unit #15  
55 Miller St, Summerdale, PA 17093  
717-732-8400, ext. 8619

Infinity Charter School will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed, marital status or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool, elementary or secondary school pupil enrolled in a school district, intermediate unit, or charter school program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age and program appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status or financial hardship.

#### **“THE SPECIAL KIDS NETWORK” INFORMATION**

The Special Kids Network is a statewide resources and referral services for teachers, parents, agencies and others who are looking for help with a child (ages 0 through 21 years) with special needs. Anyone can use the Network and there are no charges for this service.

By calling the toll-free number (1-800-986-4550), a caller is connected to an information specialist in one of six regional offices. This professional and friendly staff is ready to provide support, up-to-date information and referrals to state-wide agencies and organizations that serve children with special needs.

# Appendices

## **APPENDIX A: RESOURCES**

### **Pennsylvania Department of Education**

Don Dolbin, Bureau of Special Education  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
Phone: (717) 783-6879  
Email: [ddolbin@pa.gov](mailto:ddolbin@pa.gov)

### **Pennsylvania Association of Gifted Education (PAGE)**

PAGE, Inc.  
PO Box 452  
Natrona Heights, PA 15065  
Website: [www.giftedpage.org](http://www.giftedpage.org)

### **National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)**

1331 H Street, NW, Suite 1001  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 785-4268  
Website: [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

### **Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development**

University of Connecticut  
2131 Hillside Road, Unit 3007  
Storrs, CT 06269-3007  
Phone: (860) 486-4826  
Website: [www.gifted.uconn.edu](http://www.gifted.uconn.edu)

### **American Association for Gifted Children**

658 Coal Street  
Venus, Pennsylvania 16364  
814-354-6309  
Website: [www.aagc.org](http://www.aagc.org)

### **Hoagies Gifted Education Page**

Website: [www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)

### **John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth**

Website: <http://cty.jhu.edu>

## ***APPENDIX B: A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR THE PARENTS OF GIFTED CHILDREN***

By Gina Ginsberg Riggs

### **Parents Have:**

1. The right to a free public education for their gifted children.
2. The right to an education that enables their children to learn all they are able to learn.
3. The right to educator's awareness that gifted children learn earlier, better, faster and often differently from most other children.
4. The right to be accepted and respected as parents of children with legitimate and special learning needs.
5. The right to be involved in the planning for the education of their gifted children.
6. The right to information in the child's file and the right to an explanation if that information is in unfamiliar terms.
7. The right to freedom of expression as they voice the joys and problems of raising gifted children.
8. The right to become change agents in the legislature and schools when gifted children are not adequately served.
9. The right to an environment of acceptance and pride in what gifted children can accomplish for themselves, but also for the quality of all our lives.

---

**APPENDIX C: FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parent certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when her or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest;

- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in case of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

If you do not want Infinity Charter School to disclose directory information (ICS designates name, address, email address, Parent name/email address, photograph, grade level, awards and accolades as directory information) from your child's education records without your prior written consent, please write and sign a letter to the school including the statement below within sixty (60) days of your students' enrollment:

*I have read this statement of privacy rights to information in my student's education record and request that Infinity Charter School NOT disclose any personally-identifiable information from my student's records, including what is called "directory information," without my prior written consent, to any outside person or organization.*

# Parent/Student Agreement



INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

You and your child/ren are asked to read this handbook carefully and sign below. After doing so, please return the form to school.

☐ Please check here asserting that you have read, and agree to abide by, all the policies and procedures as outlined in the Parent Handbook.

We have read this handbook and agree to abide by the policies, procedures, rules and regulation of Infinity Charter School as set forth in the Parent Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

Please return this form to school after signing it.

Thank you!