



MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK
2021-2022

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CQA Commitment to Excellence

Teacher Team Commitment

We fully commit to CQA in the following ways:

- We will arrive at school by 7:45 AM Monday – Friday.
- We will remain at school until 3:45 Monday-Thursday.
- We will tutor during office hours weekly.
- We will remain at school until 4:00 on Fridays.
- We will do whatever it takes for our students to learn.
- We will modify instruction and assessments to meet the needs of all learners in our classes.
- We will be fully prepared for each class that we teach.
- We will grade and return all student work within a week of the due date.
- We will model the CQA core values in our words and actions.
- We will enforce all CQA rules and policies consistently and fairly to maintain school-wide academic and character excellence.
- We will communicate with parents/guardians on a daily/weekly basis.
- We will always protect the safety, interests, and the rights of all individuals in the classroom and school community.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can lead impact my future standing at CQA.

Parents'/Guardians' Commitment

We fully commit to CQA in the following ways:

- We will make sure our child arrives on time every day.
- We will make arrangements for our child to remain at school until 4:30 PM Monday – Thursday and 2:00 pm on Fridays.
- We will always help our child as best we can and we will do whatever it takes for him/her to learn, work hard, produce the best work possible, make the best choices possible, and reflect responsibly.
- We will maintain an environment at home for our child to complete homework effectively.
- We will check our child's homework every night, let them email or call the necessary teacher if there is a problem with the homework, and try to read with him/her every night.
- We will check our child's grades on Kickboard 1x every week.
- We will always make ourselves available to our children and to the school and will address any concerns they might have.
- We will communicate frequently with our child's teachers through TalkingPoints, phone calls, or e-mail.
- We will attend quarterly parent conferences and other CQA-sponsored events and celebrations.
- If our child is going to be late or miss school, we will notify the school as soon as possible. We will also make sure that our child promptly makes up missing work.
- We will carefully read all papers and TalkingPoints messages the school sends home.
- We will allow our child to go on CQA field trips/lessons.
- We will make sure our child follows the CQA dress code.
- We understand that our child must pass all core academic classes to be promoted to the next grade.
- We understand that our child must follow school rules to protect everyone's safety, interests, and rights. We, not the school, are responsible for our child's behavior and actions.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause my child to lose various CQA privileges and require in-person meetings with school administration.

Student's Commitment

I fully commit to CQA in the following ways:

- I will arrive at school on time every day.
- I will remain at school until 4:30 PM Monday – Thursday and 2:00 PM on Friday.
- I will follow the CQA core values by always working, thinking, behaving, and reflecting in the best way that I know how. I will do whatever it takes for my fellow students and me to learn. This means that I complete all my homework every night; I will email my teachers if I have a problem with the homework or coming to school, and I will raise my hand and ask questions in class if I do not understand something.
- I will always make myself available to parents and teachers and will address any concerns they might have. If I make a mistake, I will tell the truth to my teachers and accept responsibility for my actions.
- I will share my daily and weekly progress reports promptly with my parents.
- I will always behave to protect the safety, interests, and the rights of individuals.
- I will always listen to all my CQA teammates and give everyone my respect.
- I will follow the CQA dress code.
- I am responsible for my own behavior, and I will follow the CQA Code of Conduct.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause me to lose various CQA privileges.

Welcome

Welcome to Central Queens Academy Charter School (CQA). CQA was founded by a team of educators, parents and youth advocates in partnership with APEX, a youth development organization with almost 20 years of experience working with Asian immigrant youth in NYC, many of whom are English Language Learners (ELLs). APEX's history inspired CQA's model of combining strong academics with youth development principles of leadership, self-confidence and critical thinking.

CQA's academic program is designed to meet the needs of a highly diverse student body. CQA has grounded this program in our core values and will implement our mission using research-based methods that have worked in other schools. Moreover, our curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and the New York State Standards and has been designed to make sure that students learn what they need to know in a rigorous and fun environment.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Central Queens Academy Charter School is to prepare students for success in education, the workforce and the community through a school that integrates literacy, standards-based academics, and culturally responsive supportive services. The school will lay the foundation for students to be able to graduate, attend the competitive high school of their choice, and go on and excel in college.

Educational Philosophy

CQA is guided by the educational philosophy that children learn best in an atmosphere of high expectations and that is intentionally designed to meet their needs. The founders envisioned a lasting community institution that graduates highly literate leaders who feel empowered to achieve their fullest potential. CQA will foster scholastic achievement and character development in an inclusive, culturally responsive small school setting.

The central focus of our program is literacy. On a basic level, the number of words that a child knows is an indicator of that child's potential for academic success. Research shows that students need an approximately 50,000-word vocabulary to succeed in high school. Students on average often learn at only a rate of about 3,000 words per year without intervention. Students who live in poverty know approximately five times fewer words than students from wealthier families, and ELLs start out knowing even less. Our program will not only increase the number of words students use and learn but will teach students that literacy matters. This will not just help ELLs, but it will help all students develop the linguistic proficiency that they need to succeed in high school and beyond.

CQA Values

- **Care for our Community**—We care for our community so that we develop pride in our school and an interest in helping others.
- **Quality of Character**—We seek quality in our character so that our scholars learn the skills of empathy, compassion, respect, responsibility, and perseverance.
- **Achievement through Academics**—We strive for high academic achievement because knowledge and education are the foundation of success in life.

CQA Methods

- **Whole School Focus on Literacy**

CQA believes that literacy cannot be taught in a single class but needs to be reinforced in every class to build on the blocks of understanding. Beyond that, we seek to embed literacy into all classes so that students acquire the type of interdisciplinary learning that promotes higher-level thinking and prepares them for the real world.
- **High Academic Standards**

CQA believes that if you set the bar high and show students how to get there, they will show you that they can achieve those high markers and more.
- **Caring and Competent Teachers**

CQA's teachers model how students should live, always striving to be better and always caring for the people around them.
- **More Time in School**

CQA believes that more time spent well can make the difference for students who need more time to practice their academic skills and to develop their sense of selves.
- **Social and Emotional Learning**

CQA understands that students need more than academic rigor to succeed; they need the fundamental skills that we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. Through our Advisory program and use of core values, CQA seeks to teach and support social and emotional learning just as it does academics.
- **Parent Engagement**

CQA collaborates with parents/guardians, so we are utilizing all the resources to do what is best to meet each child's individual needs and ensure that s/he reaches his/her academic and character potential.
- **Enrichment**

CQA believes that students who receive after school enrichment will become more well-rounded and well-grounded and will be invigorated to take on the challenges of academic achievement.

Who We Are

School Administration

- Ashish Kapadia, Executive Director
- Glenn Liebeck, Director of School
- Therese Paskoff, Operations Director
- Michelle Dalpiaz, Chief Financial Officer
- Dee-Ann Martell, Middle School Principal
- Angel Geeng, Assistant Principal of CQA North
- Keneshia Maxwell, Assistant Principal of CQA South
- Kerry Brett-Esty, Academic Dean Grades 5 & 6
- Peter Margulies, Academic Dean Grades 7 & 8
- Susan Miller, Special Education Compliance Manager Grades K- 6
- Maria Diaz, Special Education and Intervention Coordinator Grades 7 & 8
- Sermania Arias, Guidance Counselor 5 & 6
- Purvi Ramkarran, Guidance Counselor 7 & 8

Board of Trustees

- Michael Zisser
- Rick Ruvkin
- Arunabha Bhoumik
- Sonia Park
- Megha Jain
- Catherine Tse
- Bruce Saber
- David Nitkin
- Année Kim
- Maribel Lara
- Michael E. Lee
- Tom Ng
- Sabir Semerkant
- Joyce Wu

Faculty - CQA North

<p>Jennifer Clarke-Green, 5th Gr ELA Stephanie Morefield, 5th Gr ELA Lane McDonough, 5th Gr Math Victoria Fasullo, 5th Gr Sci Nadia Persaud, 5th Gr HSS Lauren Burgos, 5th Gr INT</p>	<p>Allison Jones- 7th Gr. Reading Vincent Ricco- 7th Gr. Writing Amy Koven- 7th Gr. Math Darrell O'Neill- 7th Gr. Science Jasmin Rodriguez- 7th Gr. HSS Semir Purisic- 7th Gr. IDS</p>
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Faculty - CQA South

<p>Carina DeCatri, 5th Gr ICT Kristen Bopp, IEP Coordinator (North) & 6th Gr ICT Scott Calhoun, 6th Gr ELA Jessica Magnusson, 6th Gr ELA Sara Wolf, 6th Gr Math Gabrielle Johnson, 6th Gr Sci Ryan Solomon, 6th Gr HSS Jesse Giardina, 6th Gr IDS Suzianna McKay, 6th Gr INT Branavi Nadarajah, Associate Teacher/ 5th & 6th GrMath INT</p>	<p>Tina Williams- Special Education 7th Gr. Brianna Monzert- ELL Support Eleni Papanikolau- ELL Support Sunu Matthew- 8th Gr. Reading Zeinab Imam- 8th Gr. Writing Sarah Thurmond- Algebra 1 Regan Nguyen- Earth Science Brian Magone- 8th Gr. HSS Sharena Arguello- 8th Gr. IDS Kesha Patel- Special Education 8th Gr. Matthew Wood, Associate Teacher/7th & 8th Gr Intervention</p>
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Operations Team

- Katherinne Castillo, Operations Manager (North)
- Melisa Areiza, Operations Assistant (North)
- Anielka Espinosa, Operations Manager (South)
- Erika Sopiotti, Finance Manager
- Emily Abreu, Finance Associate
- Edgar Marroquin, Facilities Maintenance

School Calendar 2021-2022 (*see our website for the complete calendar*)

Covid-19 Related Information

Personal Protection Equipment Expectations

- CQA will sanitize and disinfect the school daily
- Scholars and staff are required to bring two personal face masks daily.
- All are required to wear face masks while in the building.
- Scholars are allowed to take mask breaks periodically throughout the day if necessary.
- Scholars will be responsible for sanitizing their personal area daily.
- Teachers are responsible for sanitizing their own work area.

Visiting the School

- Due to the pandemic, all visitors, including parents, are restricted from visiting the School until further notice.
- Parents must show ID at the door to pick up children in case of illness or emergency.

School Hours

School will open at 7:45am for North students to eat breakfast and get prepared for the 1st period and at 8:00am for students at the South campus.

Classes will end at 4:30pm four days per week and 2:00pm one day per week.

Arrival

Students must arrive by 8:15, or they will be marked as tardy.

Students may enter for breakfast at 7:45am for 5th & 6th grade and at 8:00am for 6th & 7th grade.

First period class begins at 8:10 for grade 5 and at 8:20am for grade 6,7,8.

Lateness

Any students who arrive after entrance doors close will be marked tardy.

If your child is late with a legitimate reason, he/she will need a note explaining the reason.

If your child is late 5 or more times, you may receive a letter from the Principal and be called for a meeting with the Assistant Principal.

Attendance

Regular attendance is mandatory. If you know your child will be absent, please let the school know the following information by 8:05am through Talking Points or phoning the school:

- Child's name
- Parent's name
- Date and time of the phone call or email
- Reason for the lateness/absence
- Phone number where the parent can be reached at the time the student signs in.

Your child will need to bring a note the next day with the same information and your signature. If your child is seeing a doctor, please have a doctor's note signed by the doctor. We strongly encourage all doctor's appointments be scheduled for non-school hours.

If your child is absent 5 times or more, you may receive a letter from the Principal and be called for a meeting.

Absence Consequences:

- All absences are noted on report cards
- 3 Unexcused may result in NO TRIP or loss of privileges for the quarter
- 7 Unexcused total may result in NO END OF YEAR TRIPS and loss of other privileges.

Lateness Consequences: Must get a late pass from the main office

- Unexcused late arrivals may result in detention for the day
- 4 for the quarter may result in NO TRIP for the quarter
- 15 for the year may result in No END OF YEAR TRIPS

Excused & Unexcused Lateness and Absence

An acceptable reason for your child's absence is if your child is sick, there is a family emergency, your child has an appointment, or you are observing a major religious holiday. All other absences are unexcused, including but not limited to, family vacation, participation in sports tournaments, attendance at entertainment events, the parent has an appointment, or when the family has not contacted the school with a satisfactory reason.

Please Note: Even excused absences may result in academic consequences, including but not limited to lower grades and may affect your child's promotion in school.

Please let the school know as soon as possible if your child will be absent. (See previous “Attendance” section.) For a family emergency to be deemed an excused absence, an adult family member must hold a conference with the Principal within 24 hours.

Death of a close family member is an excused absence. Please contact the school in order to make sure that we are providing the best emotional supports that we can and deciding as a team how to proceed with your child’s academic growth in light of your family’s loss.

Participation in Other Activities When Absent

If your child is absent from school, your child may not participate in the after-school program or any other school-sponsored activities on the day of the absence, unless the school has given permission ahead of time.

Extended Illness

If your child is sick for more than two days, you must have a note from the doctor explaining the illness and keep in contact with the school on a weekly basis regarding your child’s health. CQA will work with families on an individual basis in accordance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

Leaving Early Due to Illness/Early release of Student to Adult

Your child may not leave school early unless you have given the school a written note giving permission, and you, or a guardian over 18 years old who is on the emergency contact form, is at school to pick up your child and sign him/her out. If no one is available to pick up the student, the student will rest quietly in an office. Children who need to leave school early must be signed out by an authorized adult who may be asked to produce photo identification. To add an adult to the list of authorized people, please contact the main office of the school.

Parent Pick-up

You must pick up your child promptly after school or following the after-school program, unless you have made alternative arrangements for your child to get home safely. Please note that when there is a half day, you will be responsible for picking up your child. Any changes to normal pick-up **MUST BE** communicated through Talking Points or by written note or with the child's name and guardian signature.

Weather Days and School Closings

The school may be closed at any time due to bad weather, or due to a local condition. CQA will close if NYCDOE schools are closed. School closings or emergencies will be announced by the Mayor or Chancellor of the NYCDOE on your local television or radio stations or call 311. In addition, Talking Points message and an email message will be sent to all CQA scholars and families.

Dress Code

Uniform

CQA expects students to dress in a professional, comfortable, and appropriate manner. The “professional” uniform includes a white polo shirt with logo (long or short sleeved) and gray pants or the gray skirt option **ONLY** with black, white, or gray leggings underneath. Students are expected to wear a belt, socks and appropriate

closed-toed shoes or sneakers. Only solid gray hoodies, sweaters, fleeces, and cardigans are allowed. The gym uniform entails the orange CQA t-shirt, CQA sweatpants, and gym shoes or sneakers—*only to be worn on specified gym days*.

Students are **NOT** allowed to wear:

- Grey jeans or tights
- Baggy, excessively ripped or revealing clothing (shorts, miniskirts, cropped tops, or cut-offs)
- Headgear, such as hats or do-rags (except for religious head dressings)
- Sandals or flip-flops
- Jewelry or accessories that are distracting in the learning environment
- Shorts *unless otherwise stated by school leader*

CQA assures that we will not exclude from instruction any student who is in violation of the school dress code policy. However, students must borrow clothes from the school to enter class. A uniform violation results in lunch detention. Repeated violations of the dress code may result in a meeting with a school administrator.

Personal Hygiene

The personal grooming of each student should be in accordance with the standards set by the uniform dress code. Students should be clean and neat when at school.

Special Occasions

Field Trips/Lessons

Whenever students are traveling away from school, they are subject to the same rules, regulations, and appropriate behavior as required at school. They are expected to fulfill the CQA expectations and always represent the school.

Field trips/lessons are a privilege at CQA. To attend field trips, a student must:

- Demonstrate CQA core values prior to the trip
- Maintain a consistent attendance record
- Attend school the day of the field trip
- Have all permission slips and forms signed by a parent/guardian and turned in
 - For any walking trips within a half-mile of the school, a parent must put in writing if s/he denies permission for the child to attend.

Academics

Promotion Policy

To be promoted to the next grade, all CQA students will have to meet certain promotion criteria. Those categories may include:

- Attendance and lateness.
- In-class work, homework, participation, projects, and tests.
- Overall course grades where scholars pass at least three core classes.
- Benchmark tests (i.e., Interim Assessments and NYS Standardized Test scores); and
- Social and emotional readiness.

Unless otherwise stated, 70% is the minimum passing score for all assignments, marking periods, and final grade.

While your child's NYS standardized test scores are important, CQA will decide whether to promote your child to the next grade or have your child repeat a grade depending on the other factors. If your child does not meet the expectations listed below by the second semester, CQA will inform you in writing that your child is "Promotion in Doubt" during the winter and/or spring and that your child may not be promoted to the next grade. If your child does not improve by the end of the school year, then your child will be identified as having to repeat the same grade for the following year. Some students will be given the additional opportunity to meet these promotional expectations by attending Summer School. At the end of Summer School, final promotion and retention decisions will be made by the Principal.

Promotion of Children with IEPs:

A student with an IEP may be promoted if they are meeting their IEP goals and set school promotional criteria.

Homework

Students should expect to have homework every night, with specific nights' HW being for designated subject areas. Homework will be posted on the school website and should be recorded by students in their planners every day. It is expected that parents/ guardians look at the planner and check the orange folder daily.

(*Note: Nightly HW time allotments are estimated at 25 min per subject. ELA and Math homework are assigned daily; other subjects coordinate assignment nights so that scholars are not overwhelmed.)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable at CQA. It is important that students reflect their true understanding and mastery of the academic content through their work for their teacher to have a true assessment of their learning. **Academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism involves an attempt by a student to present another's work as their own.**

Cheating and Plagiarism include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Copying or giving an assignment to a student to be copied unless specifically permitted by the teacher.
- Submitting another student's work as your own.
- An act of using the exact words, a close paraphrase, or a unique idea from another person's writing without correct citation.
- Submission of any work that is not the student's.
- Use of unauthorized material, including textbooks, notes, calculators, phones, computer programs during an examination or on a major project.
- Supplying or communicating in any way unauthorized material including notes, textbooks, calculators, or computer programs on a major project.

- Unauthorized access to an exam or answers to an exam.

Consequences will be determined by the severity of the offense and whether the student is a repeat offender. CQA School Administration will determine consequences for cheating and/or plagiarism: including but not limited to a zero for the assignment, detention, and parent meeting.

Academic Supports

If your child is having academic trouble, we will provide your child with additional support according to the Response to Intervention model, possibly including small group instruction, office hours, 1:1 instruction, and regular monitoring, at the discretion of the instructional team. If your child does not respond to the additional supports, your child may be referred for a special education evaluation to potentially receive additional supports through an Individualized Education Plan.

Students with Disabilities

CQA will serve its population of students with disabilities by providing special education programs and services that comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. CQA will have a clear process for identifying students with disabilities through assessments and other methods of progress monitoring.

CQA will not discriminate against students with disabilities or of having a disability, in its admission or enrollment practices.

Special Education

If there is an indication that your child may need special education, your child will be referred, in writing with substantial documentation, to the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's district of residence for individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services as required by federal laws and regulations. Referrals will be made in writing and with proper documentation, only after careful consideration and evaluation of your child, and in coordination with all the appropriate people, including you, the parent.

If your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is identified as in need of services by the CSE, CQA will follow that IEP as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and prepared by the CSE in the student's district of residence. To the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's IEP, CQA will educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, usually in mixed group classes with their non-disabled peers.

CQA will comply with all applicable laws and regulations regarding students with IEPs. CQA will work with the appropriate CSE on meeting the needs of the student and the goals set forth in individual IEPs. The school will work with the CSE to comply with or review and update the existing goals in the IEP, with the consent of parents. Parents and teachers of students with disabilities will participate in all meetings regarding the provision of appropriate services to those students at CQA.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences will be conducted at the end of Quarters 1 and 2. Parents may be asked to come in for a meeting after quarter 3 if their child is in danger of attending summer school. In addition, parents are encouraged to inquire about their child's performance regularly during the school year as well as look up their

child's progress online through individual access to CQA's information system, Kickboard. This continual monitoring will aid in strengthening each student's progress. During the conference, advisors will review the student's progress and discuss strengths and any areas in need of support. Our goal is to make these conferences a positive experience for all.

Family Council (FC)

The FC will represent parents and families of students enrolled at CQA. It will work to ensure that the Director of Schools and Principal are aware of the needs and concerns of families so that their issues can be addressed efficiently and effectively.

Parents in the FC will be encouraged to help with and participate in:

- Student recruitment, enrollment and matriculation;
- Meetings and activities designed by the school and/or the Family Council to engage parents/guardians in the educational and social lives of the students;
- School events, especially parent/family conferences, as both participants and volunteers;
- Periodic review of CQA's overall performance and adherence to its educational principles; and
- Other activities or processes determined by the Family Council in conjunction with the Director of School

Food Services

Cafeteria

Middle school students are to eat lunch in the cafeteria or in a designated classroom; students are allowed to bring a healthy lunch from home. They are not allowed to go outside to eat lunch and they cannot order food.

Student Meals

Breakfast and lunch will be made available to students at CQA each day that school is in session. The costs of such food services shall be determined at the beginning of each school year. Students can opt to bring their own lunch and not participate in the school lunch program. CQA abides by a **healthy food policy** in which soda and junk food, including cookies, chips, and other such foods cannot be consumed. (There will be a few exceptions to this policy on set days for the purposes of celebration.) CQA is a **nut-free** school. No food with peanuts or any other nuts may be brought onto campus.

Parents and guardians will be required to complete a Family Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (SD 1041 form) upon enrollment in the school. These forms enable students to receive free and reduced-price meals, and also form the basis for determining and distributing additional educational funding from the state and federal governments.

Transportation Services

Eligibility

- If your child is in 5th or 6th grade, AND you live 1 mile or more from school, then your child is eligible for free transportation (yellow bus or Metrocard). Students who do not live in Queens will not be eligible for yellow bus service. ***Transportation allowances are determined by the DOE, not CQA.**
- If your child AND you live 1.5 miles or more from the school site, then your child is eligible for a free Metrocard.
- CQA scholars must be responsible for their student Metrocard. CQA is NOT responsible for obtaining a replacement Metrocard during a semester if lost, misplaced, stolen, or otherwise out of a scholar's possession.

CQA will submit the appropriate paperwork to the DOE with the necessary information about its students, and the DOE will determine the eligibility for transportation of CQA students.

Parents/guardians must notify the school in writing in advance when there is a change to how a child is going home. Parents/guardians will be ultimately responsible for their children arriving to school and leaving school. Student misbehavior when travelling to or from school remains subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the school.

Special Education Students

Special education students often have different eligibility for transportation as well. Their eligibility is dictated by their Individual Education Program (IEP). Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

Rules for the Yellow Bus

If a student receives yellow bus service, that student may only ride the bus to which he or she is assigned. Parents are not permitted to ride the yellow school bus unless they enroll and pass a bus safety class, administered by the Office of Pupil Transportation of the New York City Department of Education.

Yellow bus service is provided on 180 school days. Since CQA has a longer school year, there will be certain days during the school year that there will be no yellow bus service. These dates will be outlined and sent to parents with the school calendar.

While on the bus, students are required to obey established rules to continue the privilege of riding the bus. The most important rules to remember are:

- Use PETSU (Please, Excuse me, Thank you, Sorry, and Yes (not Yeah)) to your bus driver, monitor and teammates every day.
- Use kind words to everyone on the bus.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Stay seated with a seat belt fastened until the bus stops at your stop.
- Pictures and videos should not be taken on the bus for safety and privacy reasons; violations is subject to disciplinary actions by the school.

If a student ever feels uncomfortable or intimidated by something or someone on his or her bus, he or she should let a teacher and the Principal know immediately. We can then work together to alleviate whatever is

causing the concern.

Inappropriate behavior on the school bus is subject to disciplinary action taken by the school.

Loss of MetroCards

Request for the replacement of MetroCards must be completed in writing and given to the office staff. Replacement MetroCards will only be given if the school is given a specific replacement MetroCard. CQA is not responsible for replacement MetroCards.

Private Transportation

CQA will not release students to private van drivers or after-care providers until parents and guardians have indicated that their child will be released on his/her own from the school. CQA does not endorse, approve, or support the use of private transportation services or after-care providers. Private van service pick-up and drop-off is not the same as yellow school bus.

Admissions and Withdrawal Policy

Non-discrimination Policy

CQA shall not discriminate against any student based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, housing situation, or on any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school. CQA shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the school shall ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and § 2854(2) of the New York Education Law, governing admission to a charter school. New students will be admitted each year without regard to prior measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, handicapped condition, ethnicity, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

Admissions Policy and Lottery Preferences

CQA will accept applications for admission to the fifth grade. 100 students will be accepted. If more than 100 applications are received, admissions will be determined by public lottery.

As allowed by New York state law, and pursuant to its charter, CQA has created an admissions preference for English Language Learners (“ELL”), an at-risk population, of up to 30% of the lottery seats.

We will conduct the lottery with the following admissions preferences, which shall be granted to applicants in the following manner:

1. First preference: Returning CQA students will automatically be assigned a seat.
2. Second preference: Siblings of students already enrolled in CQA. For definition purposes, “siblings” are two or more children that are related either by birth by means of the same father or mother or by legal adoption.
3. Third preference: 30 seats for students who reside in Community School District 24 and have been

identified as English Language Learners;

4. Fourth preference: Students who reside in Community School District 24
5. Fifth preference: All students, regardless of district of residence, who have been assessed as students who are at risk of academic failure as English Language Learners.

Enrollment

All admitted students should schedule an appointment for Enrollment Day, where they will bring in required documents and will complete the student's registration.

Waiting List

A waiting list will be maintained of applications that were not selected from the lottery. When space becomes available at the school, applications will be pulled from the waiting list in order and calls made to parents offering admission. The waiting list is subject to the same preferences as the lottery. Parents will be required to accept placement within 48 hours of the phone call, or their space will be forfeited.

Voluntary Withdrawal

CQA is a public school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. Circumstances may arise in which a parent/guardian wishes to transfer his or her child to a different school. Students, with their parent or guardian's permission, may withdraw from CQA at any time. CQA does not automatically admit any former student who has withdrawn from CQA.

After April 1 and before June 20 of each school year, parents/guardians of currently enrolled students will be expected to fill out an "intent to continue" form. School personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss the reasons for not wanting to continue with the school in the next year, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that arise from these discussions. Returning students are not required to attend Enrollment Day.

Student Safety

Anti-Harassment Policy

CQA is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from unlawful harassment or retaliation based on race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, and/or disability. Any unlawful harassment or retaliation of a student or employee by a member of the school community is a violation of this policy. The administration will act to investigate all complaints thoroughly and promptly, formal or informal, verbal or written, of unlawful harassment based on color, race, religion (creed), national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, and/or disability. CQA will discipline or take appropriate corrective action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy.

If any member of the CQA community has reason to believe that a scholar may be the recipient or victim of bullying, sexual harassment, or the focus of inappropriate behavior, that teacher should report such incidents

to the Principal or Assistant Principals via written communication. Given the sensitivity of these reports, an in-person meeting should be requested, as well.

When reporting an incident, it is helpful to provide as much information as possible, including the following:

1. A description of the event(s)
2. The number of occurrences, with dates and places
3. The names of any witnesses
4. Any documents or other exhibits, if appropriate

Closed Campus

Under no circumstances are students to leave the building or use any exit without permission. A student with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult – who has physically come to the Main Office to sign a student out – unless the school has been given prior written permission authorizing unaccompanied departure. Once students have entered in the morning, they may not leave the building unless a staff member escorts them.

Visiting the School

During non-COVID times, parents and visitors are welcome to visit us. Unfortunately, for safety precautions, CQA has a strict NO Visitors policy until further notice.

When those restrictions are lifted, please follow the following guidelines:

- Visits should be arranged at least 24 hours in advance.
- **All visitors must show ID** (regardless of the number of times visited) and report to the school's main office to sign in. Visitors will receive a visitor's pass.
- Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the Principal. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
- All visitors are required to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this Code of Conduct. By entering school property, visitors accept these rules.
- CQA is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions.

Emergencies and Drills

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the main office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact students in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the main office.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures

Please note, some procedures may change once the school year has officially begun. Students will be notified of and trained in any significant changes.

In case of an emergency, if a student or staff member sees fire or smells smoke, he or she should close the door. Upon hearing an alarm, school staff will assemble students in their rooms and proceed out of the building

according to the fire evacuation plan posted in each room. Students should follow the direction of staff members who will verify the safety of the stairwells and lead students outside the building to the designated locations, where school staff will line up students by class and take attendance.

Throughout the school year, students and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency.

In case of a more serious emergency, should it be necessary to evacuate our school before, during, or after the school day— and it appears that we will be unable to return to the school for an extended period or for the rest of the day— school staff and students will evacuate according to the school’s evacuation plan. Staff will line up students in a safe and orderly fashion on the sidewalks outside of the evacuation site. After staff takes attendance, should conditions permit, all staff and students will return promptly to school.

Health Policy

Illness at School

CQA has a campus nurse. If your child becomes ill during the school day, he or she will be sent to the nurse’s office. You will be called if your child is ill or injured at school. If a parent cannot be reached, another person on your emergency form will be called. If an accident or illness requires immediate care and we cannot reach you, we will call 911 and someone from school will accompany your child. *Please keep your home phone, address, and emergency contacts up to date.*

****COVID-19 NOTICE****

All scholars or staff that show signs of illness, record a fever over 100°F, or show COVID-19 related symptoms will need to be picked up from school immediately. They will be placed in a designated quarantine room until they are picked up by an adult family member or a designated emergency contact.

Until further notice, staff and scholars that are absent or sent home for ANY COVID-19 related symptoms, may not return to school buildings without a note from a doctor.

CQA shall comply with all health services requirements applicable to other public schools including, but not limited to, all immunization requirements and diagnostic testing (hearing and vision) requirements. All students must be immunized before they can enter or attend CQA, in compliance with New York State law. CQA shall provide on-site health care services similar to the extent that such health services are available to children attending other public schools in CSD 24.

Emergency and Medical Forms

At the beginning of school, all parents are asked to fill out forms for emergency contact. If your information changes, please be sure to tell the office so we can update your form. It is extremely important that we have the correct information on these forms. We will need your permission to take your child to a hospital in the event of an emergency during school hours.

Allergies

If your child has any allergies, please let us know in writing.

Prescriptions and Medications

As a public school, CQA is not allowed to administer medication to students unless it has been approved by the school and ordered by a doctor. If your child needs to take medicine during the school day, please contact the nurse. They will give you a form to be filled out by your doctor or pharmacy. No medication will be brought into CQA without knowledge of the nurse.

Behavior and Discipline

Behavioral Program

CQA's approach to behavior will establish the use of logical consequences that preserve students' dignity, promote fairness, and use problem solving. CQA will set and reinforce a positive school culture and community.

The Role of Students

Students will learn how to deal with conflicts and how to build relationships in a calm and peaceful way. Students will be allowed to respond to, correct, and learn from their mistakes with dignity. Students will be allowed to offer their perspectives and views and will understand why decisions are made and what is expected of them in the future.

The Role of the Counselor

Students should discuss the school's social and behavioral expectations and issues with their counselor, in a group and individually. Students can turn to their counselor for advice on how to handle difficult situations in the school. Counselors or administrators will communicate with parents about any behavioral or academic issues at the school.

The Role of Teachers

Teachers will model excellent behavior. Teachers will respond to small incidents so that they do not become big incidents. Teachers will also be responsible for reporting behavioral issues to counselors, the Dean, the Assistant Principal, and the Principal.

The Role of Parents

Parents and families will actively use Kickboard and communicate with their children's advisors to get information about their children's progress. Parents will reinforce positive behavioral expectations in the home.

Discipline

When a student does break a rule, CQA will balance the needs of the community with that of the student. The Principal and Assistant Principal will conduct an impartial investigation and engage in a fair process to repair the harm, including possible consequences outlined in the disciplinary policy, which may include detention, suspensions and expulsions, subject to due process.

Outside Intervention

CQA will attempt to resolve matters, to the extent possible, without resorting to outside intervention. But if a student breaks the law or causes or poses danger to himself/herself or others, CQA will contact the appropriate authorities and/or specialists.

Discipline Policy

Central Queens Academy Charter School will be a place where students value diversity of ideas, develop compassion, and recognize themselves not just as individuals, but part of an extended family. CQA will approach discipline with an eye towards preserving student dignity and fairness in the process, while at the same time remedying harms. Students will take responsibility for their actions and recognize the logical consequences of those actions.

Student Code of Conduct

CQA has developed a series of rules that address proper student behavior, maintenance of order within the school and while people are engaged in school activities (Code of Conduct), and a statement of student rights and responsibilities. The Student Code of Conduct will apply to all CQA students on- and off- campus, including school buses and field trips.

In all disciplinary matters, students will be given notice and will have the opportunity to present their version of the facts and circumstances leading to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions. Depending on the severity of the infraction, disciplinary responses include suspension (short- or long-term), detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities, and expulsion. Where appropriate, school officials also will contact law enforcement agencies.

CQA staff will deal with each problem individually, and for each unacceptable behavior there is a range of consequences and actions a teacher or staff member will take. This is dependent on the frequency of this behavior, progress of the child, age of the child and severity of the behavior. The specific situation dictates which consequences will be used, revisited, or skipped.

The first step taken in any disciplinary action is to restore a sense of safety and bring people into self-control. Potential steps include: speaking to the child individually; holding a group discussion; temporarily removing a child from a difficult situation within the class; sending the child to another class (teachers may not send students unattended into the hall as a disciplinary measure); informing parent/guardian of behavior; discussion with parent/guardian and setting up a plan of action with the parent/guardian, articulating what "progress" is; sending the child to meet with the Principal, Assistant Principal, the Dean, and/or counselor; discussion with other school personnel; formal meeting with the Principal, Assistant Principal and/or counselor, teacher and parent/guardian; discussing and initiating other support systems; guidance hearing; research reports; detention; community service; suspension (short- and long-term); and replacement of property or reimbursement. The decision as to which consequence is chosen will be in accordance with guidelines established by state law, which will ensure equitable treatment for all students and enable the school to exercise discretion and educational judgment.

Violations of the Code of Conduct will lead to disciplinary action. To the extent appropriate, CQA may use some

practices, such as mediations, apologies, and conferences, in response to violations of the Code of Conduct prior to instituting disciplinary action, since we believe that such practices lead to a more positive school culture. But we recognize that the overall safety of the students, staff, and community comes first, and reserve all rights to institute disciplinary action in a manner consistent with applicable federal and state laws. Depending on the severity of the violation, disciplinary responses may include exclusion from classroom and school privileges, detention, suspension (short- or long-term), and expulsion. Where appropriate, CQA officials also will contact law enforcement agencies.

In compliance with the federal Gun Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. § 7151, the school director will immediately notify the appropriate NYPD personnel of any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school, or to have possessed a firearm at school so that disciplinary proceedings can be taken. In such a case, the student will be expelled.

Central Queens Academy is responsible for ensuring that the school environment is safe for all students. All students are expected to accept responsibility for their actions and behavior, and to conduct themselves as dignified and respectable members of the school and larger community. Within the learning community, the purpose of the CQA Student Code of Conduct is to guide students in making appropriate choices that enhance and support academic achievement and civic responsibility. In the event that a student violates the Code of Conduct, consequences will result. The CQA Code of Conduct applies to the actions of all students during school hours, before and after school, while on school property and at all CQA-sponsored events. Additionally, students are responsible for following the Code of Conduct off-campus and during non-school hours when actions or incidents occur that affect the mission and goals of CQA or another CQA student.

Each disciplinary case will be judged on its own merit and adjudicated according to the facts accompanying the case. CQA staff shall consider all mitigating circumstances prior to disciplinary action. Mitigating circumstances shall include, but are not limited to, the following: age, health, maturity, and academic placement of a student; prior conduct; attitude of student; cooperation of parents/guardians; willingness to make restitution; seriousness of offense; and willingness to enroll the student in an assistance program.

In some cases, the Principal or Assistant Principal and/or Dean may deem screening and referrals for drug/alcohol counseling as a necessary component of the disciplinary action. Loss of privileges and community service may also be considered. Community service may include, but is not limited to, the following: repairing or cleaning property damage as a result of the offense; participating in landscaping, gardening or clean up inside the building or on the grounds; participating in projects that improve the school, surrounding property or community; and providing service that improves the quality of life for community members.

Each category of offense listed below carries a minimum and maximum disciplinary action associated with the act of misconduct. After considering the actual violation and factors such as those listed above, CQA staff shall determine the disciplinary action within the minimum/maximum range to which students shall be subjected.

Tier 1

Handled at the TEACHER Level <i>(Examples, not limited to)</i>	Handled at the ADMIN Level <i>(Examples, not limited to)</i>
Incomplete HW or classwork Sleeping or off-task Disrupting class Inappropriate language/ behavior Late to class Excessive noise in hallway	Dress Code Violation Lateness Missing signed progress report
Sample Consequences (not limited to)	Sample Consequences (not limited to)
Lunch Detention, Breakfast detention, Enrichment Detention, Family phone call, Loss of privilege, Teacher conference,	Lunch Detention, Breakfast detention, Enrichment Detention, Family phone call, Mandatory change of clothes, Loss of privilege,

Violations are generally logged on our scholar and family on-line portal (Kickboard). As a result of repeated violations and depending on the circumstances, these offenses may be treated as Tier II or Tier III offenses (as deemed appropriate by CQA Administration) and receive the increased consequences.

Tier II

Handled at the TEACHER Level <i>(Examples, not limited to)</i>	Handled at the ADMIN Level <i>(Examples, not limited to)</i>
Repeated Tier I violations Academic dishonesty- forging signature, cheating, plagiarism, etc. Use of hate language Egregious disrespect Use of obscene words or gestures Refusal to follow staff directives Unsanctioned use of electronic devices (i.e. cell phones)	Repeated Tier I violations Bullying or cyberbullying Use of hate language Refusal to follow staff directives Physical altercation of any kind Threat of any community member (of any type) Smoking or Vaping Posting CQA students/staff/building on social media

Violation of the CQA Technology Usage Agreement	Violation of the CQA Technology Usage Agreement
Sample Consequences (<i>not limited to</i>)	Sample Consequences (<i>not limited to</i>)
Lunch Detention, Breakfast detention, Enrichment Detention, Family conference, Loss of privilege, Teacher conference, Use of Cell Phone ladder of consequence- <i>see below</i> Academic Dishonesty ladder of consequence- <i>see below</i>	Lunch Detention, Breakfast detention, Enrichment Detention, Mandatory Family conference, Loss of privilege, In-School Suspension, Use of Cell Phone ladder of consequence- <i>see below</i> Academic Dishonesty ladder of consequence- <i>see below</i>

Cell Phone Ladder of Consequence

1st time offense	Scholar is instructed to power down cell phone and put away. Comment recorded in KB.
2nd time offense	Scholar is instructed to power down cell phone and put away. Comment recorded in KB. Parent is notified of the incidents and consequence ladder should the offense repeat.
3rd time offense	Cell phone is collected and given to administration. Parent is asked to come into the building. Phone can only be retrieved by a parent/guardian. Comment recorded in KB.
4th time offense	Cell phone is collected and given to administration. Phone can only be retrieved by a parent/guardian. Phone must be turned-in to administration daily for a minimum of 4-weeks (as decided on by admin), to be retrieved at dismissal. Comment recorded in KB.

Academic Dishonesty Ladder of Consequence

1st time offense (for a particular class)	Mandatory parent/guardian meeting set by teacher. 1 administrator must be present. Assignment must be re-done for fewer possible points
2nd time offense (for a particular class)	Mandatory parent/guardian meeting set by teacher. 1 administrator must be present. 0% for assignment grade.
3rd time offense (for a particular class)	Mandatory parent/guardian meeting. "U" for the Quarter grade.
4th time offense (for a particular class)	Mandatory parent/guardian meeting. "U" for the Final Course grade.

In the event of repeated violations and depending on the circumstances, these offenses may be treated as Tier III (as deemed appropriate by CQA Administration) and receive the increased consequences. The length of suspension, whether internal or external, shall be determined by the Assistant Principal in conjunction with the Principal. As a supplement and/or alternative to suspension, school staff may require students to complete public service commensurate with the seriousness of the offense(s).

Tier III

<p>Handled at the ADMIN Level</p> <p><i>Infractions that occur on campus, to/from campus, or at school-sponsored events off campus are all subject to the same consequences</i></p> <p><i>(Examples, not limited to)</i></p>
<p>Repeated Tier I & II violations</p> <p>Assault of any community member (interpreted as an attempt to do bodily harm to another person)</p> <p>Persistent refusal to follow stated school rules and procedures</p> <p>Arson of any kind (interpreted as creation of a flame)</p> <p>Destruction of Property</p> <p>Theft</p> <p>Trespassing</p> <p>Involvement in gang activity</p> <p>Sexual violations</p>

Possession of weapons or look-alikes Any act that endangers the safety of other students, teachers, or any school employee Use, possession, sale, or delivery of... alcohol, illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, contraband or look alike contraband/drugs. THIS INCLUDES ALL VAPING DEVICES
Sample Consequences (<i>not limited to</i>)
Mandatory In Person Meeting In-School Suspension Out-of-School Suspension Expulsion

If the circumstances warrant, the student may be subject to the maximum penalty of expulsion. As a supplement and/or alternative to suspension, school staff may require students to complete public service commensurate with the seriousness of the offense(s).

The use of corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited by Central Queens Academy. No student will be subject to corporal punishment by any administrator, faculty, staff or other student.

Provisions for All Disciplinary Actions

Due process procedures shall be followed for all disciplinary actions consistent with federal case law pursuant to Goss v. Lopez (419 U.S. 565). The Assistant Principal and/or the Dean will provide notice to inform the student of the charges against them, and if the student denies the charges, then they will be provided with an opportunity, in person, to present his/her version of events to the Dean, the Assistant Principal, the Principal, and the school director.

Overview

Discipline:	Implementation:
Detention	Held during Enrichment, after school, before school, or during lunch
Exclusion	Determined by the staff member running the school privilege
Short-term in-school suspension	Determined by the Dean, Assistant Principal, Principal, and School Director; a student may serve in-school suspension for a period of up to ten days.
Short-term out-of-school suspension	Determined by the Principal, and School Director; a student may be removed from school for a period of up to ten days.

Long-term suspension	Determined by the Principal, and School Director; a student may be removed from school for a period of more than ten days.
Expulsion	Determined by the School Director; a student may be removed from the school permanently.

Detention

A student can earn a school detention for not completing classwork or homework, insubordinate behavior, or obscene or abusive language or gestures in school. Staff members, other than the classroom teacher, may suggest detention for a student’s behavior outside of the classroom. It is the responsibility of the appropriate school staff member to inform the student’s parent/guardian of the reason for their child’s detention. The detention may also be noted in Kickboard and notification will be sent on Talking Points.

Procedures and Due Process for Short-Term Suspensions:

The Director of School or Principal may impose a short-term suspension and shall follow due process procedures consistent with federal case law pursuant to Goss v. Lopez (419 U.S. 565). Before imposing a short-term suspension, or other, less serious discipline, Principal and/ or the Dean shall provide notice to inform the student of the charges against him or her, and if the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student. The student will be provided with an opportunity, in person, to present his/her version of events to the Principal, the Dean, or the Director of School. Notice will also be given to the parent/guardian.

Procedures and Due Process for Long-Term Suspensions

The Principal or School Director may impose a long-term suspension only after the student has been found guilty at a formal suspension hearing. The decision for a long-term suspension may be appealed. In extreme circumstances, the School Director may expel the student from school. Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Dean and/or the Assistant Principal will verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean will also immediately notify the student's parent/guardian(s) in writing. Written notice will be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification will also be provided by telephone if CQA has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent/guardian(s). Such notice will provide a description of the incident or incidents which resulted in the suspension and will indicate that a formal hearing will be held by the school director on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided will be in the primary language used by the parents/guardians. The incident will be reviewed at a formal hearing. The hearing will include the school director, the Principal, the Assistant Principal, the Dean, staff members involved with the incident, and the student with his/her parent/guardian. The student will have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and present evidence.

If the Director of School initiates a long-term suspension proceeding, he or she will personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his/her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer's report will be advisory only and the school director may accept or reject all or part of it. The Director of School’s decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion may be challenged by the

parent/guardian in accordance with the charter school's complaint process.

Before the Director of School imposes a long-term suspension, the Dean or Assistant Principal will immediately notify the parent/guardian in writing that the student may be suspended from school. Written notice will be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to impose suspension at the last known address(es) of the parent/guardian(s). Where possible, notification will also be provided by telephone. Such notice will provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and will inform the parent/guardian (s) of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Dean, the Assistant Principal, the Principal, and the Director of School. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian of the student and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student's version of the incident and to ask questions of the complaining witnesses. Such notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to the suspension of the student unless the student's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the notice and opportunity for an informal conference will take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

Provisions to Implement Alternative Instruction Options

Alternative instruction must be provided within 24 hours of the beginning of a suspension, regardless of the length of the disciplinary action.

While homework assignments may be included in a student's requirements, direct instruction will be provided under the direct supervision of a teacher who meets the certification requirements as detailed in Section 2854 (3)(a-1) of Education Law.

A minimum of two hours of alternative instruction will be provided to students, who are awaiting a suspension hearing or have been suspended. Alternative instruction will be provided during school hours by teacher's aides, tutors and trained volunteers under the direct supervision of a certified teacher.

Students removed for a period of ten days or fewer will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule by which to complete assignments and/or tests missed during their suspension. CQA will provide additional alternative education instruction for a minimum of two hours for each school day. Instruction for each student will be sufficient to enable the student to make adequate academic progress. Students will be provided with instruction by one or more of the following individuals under the direct supervision of a certified teacher(s): teacher's aides or trained volunteers. Instruction will take place in a room that is deemed by CQA as a suspension room.

Students Right to Appeal

Students have the right to appeal both short and long-term suspensions. In the event of a short-term suspension, students, or their legal guardians, will have the option to speak to the school director directly to contest their argument. There is to be at least one additional person at this meeting to serve as a witness and potential arbitrator. Students or their guardians have 24 hours to protest a short-term suspension.

If a student earns a long-term suspension or is engaged in due process of removal from the school, that student, or the student's parent/guardian(s), may exercise the right to contest an argument before the CQA Board of Trustees and in accordance with CQA's formal complaint process.

A student and/or the student's belongings may be searched by a CQA staff member if the staff member has a reasonable suspicion that a search of that student will result in evidence that the student violated the law or a school rule; items which are prohibited on school property, or those which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from the student by CQA authorities.

Student lockers, closets, coat hooks, and desks remain the property of CQA, though the school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in lockers or desks. A student shall not place or keep in a locker, closet, or desk any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or tend to cause the disruption of the mission of CQA. The following rules will apply to the search of CQA property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of illegal items found therein:

- CQA authorities will make an individual search of a student's locker or desk only when there is reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of an item which is prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Searches shall be conducted under the authorization of the school director or his/her designee.
- Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from student lockers or desks by school authorities.
- In addition, a student's personal belongings may be searched only when there is a reasonable suspicion that the student possesses an item which is prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

Discipline of Special Education Students

The school director will have the authority to suspend or remove a special education student as a disciplinary action, upon conferring with the CQA Board of Trustees, the Principal, and special education coordinator. CQA will adhere to the Code of Federal Regulations on discipline provisions for students with disabilities that pertain to sections 300.530, 300.532(a), 300.532 (b), 300.533, 300.534, and 300.536. CQA will ensure record-keeping on the number of days a student with a disability has been suspended or removed for discipline reasons. This responsibility will fall to the school office manager, who will keep in close communication with the Dean, the Assistant Principal, the Principal, and the school director. Alternative instruction will be provided for students of compulsory school age who are suspended or expelled. This responsibility will be that of the Dean and/or the Assistant Principal in direct communication with the school director. CQA will also ensure that the parent/guardian and students with disabilities receive appropriate notification regarding suspensions or removals for disciplinary reasons. This will be the responsibility of the school director, working closely with the special education coordinator, the Dean, and Assistant Principal.

When a suspension or removal of a student with a disability constitutes a disciplinary change of placement, the school director, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean will follow relevant Federal regulations and ensure that the student is provided with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as defined in the federal regulations;

the student is referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan, and to make a manifestation determination; and the student's parent is provided with a copy of procedural due process rights. CQA will ensure that when the suspension or removal of a student with a disability will constitute a disciplinary change of placement, the CSE is immediately notified so that the CSE can meet its obligations to convene a CSE meeting within 10 school days to make a manifestation determination; convene a CSE meeting within 10 business days to conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan; provide the student's parent with a copy of their procedural due process rights; and determine education services or the interim alternative educational setting consistent with the FAPE requirements.

Grievance Policy

Any individual or group may bring a complaint to the CQA Board of Trustees of the Central Queens Academy Charter School alleging violation of the Act, the charter, or any other law relating to the management or operation of the school.

Formal Complaint Policy

Any individual or group may bring complaints to CQA. This must be done in writing to the school's Principal and allege a violation of law or the school's charter. From there, the Principal is required to send a written response to the individual or group within five school days.

Within five days of the receipt of the response from the Principal, the individual or group may appeal to the School Director in writing. The School Director must provide a written response within five school days.

Within five days of the receipt of the response from the School Director, the individual or group may appeal to the CQA Board of Trustees. At the discretion of the CQA Board of Trustees, within 60 days, the complaint may be presented to the CQA Board or its designee by the individual, the group, or their designee. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting. Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter to the satisfaction of the individual or group that presented the complaint. The Board, as necessary, may direct the school director or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report to the CQA Board. The CQA Board of Trustees shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required, within 90 days of meeting with the individual or group.

In accordance with Education Law § 2855(4), if after presentation of such a complaint to the CQA Board of Trustees, the individual or group determines that the CQA Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, that individual or group may present the complaint to the school's charter entity, the State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees through the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (CSI), which shall investigate and respond. If, after presentation of the complaint to CSI, the individual or group determines that it has not adequately addressed the complaint, they may present the complaint to the Board of Regents through the State Education Department, which shall investigate and respond. The SUNY Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents shall have the power and the duty to issue appropriate remedial orders to the CQA Board of Trustees under their jurisdiction to effectuate the provisions applicable under Education Law.

Informal Complaints

Informal complaints do not involve violation of the law or school charter. They are internal matters of the school. Informal complaints may be specific to classroom activities or disagreement with school policies. Informal complaints will be handled by the School Director or and not by the CQA Board or Board's designee. Informal complaints will not be referred to CSI or the Board of Regents.

Confidentiality Policy

Personal information about individual students is considered confidential. We store this information in student files that are located in a locked file cabinet. These records are only available to those staff members who work with the students. Files may not be removed from the building except when they are officially requested from another school.

A student's parent or guardian has the legal right to inspect and review their child's file upon written request to the director of operations. Parents also have the right to representation during any review of their child's record.

Conversations between teachers, administration, and parents and guardians about students, their specific educational concerns, or their past records are confidential. Information should not be shared with staff members or school community members that are not directly involved with the student. If an individual believes that this confidentiality has been violated, the individual should bring their concerns to the attention of the Principal. The Principal will review the situation and determine if the policy has been violated. If the Principal determines that an individual has violated the confidentiality policy, he or she will be subject to disciplinary action.

Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Schools Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Schools Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day CQA receives a request for access. Parents should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents may ask CQA to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the administration decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent, the parent will be notified of the decision and he or she will be advised of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the

hearing procedures will be provided to the parent when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by CQA as an administrator, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person serving on the CQA Board of Trustees; a person or company with whom CQA has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by CQA to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:
Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 600 Independence Avenue Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

CQA may release "directory information" without consent as required by Section 99.3. This may include, but may not be limited to, information such as the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, photos/images, dates of attendance, and most recent educational institution attended. Parents wishing to prevent the release of such information about their child(ren) must submit a written request to the Main Office no later than October 1 "of the given school year."

FOIL Policy (Freedom of Information Laws)

It is the policy of Central Queens Academy Charter School (CQA or the school) to furnish to the public information and records required by the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) constituting Article 6 of the Public Officers Law (POL).

1. Designation of records access officer duties
 - a. The school is responsible for ensuring compliance with FOIL. The School's record access officer is the director of operations. All FOIL requests should be sent to the following address: Central Queens Academy Charter School, 55-30 Junction Boulevard, Elmhurst, New York 11373.
 - b. The records access officer is responsible for ensuring that the school appropriately responds to public requests for access to its records. The records access officer shall ensure that the following actions are taken:
 - i. maintaining an up-to-date and reasonably detailed list of all subject matter of all records in possession of the school, whether available under POL §87(2)
 1. the subject matter list shall be sufficiently detailed to permit identification of the category of the record sought; and
 2. the subject matter list shall be updated annually. The most recent update shall appear on the first page of the subject matter list.
 - ii. assisting the requester in identifying requested records, if necessary;

- iii. locating the records and deciding as to whether access will be granted in whole or in part; and
 1. making available for inspection those records that are required to be produced by law subject to redactions appropriate under law or
 2. denying access to the records in whole or in part, with a written explanation.
 - iv. The records access officer may make available a copy of a requested record upon payment or the offer to pay established fees, in accordance with section 8, below.
 - v. Upon request, the records access officer will certify that a record is a true copy or obtain such certification.
 - vi. Upon failure to locate records, the records access officer will certify:
 1. the school is not the custodian for such records; or
 2. the records of which the school is a custodian could not be found after a diligent search.
2. Location of Records and Hours for Public Inspection . Public records shall be made available for inspection at: Central Queens Academy Charter School, 55-30 Junction Boulevard, Elmhurst, New York 11373, weekdays between 1pm and 5pm. A prior appointment is necessary to review records and can be scheduled with the records access officer.
3. Requests for public access to records
- a. A written request for records is required. Requests can be mailed to the records access officer. If records are maintained on the internet, the requester shall be informed that the records are accessible via the internet and in printed form either on paper or other information storage medium.
 - b. Every request for records that is received by any school employee must immediately be forwarded to the records access officer for the latter's response. School personnel other than the records access officer are not authorized to respond to request for records under FOIL, whether orally or in writing.
 - c. A request must reasonably describe each record being requested. Whenever possible a person requesting records should provide information, including the date of the records, which will identify the records being requested.
 - d. Pursuant to POL section § 89.3, within 5 business days of receipt of a FOIL request, the record access officer will respond to that request, provided it has reasonably and with particularity described the record being sought as follows:
 - i. if the request will be granted in whole or in part, a statement to that effect including, if practical, a copy of the requested record; or
 - ii. if the request will be denied, a written explanation of the reason for
 - iii. denial; or
 - iv. if a decision regarding the request has not yet been made, an acknowledgement of the request and a statement of the approximate date when it is anticipated that the request will be decided, which date shall be reasonable under the circumstances of the request, and, where appropriate, a statement that the request will be determined in

accordance with subdivision §89(5) of the POL (trade secret, critical infrastructure information).

- v. if the school determines to grant a request in whole or in part, and if circumstances prevent disclosure within 20 business days from the acknowledgement of the receipt of the request, the letter from the School shall state a) the reason for the inability to grant the request within 20 business days, AND b) a date certain within which the request will be granted in whole or in part (POL §89(3) as amended by Ch. 22 of L. 2005).
 - e. In determining a reasonable time for granting or denying a request under the circumstances of a request, personnel shall consider the volume of a request, the ease or difficulty in locating, retrieving or generating records, the complexity of the request, the need to review records to determine the extent to which they must be disclosed, the number of requests received by the School, and similar factors that bear on the ability to grant access to records promptly and within a reasonable time.
 - f. A failure to comply with the time limitations described herein shall constitute a denial of a request that may be appealed. Such failure shall include situations in which an officer or employee:
 - i. fails to grant access to the records sought, deny access in writing or acknowledge the receipt of a request within five business days of the receipt of a request;
 - ii. acknowledges the receipt of a request within five business days but fails to furnish an approximate date when the request will be granted or denied in whole or in part;
 - iii. furnishes an acknowledgment of the receipt of a request within five business days with an approximate date for granting or denying access in whole or in part that is unreasonable under the circumstances of the request;
 - iv. fails to respond to a request within a reasonable time after the approximate date given or within twenty business days after the date of the acknowledgment of the receipt of a request;
 - v. determines to grant a request in whole or in part within twenty business days of the acknowledgment of the receipt of a request, but fails to do so, unless the agency provides the reason for its inability to do so in writing and a date certain within which the request will be granted in whole or in part;
 - vi. does not grant a request in whole or in part within twenty business days of the acknowledgment of the receipt of a request and fails to provide the reason in writing explaining the inability to do so and a date certain by which the request will be granted in whole or in part; or
 - vii. responds to a request, stating that more than twenty business days is needed to grant or deny the request in whole or in part and provides a date certain within which that will be accomplished, but such date is unreasonable under the circumstances of the request.
4. Denial of access to records
- a. Denial of access to records shall be in writing, shall state the reason and advise the requester of the right to appeal to the individual or body established to determine appeals, [who or which]

shall be identified by name, title, business address and business phone number.

- b. If requested records are not provided promptly, as required in Section 5 of these regulations, such failure shall also be deemed a denial of access.
- c. CQA Board of Trustees has been designated to receive and determine appeals regarding denial of access to school records under FOIL.
- d. Any person denied access to records may appeal in writing within thirty days of a denial.
- e. The time period within which the records access appeals officer must decide an appeal shall commence upon receipt of a written appeal identifying:
 - i. the date and location of request of records;
 - ii. a description, to the extent possible, of the records that were denied;
 - iii. the name and return address of the person denied access; and
 - iv. whether the denial of access was in writing or due to failure to provide records promptly as required by section 4(D).
- f. Pursuant to POL §89.4, the records access appeals officer shall:1) fully explain in writing the reasons for further denial or provide access to the records to the requester within ten business days of receipt of the appeal; and 2) cause to be transmitted to the Committee on Open Government a copy of each appeal received. The Committee on Open Government, which is a division of the New York State Department of State, is located at 41 State Street Albany, New York 12231.
- g. The records access officer shall inform in writing the appellant and the Committee on Open Government of his or her determination within ten business days of receipt of an appeal. The determination shall be transmitted to the Committee on Open Government in the same manner as set forth subdivision (f) of this section.

5. Fees

- a. Central Queens Academy Charter School will recoup expenses related to the fulfillment of FOIL requests as allowed by law.

6. Public Notice

- a. A notice containing the name and business address of the records access officer and Address of the records appeals officer, along with the location where records can be seen or copied, shall be posted in a conspicuous location where school records are stored.