

NPA Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy

Attending any charter school is a choice. Understanding the mission and vision of a charter school should be of utmost importance in making the choice to attend that particular school. The mission of the Northcoast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy is to nurture highly motivated individuals who are willing to take initiative and assume responsibility for their own learning. NPA does not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnic background, national origin, gender, or disability. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(1)]

Specifically, NPA's mission is

- 1) to provide a rigorous international college preparatory and arts program
- 2) to foster and uphold the highest standards in regard to personal integrity and conduct
- 3) to promote a desire for excellence in one's chosen pursuits
- 4) to encourage responsibility for choices made
- 5) to create an atmosphere conducive to emotional, intellectual, and creative discovery
- 6) to provide opportunities for community involvement and leadership
- 7) create a caring, responsible community
- 8) initiate a journey toward lifelong learning, creativity, and individual and social awareness

NPA's code of conduct is based on the principle of learning while living respectfully in regard to oneself, to others, and to the environment. These areas--oneself, others, and the environment--are intimately interrelated and actions in one area have repercussions for the other two. Sections A through C clarify in more specific detail what respectful living entails in our particular context.

A. Respect for oneself entails:

1. taking care of one's mind, body, and spirit
 - a. being truthful
 - b. allowing time for reflection and creativity
 - c. following the laws of California
2. being prepared for class and arriving on time
 - a. allowing adequate time to complete assignments
 - b. asking for help when it is needed
 - c. caring about the quality of one's work
3. learning from rather than punishing oneself for one's mistakes

B. Respect for others entails:

1. listening and being present when another is talking in class or performing
2. finding ways to understand, appreciate, and acknowledge the unique talents of each person in the school
3. increasing one's awareness of how one's particular behavior is affecting others and their activities, including how one's participation in class affects the learning of other students
4. using language and physical actions which are not intrusive or offensive
5. being sensitive to the needs of others and appreciating personal and cultural/religious differences
6. avoiding bullying of any kind, including verbal assaults, culturally insensitive remarks, unwanted physical contact, and any other action that belittles another student or makes him or her feel unsafe
6. being curious rather than defensive when one's ideas or views are challenged
7. sharing in set up and cleanup activities
8. helping others maintain the school's mission

C. Respect for the environment entails:

1. taking care of the physical environment
 - a. keeping the school room and grounds clean
 - b. thinking of ways to enhance the beauty and usefulness of our space
2. initiating projects related to the mission of the school
3. maintaining behavior that reflects positively on the school's mission and vision
 - a. behaving in a manner that is a credit to NPA when on field trips or other off-campus activities
 - b. remaining at the school site during school hours unless prior arrangements have been made with your school and parents

If the Code of Conduct outlined above is followed there should never be a need for disciplinary action. In the event of a breach of the Code of Conduct, however, a teacher or administrator may recommend such action.

As long as a student is enrolled in NPA it is understood that the student agrees to conduct himself or herself in accordance with the laws of California at all times. This agreement to conduct oneself in accordance with the laws of California includes, but is not limited to, laws pertaining to the use, possession, transportation, sale, and cultivation of illegal substances. Any breach of the Code of Conduct, including any violation of the laws of California, can constitute cause for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary and Academic Probation

At the discretion of a teacher or administrator, a student may be placed on probation for persistent or serious violations of the Code of Conduct. If, after having been placed on probation, the student continues to commit serious violations of the Code of Conduct, a teacher or administrator may recommend the initiation of the suspension/expulsion process. If the student ceases to commit the violation(s) in question, the probation status will be removed the following semester.

The Suspension/Expulsion Process

For serious violations of the Code of Conduct, the suspension/expulsion process may be initiated by a teacher or administrator without first placing the student on probation. Once initiated, each step (1-3 below) of the suspension/expulsion process must be approved by the Site Director or Head of School. The Site Director or Head of School may stop the process at any time.

The suspension/expulsion process is as follows:

1. Student behavior causes the Site Administrator or Head of School to initiate suspension for a day
 - a. Teacher contacts parent by phone or in person and documents incident or behavior
 - b. Teacher delineates and documents needed changes in behavior
 - c. Parent meets with teacher and Site Director together to discuss student's status
 - d. If requested by any party a staff committee will be convened to review the incident. Parent may attend the review process.

2. Student repeats behavior--consequence is suspension for one to three days. This step may occur one or more times before moving to step three.
 - a. A joint meeting with parent, teacher, and Site Director seeking positive solutions to ongoing problem with clear delineation of needed changes and timetable for changes
 - b. Student may be present at part of meeting by request of teacher or parent
 - c. Parent and student will be informed if expulsion is a possible consequence for continued behavior that is incompatible with basic student responsibilities

3. Student is recommended for expulsion
 - a. Recommendation must be approved by the Head of School
 - b. May be a result of the failure of steps one and two with prior warning of expulsion
 - c. May result, with no "warning", from extreme violation of student responsibilities
 - d. School sends written notice of the facts, allegations, and student/parent rights to the parent or caregiver regarding the offense
 - e. The Board of Directors holds a hearing to determine if the case merits expulsion
 - f. At the conclusion of the hearing, the student will either be expelled or offered reinstatement, as appropriate

The suspension/expulsion process will be amended as required by law to protect the rights of students with an educational plan team if a suspension lasts beyond ten days or in the event that expulsion is recommended.