



## Independence Classical Academy 2024-25 Student Code of Conduct

*Aimed at Seeking the Truth, Goodness, & Beauty in all things*

### Policy SE 10.0 - Discipline

Independence Classical Academy has the following disciplinary goals:

- 1) Provide a secure and calm learning environment in which ***all*** students can focus on their work with as little distraction as possible.
- 2) Treat all students equitably, fairly, and with respect.
- 3) Teach students the importance of their own character.

**As our motto states, ICA is an institution where “*teachers can teach, and students will learn.*” Therefore, any departure from proper decorum, resulting in the disruption of teaching and learning is subject to disciplinary action.**

For the purposes of discipline, the following terms are defined as:

- “Habitual” meaning three or more times within a semester.
- “Continuous” meaning repetitive, after being instructed to do otherwise or after being redirected at least once.
- “Minor” meaning it constitutes a disrespect for or disruption of self but not authority or others.
- “Major” meaning it constitutes a flagrant disrespect for or disruption of others, the learning environment, or authority.
- “Dismissal” meaning the removal from the ICA program (students will be referred to student assignment for their zoned school, or may choose to enroll in private, another charter, virtual, or home school programs without limitation).
- “Expulsion” meaning a referral to the sponsor for expulsion from all St. Lucie County public schools.

#### Disciplinary Action

Students will be verbally corrected for minor instances of poor behavior. If the behavior is repetitive or serious, they will receive a behavioral incident report (BIR), which is recorded into the skyward system.

Students may receive detention and/or work detail because of classroom management/discipline due to failure to meet expectations for minor incidents. Detention and/or work detail will occur during lunch, resulting in the loss of social time. Detention takes precedence over any extracurricular activity.

For habitual or more serious disruptions the student and parent will be required to attend a mandatory conference and may be in jeopardy of forfeiting their seat at ICA.

***In addition to the forfeiture of choice seating at ICA for failing to meet behavioral standards, students who accumulate 10 days or more of non-attendance, are highly likely to fail the term because of academic learning loss, therefore the attendance requirement of 170 out of 180 days is incorporated into the Student Code of Conduct, as it is an expectation. Please see the attendance policy, which clarifies minimum requirements.***

## Policy SE 10.1 - Discipline Matrix

The following matrix has been established and will constitute a basis for disciplinary action as it relates to our levels of infraction. ICA intends to establish a standard of decorum both on campus, at school events and activities, and in the classroom that allows **every** student to meet our academic expectations. Proper decorum in the classroom by **all** students will lead to a setting that promotes teaching and learning. A virtuous environment is sought by all who apply at this institution, and as a school of choice, our code of conduct is agreed to by accepting a seat at our institution, therefore the following actions will not be tolerated:

LEVEL 1 OFFENSE	LEVEL 2 OFFENSE	LEVEL 3 OFFENSE	LEVEL 4 OFFENSE
Chewing gum	Habitual Level 1 offenses	Habitual Level 2 offenses	Habitual Level 3 offenses
Dress code violation	Cheating or Plagiarism in addition to discipline, will warrant a zero on assignment/project/test.	Major offenses of blatant disrespect	Possession of weapons, drugs (controlled or prescription), alcohol, vapes, nicotine, or other drug or weapon-related contraband
Minor verbal disruptions (talking out of turn)	Giving false or misleading information	Theft	
Noncompliance with directions	Misuse of electronic devices in accordance with school policy	Any vandalism of school property greater than \$100.00 but less than \$1,000.00	Major destruction of property exceeding \$1,000.00
Failure to work diligently	Minor vandalism of property of less than \$100.00	Open defiance of school policy	Tampering with school safety or security equipment
Minor offenses of disrespect	Minor incidents of profanity/vulgarity and or obscenity	Fighting	Threats or actual acts of intimidation, bullying, or racially inciting statements
Spraying perfumes/body sprays in classroom	Out of area		
Level 1 offenses are classroom management offences and warrant a BIR and parent contact.	Level 2 offenses <b>will</b> warrant a disciplinary action by the administration.	Level 3 offenses warrant dismissal from ICA.	Level 4 offenses warrant dismissal from ICA and potential expulsion by SLCSB.

## Policy SE 11.0 - Suspension

The School Administration has the authority to suspend students as appropriate. Suspensions last from one to ten days depending on the severity of the infraction, academic standing, and discipline history of the student. All suspensions will require a parent conference upon return to school. A conference will occur before the student is readmitted to class and expectations of the student moving forward will be clarified by all parties in the best interest of success, as part of our discipline matrix.

The ICA Board hereby determines that a student may be declared habitually disruptive after being suspended for 10 cumulative days in one year for causing a material and substantial disruption in the class, on school grounds, on school vehicles, or at school activities or events because of behavior that was initiated, willful and overt on the part of

the student, and the suspensions were made for:

- Continual, willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property (to include trashing restrooms, littering, and graffiti).
- Behavior on or off school property, which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel.
- Serious violations in a school building or on school property.
- Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other students, including but not limited to habitual violations of technology, dress code, and school environment (SE) policies.
- Infractions involving the touching or harming of another person with intent. It is never appropriate to touch another student or adult in any manner for any reason. As part of our "zero tolerance" policy and expectations for a virtuous environment of self-governance and personal responsibility, hands on altercation will result in an automatic 5 to 10-day suspension per the discipline matrix.

ICA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and has adopted the St. Lucie County anti-bullying policy as part of our code of conduct, effective October 2020. Bullying, whether physical, verbal, emotional, or cyber, will NOT be tolerated at ICA. A request to St. Lucie County Public School for expulsion\* **will** be mandatory for the following violations with no exceptions:

- Carrying, bringing, using, or possessing a dangerous weapon, as determined by Independence Classical Academy.
- Sale or distribution of a drug or controlled substance.
- The commission of an act which, if committed by an adult, would be considered a felony act.

When a student is considered a habitually disruptive student by Independence Classical Academy, or commits an egregious act, ICA may request the St. Lucie County School District Board of Education to expel\* the student from school.

**\*St. Lucie County School District is the sole arbiter of expulsions. Independence Classical Academy may only recommend expulsion of a student to St. Lucie County School District. The expulsion process and proceedings will follow all St. Lucie County School policies that apply. When students are expelled, they are expelled from the St. Lucie School district, which includes ICA.**

### **Policy SE 12.0 - Plagiarism**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any subject. Student's progress academically only by receiving comments and corrections on work they turn in and by taking these comments and corrections to heart to improve their performance. The entire system of assessment rests on the assumption that the work a student turns in is his own. Plagiarism compromises this system, is unfair to other students in the class who do their own work and constitutes a form of theft of others' ideas and labor. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another's ideas or words and present them as one's own. An instance of plagiarism can be as long as a term paper or as short as a sentence. Simply rephrasing an author's words can also constitute plagiarism. The words of authors can only be used when properly quoted and cited. Teachers will provide the guidelines of acceptable citation. When in doubt, the student has the responsibility to ask how an author should be used in an assignment. Whenever a student has been caught plagiarizing, the following process will be followed.

1. The teacher will keep a copy of the student's assignment and, whenever possible, a copy of the plagiarized work. The teacher will also write a brief description of the instance of the plagiarism. These materials will be placed in the student's permanent record.
2. The teacher will inform the administration of the plagiarism.
3. Either the teacher or the administrator will inform the student's parent of the plagiarism.
4. The student will receive a zero on the assignment if it is the first offense.
5. For a second offense, the student will fail the entire course, and further disciplinary action, to include suspension or expulsion, may be instituted.

A disciplinary referral will be issued if plagiarism has occurred. Students caught plagiarizing will be ineligible for any awards or honors, regardless of overall academic outcomes.

### **Policy SE 13.0 - Cheating**

Like plagiarism, cheating will not be tolerated by any teacher in any subject. Cheating occurs when a student uses someone else's work or a prohibited source of information to gain an unfair advantage on a test or an assignment and to avoid doing his own work. Cheating comes in many forms. One student copying off another, a student using a "cheat sheet" to answer questions on a test, and a student trying to pass off another student's work as his own are examples of cheating. Whenever a teacher suspects two students of cheating, he should confront the students individually before speaking to them together. Otherwise, the same process outlined for plagiarism should be followed for instances of cheating. A student who allows others to copy his/her work without instruction will also be held accountable in the same fashion.

A disciplinary referral will be issued if cheating has occurred. Students caught cheating will be ineligible for any academic awards or honors, regardless of performance in other areas.

### **Policy SE 14.0 - Behavioral**

Students are expected to be always polite and attentive. Any other behavior is disruptive and will be cause for disciplinary action. Students should enter the building prepared to learn and enter every classroom quietly, respectfully, and prepared to engage in the lessons of the day. Students should respect adults, be reserved in their manners and kind in both words and deeds,

#### Classroom

Teachers have the authority to set their specific classroom rules and procedures within the parameters of the Independence Classical Academy handbook, including but not limited to hall pass policies, restroom policies, seating policies, and other classroom management policies-which are at the discretion of the faculty. Final decision with behavioral policy rests with the School Administration. Decisions by school administration may be appealed to the Governing Board, whose decision is final, according to the grievance policy set forth in this handbook.

Students should listen when others are talking and not interrupt, speak courteously and respectfully, follow directions, keep one's body and objects to oneself, and not disturb others. ICA scholars are expected to respond to adults on campus using sir or ma'am out of respect for their position of authority.

When called upon in class, a student shall stand, push in his or her chair, respond, and return to their seats upon completion of the conversation. Students should always be attentive to the teacher and/or student speaker.

Students should spend the final minutes of each class period/day inspecting their personal learning areas and cleaning up after themselves to leave the classroom how they found it.

#### Campus

Behavioral expectations apply whenever the student is on our campus, including before school, during recess, and after school.

In the hallways, students are expected to walk quietly and orderly. During lunchtime students are expected to act calmly and quietly while they enjoy their meals and relax. All students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. At ICA, students who make extraordinary messes in the cafeteria, restroom, hallways, or other campus locations WILL be required to stay afterwards and clean up their OWN mess. This time is considered disciplinary in nature and any work missed will be ineligible for make-up work.

Parents/Guardians of students caught destroying property of ICA will receive an invoice for the repair and/or replacement of such damage. Any students with invoices not paid by the end of the year will not receive their final report card and/or schedule/class assignment for the following year.

## **Policy SE 15.0 - Student Network Use**

Independence Classical Academy recognizes the value of a network and internet access as a resource. We also recognize the need of supervision to protect our students. It is our goal to provide these services in as safe an environment as possible. Network access is a privilege, and all students are expected to practice proper and ethical use of these systems.

The use of these systems is monitored, without an expectation of privacy, and subject to administrative and/or law enforcement review at any time. It is intended that these resources will be used to pursue intellectual activities in support of research and education where appropriate. Student emails are created by ICA and are also subject to review by the above entities at any time.

Independence Classical Academy does not assume responsibility for system failures that could result in the loss of data. Middle School research students should use personal flash drives to save work in class.

### *Electronic mail and social media*

Students are not allowed unsupervised access to, or the use of personal electronic mail or social media accounts from school networks. Students will have school-generated email accounts that are monitored.

### *Etiquette and Personal Security*

During supervised classroom activities on the network, students are expected to observe the same standards of behavior as they do in the classroom.

- Be polite and courteous.
- Never reveal any personal information. This includes addresses, phone numbers, passwords, and credit card numbers.
- Do not reveal addresses, phone numbers, passwords, of any other student or member of the staff.

## **Policy SE 16.0 - Electronic Device Policy**

Electronic devices must be powered off and may not be used during the academic school day, including drop-off and pick-up. This includes but is not limited to laptops, portable audio devices, head/earphones, hand-held video games, smart watches, and cell phones. Exceptions will be made for necessary medical devices and at the principal's discretion. Students in need have full access to the use of phones for the purpose of communicating with parents in the front office and this privilege, while not permitted to be abused, will never be withheld from a student. Classical education places an emphasis on knowledge-centered learning and the importance of digital devices are not necessary in carrying out that mission. ICA will very clearly indicate the significance and seriousness of this policy at all orientations, open houses, and town hall meetings. The policy will be listed on our website as well as in this handbook.

Any student who is using a phone or other electronic device during the day will have that device confiscated until the end of the day. Parents will be required to collect the device and sign a form to acknowledge the consequences for such confiscation. If there is reason to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation, the device may be powered on and searched by school administration or school security.

Students who break this rule will be subject to disciplinary action. Once a device has been taken up, the following procedure will be used to return the device:

1st Confiscation: The device will be held until the end of the school day and can be picked up by the student or parent when school is dismissed.

2nd Confiscation: Will warrant detention. The device will be held until the end of the day and can be picked up only by a parent who will be required to sign for the device.

3rd Confiscation: The device can be picked up after school has been dismissed and will warrant a minimum of 1-day

suspension, depending on student standing, according to the discipline policy.

4th Confiscation: The device can be picked up after school has been dismissed and will warrant additional disciplinary action according to the discipline policy, including potential dismissal.

Independence Classical Academy is not responsible for the damage, loss, or theft of these items. It is important for families to remember ICA is a school of choice, and in choosing this learning environment for your student, you acknowledge our belief that passive learning has no place in school.



This policy was approved by the governing body at a regularly scheduled, publicly held meeting with an established quorum on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. SJH