

## SIGNATURE SCHOOL GUIDELINES & RULES

2025-2026

Signature School seeks to promote a safe learning environment for all students. Students and parents are responsible for knowing and observing the guidelines and rules which govern Signature School. Any one or combination of the following actions may be used in order to maintain discipline in school: parent conference, counseling, restriction of extracurricular activities, suspension of privileges, suspension from class, suspension from school, expulsion from school, referral to juvenile court, suspension from the bus, or other reasonable disciplinary action which is left to the discretion of the faculty and Executive Director.

Signature School operates with an open campus. Parents and guardians make the final decision for their child to attend Signature with the knowledge that our campus is open and that their child has the responsibility to follow all school rules.

Signature School may, at its discretion and consistent with applicable law, report any disciplinary action to colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions as well as other legitimate organizations where a student may seek admission or with which a student wishes to associate.

### MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE

Recognizing that the behavior of some students may be so disruptive that it interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school, Signature School may find it necessary to remove a student from the school. In this event and in accordance with the provisions of **Indiana Code 20-33-8**, the Signature School Board of Directors authorizes administrators and staff members to take the following actions:

1. **REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR ACTIVITY-TEACHER**

School personnel may take whatever action that is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent an interference with an educational function that the individual supervises, including removal of a student from a classroom or activity.

2. **SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The school executive director (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of time of up to ten (10) school days. Students are not allowed on Signature School property while suspended and may not attend any activity sponsored by Signature School.

3. **EXPULSION**

In accordance with the due process procedures defined in statute, a student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester, with the exception of a violation of **the weapons rule (RULE 2)** listed under the grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy which will result in a one year expulsion for any of the grounds listed in the Indiana code. Expelled students are not allowed on Signature School property and may not attend any activity sponsored by Signature School.

**\*\*A VIOLATION, OR REPEATED VIOLATION, OF ANY SCHOOL RULE IS GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION, WHICH MAY INCLUDE SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION\*\***

## GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

### IC 20-33-8-14

#### Sec. 14: Grounds for suspension or expulsion.

(a) The following are the grounds for student suspension or expulsion, subject to the procedural requirements of this chapter and as stated by the School rules:

- (1) Student misconduct.
- (2) Substantial disobedience.

(b) The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in subsection (a) apply when a student is:

- (1) on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- (2) off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- (3) traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.17.

### IC 20-33-8-15

#### Sec. 15: Unlawful activity by student

In addition to the grounds specified [above], a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

- (1) the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
- (2) the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property;

including an unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.17.

### RULE 1. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

#### A. Alcohol

Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of alcohol is prohibited. Any substance which is represented to be alcohol is prohibited.

(IDOE Code 01)

#### B. Drugs

Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any drug not used in accordance with a doctor's order is prohibited. Any substance/chemical which is represented to be or looks like drugs/paraphernalia, or is not used for its intended purpose, is also prohibited. Students shall surrender any prescription or non-prescription drugs in the original container to Ms. Cirino or Ms. Libbey upon arrival at school. (IDOE Code 02)

C. Tobacco

Possessing, using, and/or transmitting tobacco or tobacco products is prohibited. Use of tobacco shall include all uses of tobacco, including cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff, or any other matter of substance that contains tobacco, as well as electronic, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes. (IDOE Code 07).

**RULE 2. WEAPONS**

- A. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearms, deadly weapons, destructive devices, or dangerous instruments, as defined in Indiana Codes 20-33-8-16 and 35-47-5-2.5, on school property. Look-alike weapons of any kind are also prohibited. (IDOE Codes 03-06).
- B. The penalty for possession of a firearm, deadly weapons, or destructive devices is expulsion for one (1) calendar year.
- C. The Executive Director shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

**RULE 3. INTIMIDATION, BULLYING, AND HARASSMENT**

- A. No student shall intimidate, bully, harass, or threaten other students or school personnel in any form or manner as defined by Indiana Codes 35-45-2 and 20-33-8-.02. (IDOE Codes 13 and 10). Behaving in a way that is disrespectful towards others is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Signature School's Anti-bullying Policy/Policy Prohibiting Bullying outlines the definition of bullying, investigation procedures, reporting, and response.

B. Bullying

1. Bullying committed by students toward other students is strictly prohibited. Engaging in bullying conduct described in this rule by use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, computer network, or cellular telephone or other wireless or cellular communication device, is also prohibited.
2. For purposes of this rule, bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that
  - places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
  - has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
  - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
  - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
3. This rule may be applied regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when a student committing bullying behavior and the targeted student attend a school within the school corporation

and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of other students to a safe and peaceful learning environment.

4. Any student or parent who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this rule or any student who feels he/she has been bullied in violation of this rule should immediately report the conduct to the Academic Services Advisor or Executive Director who has responsibility for all investigations of student misconduct including bullying. A student or parent may also report the conduct to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the Academic Services Advisor or Executive Director. This report may be made anonymously.
5. The Academic Services Advisor or Executive Director shall investigate immediately all reports of bullying made pursuant to the provisions of this rule. Such investigations must include any action or appropriate responses that may be taken immediately to address the bullying conduct wherever it takes place. The parents of the alleged perpetrator and the targeted student(s) shall be notified of the reported bullying incidents before the end of the next school day of the report of such incidents and shall be notified the school is investigating the reported bullying incidents before the end of the next school day of the report of such incidents.
6. The parents of the alleged perpetrator and the targeted student(s) shall be notified of the reported bullying incidents before the end of the next school day of the report of such incidents and shall be notified the school is investigating the reported bullying incidents before the end of the next school day of the report of such incidents.
7. The school shall report to the alleged perpetrator and the targeted student(s) on a regular, periodic basis of the progress and the findings of the investigation and of any remedial action that has been taken. During the investigation, the school's priority will be the safety of the victim.
8. The parents of the alleged perpetrator and the targeted student(s) shall be notified of the conclusions of the reported bullying investigations before the end of the next school day after the conclusions of the investigations.
9. The Academic Services Advisor or Executive Director will be responsible for working with the school counselors and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the Academic Services Advisor or Executive Director and school counselors will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief. Such determination should be made as soon as possible and once this determination is made, the report should be made immediately to law enforcement.
10. False reporting of bullying conduct as defined in this rule by a student shall be considered a violation of this rule and will result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions if the investigation of the report finds it to be false.
11. A violation of this rule prohibiting bullying may result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanction, including suspension and/or expulsion.
12. Failure by a school employee who has a responsibility to report bullying or investigate bullying or any other duty under this rule to carry out such responsibility or duty will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment with the school corporation.

13. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the bullying.
14. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying.

C. Students are prohibited from engaging in conduct, including continuous or intentional noise making, that significantly interferes with the ability of a teacher or other school personnel to conduct the education function under their supervision.

D. Students are also prohibited from violating or repeatedly violating rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function.

E. No Student shall engage in any form of written, verbal or nonverbal harassment, including relating to a student's disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, race, and/or religion.

F. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function is also prohibited.

#### **RULE 4. THEFT, DAMAGE, OR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY**

- A. Theft of school or personal property is prohibited. Possession of stolen property is also prohibited. (IDOE Code 10).
- B. Students are prohibited from writing, damaging or defacing desks, walls, books, or other school property. Students shall litter on school property.
- C. Students shall not post advertisements or other similar materials in the school without permission of an administrator.
- D. Trespassing on school property is prohibited.

#### **RULE 5. ASSAULT, FIGHTING, THREAT**

- A. Fighting is prohibited. (IDOE Code 11).
- B. Battery as defined by I.C. 35-42-2-1 is prohibited. (IDOE Code 12).
- C. Verbal aggression and profanity are prohibited. (IDOE Code 14).
- D. Forming a group that associates closely, such as a group engaging in antisocial, delinquent and/or criminal behavior is forbidden. Use of signals related to membership in groups is prohibited. Writing gang signs or symbols on your person at school is prohibited. Gang-related tattoos are also prohibited. (IDOE Code 10).

## **RULE 6. DEFIANCE**

Defiant behavior is prohibited. Defiance is defined as failing to comply with directions of a teacher or other school personnel when the student is properly under their supervision and/or the behavior constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function. (IDOE Code 15).

## **RULE 7. UNAUTHORIZED ITEMS**

Students shall not bring equipment or other objects to school or school activities that may be considered disruptive and/or are being used in the educational process without permission from school personnel. (IDOE Code 10).

## **RULE 8. VIOLATION OF STATE/FEDERAL LAW**

Engaging in activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana or the federal government is prohibited. (IDOE Code 10).

## **RULE 9. SCHOOL RULES**

Walkway Safety. Students are advised to remain attentive and cautious while on the walkway. No student is permitted on the walkway alone. Students must always travel in groups or pairs.

- A. Wireless Communication Devices. The use of any wireless, web-enabled device capable of allowing voice/messaging/data communication between two (2) or more parties e.g. cellular telephones, school-owned or personal computing devices, gaming devices, etc. (including connected accessories) is prohibited during instructional time, including passing periods. The school assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damage, misuse, or unauthorized use of a student's wireless communication device brought onto school property.
- B. Cell phones and all other wireless communication devices must be turned off and are not permitted inside the main building, Koch Center, and/or Victory from 8:30 a.m. until 3:15 p.m., including during passing periods.
  - 1. Cell phones may be used outside during lunch.
  - 2. Cell phones or other wireless communication devices may not be used in any manner that may cause disruption to the educational environment.
  - 3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, cell phone usage is permitted when a student has received specific permission from a teacher for educational purposes in the class of that teacher and only during the time while that specific permission is in effect, or in the event of an emergency to manage a student's health care, or otherwise permitted by law under a written program of instruction.
- C. Students shall adhere to health and safety practices and all other school rules during the school day, at school activities, and during transportation to and from school or school-sponsored activities. Students shall follow traffic signals when crossing the street.
- D. Students shall not cheat or make misrepresentations, including forging, misuse of any document, misuse of technology, excuse, official forms or records (e.g., Reason for Absence form), assignments, homework, false telephone calls, text messaging, etc. Students shall abide by the Signature School Honor Code at all times.

- E. Creating, writing or distributing newspapers, bulletins, newsletters, websites, social media accounts, or postings that use the Signature name or logo without first obtaining written permission from the Executive Director is prohibited.
- F. Blogs and websites. Students shall not create or assist in creating a blog, website, social media account, post, or other similar form of communication using the Signature name as part of its title to state or imply that such is sponsored or sanctioned by Signature.
- G. Students shall refrain from any action that could result in the malfunction of the elevator, including pushing multiple buttons simultaneously and jumping up and down. Students are reminded to be respectful of others when entering or exiting the elevators. Except in cases of emergency, the number of individuals on the elevators should not exceed 12.
- H. Matches and/or lighters are prohibited.
- I. The selling of items for fundraising purposes must be approved by the Executive Director.
- J. Students who bring electronic devices must observe Signature's Acceptable Use Policy. Information on devices confiscated by the school is subject to review by the police/liaison officer.
- K. Students shall maintain the cleanliness and overall appearance of the building and shall not bring in food or drinks in open containers. Eating or drinking in a hallway or elevator is also prohibited.
- L. Students shall not block hallways, elevators, or stairwells, including with backpacks or bookbags.
- M. Students shall not leave backpacks, bookbags, or other similar carry items in a lobby, the first floor, or outside in front of the school.
- N. Student shall not engage in any public display of affection, including kissing, hugging, holding hands, or other intimate gesture.
- O. Students shall not disseminate any false statement and information about a student or Signature School employee.
- P. The use of non-school-issued headphones is prohibited at all times, including during lunch.

#### **RULE 10. DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT PROHIBITED**

It is the policy of Signature School to maintain a learning and working environment free from harassment and discrimination, including on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, limited English proficiency, or any other reason protected by law.

It shall be a violation for any employee, student, or agent of Signature School to harass another employee, student, or agent through verbal or nonverbal conduct. This policy covers non-employees and volunteers who participate in school sponsored activities subject to control of school authorities.

- A. Students shall not exhibit conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another student's academic development or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

- B. Students shall not make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or exhibit other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- C. Students shall not engage in subtle forms of harassment, including unwelcome cartoons, caricatures, or jokes based on race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, limited English proficiency, or any other reason protected by law. Likewise, a student shall not engage in unwelcome, deliberate physical contact.
- D. A student shall not engage in verbal or physical abuse, racial harassment, sexual harassment, use indecent language, make indecent gestures, or make threats of violence to other students or school employees.

#### **RULE 11. ATTENDANCE (I.C. 20-33-2)**

##### **Attendance Limits:**

If a student accumulates ten unexcused absences from school during a semester, the student and a parent will be referred to the Executive Director or designee for appropriate action. Absences due to a disciplinary suspension will not count toward the ten-day limit.

##### **A. ABSENCES AND PROCEDURES**

1. Attendance herein shall mean to be physically present on a regular school day, during regular school hours, via Virtual Instruction, Remote Instruction, in a school, or at another location where the school's educational program in which the student is enrolled is being conducted.
2. Student absences shall be reported to the school by a parent/guardian before 9:30 AM on the day of an absence.
3. Absences will count in the determination of loss of credits.
4. Unexcused absences, if excessive, can lead to legal action under the compulsory school attendance law. I.C. 20-33-2, *et seq.*
5. A suspension or expulsion from another educational institution will apply to and be upheld by Signature School.
6. Vacations during school time are generally counted as unexcused absences and can lead to the loss of the student's credit(s). In Indiana, school attendance is mandatory, and schools cannot give permission for absence beyond the law. Parents/guardians are advised to plan family activities when school is not in session.
7. Student absences for activities other than those listed in this Rule will be counted as unexcused absences unless deemed otherwise by the Executive Director. Requests for such absences must be submitted in advance and in writing to the Executive Director.
8. Students who find it necessary to leave school before the end of the school day must receive approval from the proper school authority and sign out in the school office.
9. Students shall attend all scheduled classes and activities to which they are assigned during the school day unless properly excused by school authority.

10. When absent from school, each student is responsible for requesting make-up work, including tests, by following the procedures set forth by the school. **Make-up work will not be allowed** for students who are truant.
11. If a student has been suspended, the student should contact the teacher and request makeup work for the time absent. A student who does not request the work by the end of the third day after return will forfeit his/her rights to make up the work.
12. In order to participate in extra-curricular activities, the student must be in attendance in ALL classes on the day of the activity, unless excused by the Executive Director. Students who are suspended from school may not practice or participate in extracurricular activities.
13. Students attending Signature School must be legal residents of the state of Indiana.

#### **B. LATES (TARDIES) TO SCHOOL/CLASS**

1. A student will be considered late when he/she is not in his/her assigned class at the designated time of the class.
2. Three lates to a class will equal one unexcused absence to that class.
3. Students who report to school late in the morning shall sign in at the office. The student is responsible for providing documentation to excuse the absence.

#### **C. EXEMPT ABSENCES**

The following absences, subject to receipt of proper verification documentation, are considered exceptions to the state's mandatory attendance requirement and Students will not be counted absent:

1. School-approved field trip;
2. Service as a page or an honoree of the Indiana General Assembly (I.C. 20-33-2-14);
3. A high school student serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party on the date of each general, city or town special, and primary election at which the student works. Prior to the date of the election, the student must submit a document signed by one of the student's parents or guardians giving permission to participate in the election provided in this section, and the student must verify to school authorities the performance of services by submitting document signed by the candidate, political party chairman, campaign manager, or precinct officer. The document must describe generally the duties of the student on the date of the election. (I.C. 20-33-2-15)
4. A student subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding (I.C. 20-33-2-16);
5. A student ordered to active duty with the Indiana Guard for not more than ten days in a school year (I.C. 20-33-2-17);
6. A student with an Approved Educationally Related Non-Classroom Activity (e.g., science fair) (I.C. 20-33-2-17.5); or
7. A Student participating in FFA or 4-H (I.C. 20-33-2-17.8).

#### **D. EXCUSED ABSENCES**

The following absences, subject to receipt of proper verification documents, shall be excused and excluded from identifying habitual truancy:

1. Funeral/Bereavement;
2. Verified medical or dental appointment (written medical verification of illness and proof of medical visit must be provided within three school days of the date the student returns to school);
3. Chronic illness (school form must be filled out by doctor each year);
4. Religious holidays/activities (must be verified by the parent/guardian and should be received and approved by the administrator one week in advance of the event);
5. Legal appointment (written legal verification must be provided); and
6. Such other good cause acceptable by the Executive Director or as permitted by law.

Failure to submit the appropriate documentation or written excuse for the absences listed above within three days of the absence may result in the absence counting toward identifying habitual truancy.

#### **E. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

The Student is absent and not excused or exempt. All absences not designated as Excused shall be considered Unexcused absences, including absences without proper documentation or not approved in advance.

#### **F. TRUANCY**

Truancy is considered absence (whether all day or for a single period of the day) when the absence is initiated by the student without parental consent under circumstances not covered by law or recognized by the school.

1. A student is truant when no just reason is presented to Signature School for the absence(s) within three days.
2. Make-up work is not permissible for students marked truant.
3. Habitual Truancy and Truancy Prevention.

A habitual truant is defined as a student having unexcused absences from school for more than ten (10) days of school in one (1) year. (I.C. 20-33-2-11).

- a. When a student is classified as habitually truant, a parent/guardian conference will be requested, and one or more of the following steps may be taken.
  - i. The parents/guardians may be notified that a doctor's written excuse will be required to excuse any further absences for the semester.
  - ii. Referring the student to the Vanderburgh County Prosecutor.
  - iii. Change of the course schedule including, but not limited to, withdrawal/withdraw fail from course(s).

- iv. Eligibility for extracurricular activities may be denied.
- v. Loss of privilege to attend field trips.
- vi. Placing a student on homebound instruction or modified schedule per doctor's request.

4. Students identified as habitual truants may be prohibited from receiving a driver's license or permit until age 18.

## **G. CHRONIC ABSENCE**

According to Indiana Code 20-18-2-2.4, chronically absent means missing ten percent (10%) or more of a school year for any reason. A student who has been designated as Chronically Absent may not be allowed to participate or continue to participate in extracurricular/co-curricular activities.

When a student is classified as chronically absent, a parent/guardian conference will be requested with one or more of the following steps taken:

1. The parents/guardians may be notified that a doctor's written excuse will be required to excuse any further absences for the semester.
2. Change of the course schedule including, but not limited to, withdrawal from course(s).
3. Eligibility for extracurricular activities and various programs may be denied.
4. Loss of privilege to attend field trips.
5. Placing a student on homebound instruction or modified schedule per doctor's request.

For the 2025-2026 school year, a student will not be suspended or expelled solely for being habitually truant (missing ten (10) or more unexcused absences in a school year) or being chronically absent (missing ten percent (10%) or more during a school year).

## **H. DOCUMENTATION OF ABSENCE/DENIAL OF CREDIT**

Each semester a student may be denied credit after the fifth unexcused absence from a class. Extensions may be provided to students who have written medical or dental excuses on file in the attendance office if the note is received within three days of the absence. Notes received after three school days may not be accepted. When a student is denied credit in three or more classes, he/she will be recommended for expulsion from school or referred to the prosecutor's office; or, if of legal age, will have the option to withdraw. All appeals should be directed to the Executive Director.

## **I. RESTRICTION ON LEAVING CAMPUS BUILDINGS**

Students shall not leave campus buildings between periods, except:

1. Students who are ill and have been excused by an administrator; and/or
2. Student with permission from an administrator.

Students shall use the exit by the front office at all times. Students leaving any campus building during the day must sign out with the main office.

## **RULE 12. SCHOOL BUILDING**

### **A. LUNCH**

1. Signature students have two options during lunch: (1) bring their lunch and eat at the Koch Center Commons, outside on the "Grassy Knoll" (on the Civic Center side of Signature School) or (2) in designated classrooms for appointments with teachers or faculty-supervised club meetings.
2. Students will be accompanied when dining at selected downtown restaurants.
3. Students will be provided a copy of the lunch procedures on the first day of school.
4. Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves at all times.
5. Students may not have lunch with non-Signature students.
6. Students are expected to comply with the Signature School Lunch Procedures.
7. Family members who have lunch with a student must sign in at the front desk in the office.

### **B. BOOK DAMAGE**

Students are responsible for maintaining books, equipment, materials, and/or items provided by Signature School in good condition. Students shall not damage or deface those items in any manner and may be charged for any lost, damaged, and/or unreturned item.

### **C. DRESS CODE**

1. Appropriate dress and personal grooming are required as a vital part of maintaining the educational environment. Modes of grooming or styles of attire that detract from the teaching/learning environment are prohibited. Extremes shall be avoided in all areas of dress and grooming, including body piercing. The building administrator and staff shall determine what is inappropriate. Students in violation of the dress code will be asked to correct the violation prior to returning to the classroom and could face further disciplinary action. (IDOE Code 15).
2. Students must recognize the necessity for health, safety, cleanliness, and modesty in their grooming and attire.
3. Apparel containing or suggestive of sex, drugs, alcohol, violence, or other vulgar or disruptive content (as determined by the Executive Director) is prohibited.
4. The following items are also prohibited: hoods, full or partial face masks (for non-health reasons), pajamas, house slippers, low-rise pants, baggy or sagging pants, revealing clothes, undergarments, swimming trunks, see-through or sheer garments, and other similar items.
5. Shorts or skirts shall be at least finger-tip length when arms are resting at the side of the body.
6. The wearing of low-cut tops/blouses and cut-off shirts should be avoided.

## **RULE 13. BUS TRANSPORT**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and school property. All school rules apply on the bus. Students shall follow rules of safety required for bus riders.

## **RULE 14. COMPUTERS**

All students will be provided a copy of Signature School's Acceptable Use Policy. To have access to Signature School computers, students and parents must sign the "Network User's Agreement" and return to the main office.

- A. Students shall not access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit materials, nor shall students transmit pornographic, obscene, abusive, or sexually explicit materials, or "stalk" or harass others.
- B. Students are prohibited from bullying, threatening, intimidating, or transmitting sexually explicit communication via electronic devices.
- C. Students shall not use the network to violate or attempt to violate local, state or federal law.
- D. Students shall not access the files, information, or software of the school or others without prior authorization.
- E. Students shall not vandalize, damage, disable or "hack" files, networks, software, profiles, and/or other electronic media and devices of others. Creation of a "virus" is considered vandalism.
- F. Students shall not upload, download, or otherwise use copyrighted material or other intellectual property of others without prior authorization. Copyright violations can result in fines or imprisonment.
- G. Students shall not purchase goods or services through any online service.
- H. Computers and other electronic devices are to be used for educational and classroom purposes only. Students are prohibited from using computers, electronic devices, and/or the school network for entertainment purposes, including:
  - Gaming;
  - Streaming or downloading movies, television, and music;
  - Shopping;
  - Blogging; and/or
  - Unapproved social media use.

## **RULE 15. LEAVING SCHOOL WITHOUT PERMISSION**

Students shall not leave school during lunch without permission and may face suspension for doing so. Students are prohibited from leaving campus to access their vehicles without prior authorization.

## **RULE 16. SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Signature School may, upon reasonable cause, search student(s) and seize items to ensure the safety of all students.

- A. As used in this section, "reasonable cause" means circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to believe that the search of a particular person, place, or thing will lead to the discovery of evidence of a violation of school rules and guidelines, or anything that might present a danger of physical harm or illness.

- B. The administration or a teacher may search any storage area on school premises at any time.
- C. Student searches shall be conducted by the Executive Director or Executive Director's designee.
  - 1. Searches of the student shall be limited to:
    - a. Searches of the pockets of the student;
    - b. Any object in the possession of the student, including a purse, backpack, or electronic device; and/or
    - c. a "pat down" of the exterior clothing.
  - 2. Student searches involving removal of clothing other than shoes, socks, coat or jacket shall be referred to a law enforcement officer.
- D. Driving a motor vehicle to school is a privilege. The Executive Director or Executive Director's designee may search a motor vehicle on or near school property, or which has been driven to school or a school event.

### **POLICY AND PROHIBITION ON SMOKING**

The Signature School Board of Directors recognizes that the use of tobacco presents a health hazard that may result in serious consequences for both the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the Board.

For purposes of this policy, "use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including a cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff, or any other matter of substance that contains tobacco, as well as electronic, "vapor," or other substitute form of cigarettes.

In order to protect students and staff who choose not to use tobacco from an environment noxious to them, and because the Board cannot condone the use of tobacco, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco by professional staff members, students, and visitors in school buildings at all times. Such prohibition also applies on school grounds, on school buses, at any school-related event except at designated times and in designated areas.

It is the policy of the School Board to comply with the city and county smoking ordinance, which can be accessed from the link below.

<http://www.vanderburgh.org/auditor/codification/title8/8.24.html>

### **POLICY AND PROHIBITION ON THREATENING BEHAVIOR**

Signature School seeks to promote a safe environment for students and employees. Threatening behavior can harm and disrupt the School, its students, faculty, staff, volunteers and visitors (the "School Community"). Signature School prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the School Community.

Threatening behavior is prohibited. "Threatening behavior" means any statement, communication, conduct, or gesture, including, but not limited to, those in electronic and written form, directed toward any member of the School Community that causes a reasonable fear or concern about the possibility of physical harm to one or more persons in the School Community. A student can commit threatening behavior even if the person who is the object of the threat does not observe or receive it, so long as a reasonable person would interpret

the maker's statement, communication, conduct, or gesture as an expression of intent to physically harm. Threatening behavior is prohibited on and away from School-owned or leased property. For example, threatening behavior could occur during an out-of-town field trip or in an email, text, or social media.

## **POLICY AND REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

Signature School does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or limited English proficiency in its programs or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Law (I.C.22-9-1), Title IV and Title VII (Civil Rights Act of 1964), the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (Educational Amendments), the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act, and Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973). Questions concerning compliance should be directed to the Chief Engagement Officer at Signature School.

It is the policy of Signature School to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all Signature School operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, and any other unlawful basis, and encourages those within the Signature School community, as well as third parties who feel aggrieved, to seek assistance to rectify the problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

All reports and complaints of discrimination may be reported to the School's Executive Director/Title IX Coordinator, Jean Hitchcock, who may be contacted at either [jean.hitchcock@signature.edu](mailto:jean.hitchcock@signature.edu) or (812) 421-1820. Any report or complaint may also be made to any faculty and staff member. Faculty and staff contact information is provided at [www.signature.edu](http://www.signature.edu).

Reports will be reduced to writing by the Title IX Coordinator or their designee. The person making the report or complaint may be asked to review the document for accuracy and then sign and date it.

If the person making the report or complaint requests to remain anonymous, this request will be respected [although it will make it more difficult to look into the report] unless doing so will compromise the health and safety of the reporter or others in the school community. Likewise, a request that no investigation be made will be respected unless doing so will compromise the health or safety of the reporter or the school community.

The Title IX Coordinator or their designee will discuss Supportive Measures with the reporter. These are non-disciplinary services offered to assist this person and may include counseling, modification of course-related deadlines, or separation of those involved to maintain an appropriate educational setting.

An impartial investigator will be assigned to each report unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that, given the nature of the alleged discrimination, an informal resolution by the Title IX Coordinator will be pursued. Thereafter, unless informal resolution is selected, a prompt and reasonable investigation will commence. This investigation will include, but may not be limited to, an interview of the reporter, the person or persons reported about and other witnesses identified during the investigation who may have material information.

Depending on the severity of the alleged offense(s) the investigator may make a written report or report orally to the Title IX Coordinator. In either case, the Title IX Coordinator will consider all of the information provided

and notify the parties of the outcome of the investigation or informal procedure. In most circumstances this process will be completed in no more than thirty (30) days. If this timeline is not feasible, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the parties and establish a new deadline.

A copy of the School's Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures in its entirety may be obtained from the Office of the Executive Director.

#### **NOTICE OF ASBESTOS INSPECTION/TESTING**

Signature School is in compliance with federal regulation 40 CFR 763.85 covering asbestos Inspections and testing. Signature School has an asbestos management plan in place that is available to parents/guardians to view.

#### **NOTICE OF PEST CONTROL**

Signature School may on occasion use pesticides to control insects and pests. Parents/Guardians have the right to be notified of pesticide usage. If a parent/guardian wishes to be notified in advance of pesticide usage, he/she must notify Ms. Libbey in writing that he/she wishes to be placed on a notification list.

#### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) DISCLOSURE**

FERPA allows schools to disclose certain "directory" information without student or parental consent. This information could include a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. FERPA requires that parents and eligible students have the right to request the school NOT disclose this information. If any Signature School parents or eligible students wish to have directory information withheld during the 2025-2026 school year, they must notify the school's Executive Director by August 22, 2025. To see full FERPA information, go to:  
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpcos/ferpa/index.html>

#### **POLICY ON CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Signature School prohibits criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on Signature School property, on buses or other vehicles used to transport Signature students, and at school-sponsored functions. Signature prohibits reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnessed, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

#### **NOTICE OF RIGHTS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The following is a description of the rights granted by federal law to students with handicaps. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions.

You have the right to the following:

- Have your child take part in and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of his/her handicapping condition.
- Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
- Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.

- Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.
- Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided non-handicapped students.
- Have your child receive special education and related services if she/he is found to be eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and/or general education interventions/modifications outside of special education under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options.
- Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district.
- Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
- Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement.
- Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
- A response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
- Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing.
- Request mediation, grievance, or an impartial due process hearing or appeal related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement. The costs for these due process procedures will be borne by the School. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you. Requests for mediation should be made to the school Executive Director. Requests for grievance, hearing, or appeal should be made to the Executive Director.
- Request a review (appeal) of the hearing should you not prevail.
- Ask for payment of reasonable attorney fees if you are successful on your claim.

## **NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENTAL RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal\* to those provided to non-disabled students.

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who (a) has, (b) has a record of having, or (c) is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and performing manual tasks.

**Dual Eligibility:** Some students will be eligible for education services under both Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Students who are eligible under the IDEA have many specific rights that are not available to students who are eligible solely under Section 504.

\* Equal educational benefits and opportunities does not mean the "same" benefits and/or opportunities.

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. You have a right to be informed by the school district of your rights under Section 504. (The purpose of this Notice form is to advise you of those rights.) (34 CFR 104.32.)
2. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his/her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met. (34 CFR 104.33.)
3. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. (34 CFR 104.33.)
4. Your child has a right to placement in the least restrictive environment. (34 CFR 104.34.)
5. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. (34 CFR 104.34.)
6. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to an initial Section 504 placement and any subsequent significant change in placement. (34 CFR 104.35.)
7. Testing and other evaluation procedures must conform to the requirements (34 CFR 104.35) as to validation, administration, areas of evaluation, etc. Signature School shall consider information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, adaptive behavior, physical or medical reports, student grades, progress reports, parent observations, and anecdotal reports. (34 CFR 104.35.)
8. Placement decisions must be made by a group of persons (i.e., Student Intervention Team and/or Signature School 504 Committee), including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. (34 CFR 104.35.)
9. If eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, generally every three years. (34 CFR 104.36.)

10. You have the right to examine relevant records. (34 CFR 104.36.)
11. You have the right to notice prior to any action by Signature School in regard to the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. (34 CFR 104.36.)
12. You have a right to an impartial hearing with respect to Signature School's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. (34 CFR 104.36.)
13. If you wish to challenge the actions of Signature School's 504 Committee in regard to your child's state department of education's Section 504 compliance office. A hearing will be scheduled before an impartial hearing officer and you will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place for the hearing.
14. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer, you have a right to review of that decision by a court of competent jurisdiction. (34 CFR 104.36.)
15. On Section 504 matters other than your child's identification, evaluation, and placement, you have a right to file a discrimination complaint with the school administration, who will investigate the allegations to the extent warranted by the nature of the complaint in an effort to reach a prompt and equitable resolution.
16. You have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, contact the school's 504 Coordinator at: 812-421-1820.

*Signature School reserves the right to amend school rules based on the action of the Signature School Board or legislative mandate.*

***Pending approval by the Signature School Board of Directors on August 4, 2025.***