

Innovation High School
Student - Parent Handbook
2015-16 School Year

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The Renaissance Charter High School for
innovation

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Welcome

INNOVATION |inə'vāSHən|

· noun

The action or process of developing a new method, idea, or practice.

Our school motto is “Developing Leadership through Innovation.”

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Innovation High School! As a member of Innovation’s growing student body, you have the opportunity to be a pioneer and a leader while learning at Innovation. We are looking forward to getting to know every one of you and to supporting your continued growth as a student, innovator and member of our learning community.

Innovation’s mission is to develop leadership through innovation. Student-innovators achieve academic excellence by setting self-created goals within a three-tiered educational model of core classroom instruction, portfolio-based annual individual projects, and hands-on, experiential learning.

Our staff is excited to support you and your family in developing these goals and to help you meet our school-wide objectives, including graduation with a New York State Regents Diploma and acceptance into a college, university, career preparation program or other post-secondary option of your choice.

In this handbook you will find information about the school and the various programs that we offer. For most programs, another more detailed handbook exists. In this Student - Parent Handbook you will find brief descriptions of our programs and ways to request more information. We hope that this handbook helps you to take full advantage of the many programs that Innovation offers.

Please note that the information, policies, and programs described here will change from time to time. Any changes are effective immediately.

School Contact Information

For any questions about this handbook or other school matters, our contact information follows below:

Mailing Address

The Renaissance Charter HS for Innovation
410 E. 100th Street
New York, NY 10029

Phone: (212) 722-5871

Fax: (646) 430-8555

Web: www.innovationhighschool.org

Email: office@innovationhighschool.org

School Rules

Regular attendance, and arriving in school on time are keys to academic success. Innovation offers daily classes from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and a daily after-school program from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Innovation students are expected to be on time for school every day, to work hard to achieve their academic potential, and to respect themselves, their classmates and all Innovation staff.

We honor the hard work and strong efforts of students who have fulfilled their responsibilities. Accordingly, students will be eligible to earn the following privileges at Innovation:

1. Ability to participate in sports and partner programs.
2. Overnight College Practicums.
3. Participation in Enrichment Week Programs.
4. Ability to participate in afterschool programming, extracurricular and school social events.

Students come to Innovation to learn. Any disruption of the learning environment, including rude or inappropriate behavior toward staff or other students, will result in an immediate parent meeting and other disciplinary consequences. Ongoing disruption of the learning environment will result in additional disciplinary action, as needed.

Promotion & Graduation Requirements

To graduate in four years with a New York State Regents diploma, students must earn the following credits: Freshman - 11 credits, Sophomore - 22 credits, Juniors - 33 credits and Seniors - 44 credits.

Subject	Number of Credits Required
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English	8 credits (four years of English Language Arts courses)
Social Studies	8 credits (four credits of Global Studies, two credits of U.S. History, one credit of American Government, one credit of Economics)
Math	6 credits (including Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II/Trigonometry and elective Mathematics courses)
Science	6 credits (at least two in Life Science and two in Physical Science)
Foreign Language	2 credits (Spanish)
Physical Education	4 credits
Health	1 credit
The Arts	2 credits (includes Visual Arts, Drama and Music)
Other Electives	7 credits (includes CCR 101, 201, 301, and 401)
Total	44 credits

In addition to the 44 credits, all students must pass the following New York State Regents Examinations with a grade of 65 or higher:

- (1) English
 - (1) Global History
 - (1) US History
 - (1) Mathematics (Integrated Algebra, Geometry or Algebra II/Trig)
 - (1) Science (Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry or Physics)
- For more information, please contact the Teaching & Learning team at

learning@innovationhighschool.org

Student Identification Cards

Once issued, all Innovation students are required to carry their photo Student Identification Cards with them at all times and to display them, at any time, to any staff member who asks to see them. Students who are not where they are scheduled to be are in violation of the discipline code, which will result in disciplinary action.

Student ID Cards will be distributed in September by the Main Office. For additional questions about this or to get a replacement card you can contact the office at **212.722.5871** or office@innovationhighschool.org

Dress Code

Innovation students are not required to wear a uniform; however, clothes for school should be neat, clean, appropriate to the weather, and should not disrupt the educational environment as determined by the SDT Coordinator or another administrator.

- No bare shoulders, exposed cleavage, or exposed midriffs are allowed. Therefore, garments that are backless, strapless, see-through or partially see-through are unacceptable.
- Shorts and skirts must be of appropriate length, and loose-fitting pants must be secured with a belt at or above the hips.
- Footwear must be worn at all times and must be securely fastened. Coats are to be kept in lockers and may not be worn in class.
- T-shirts or other clothing items with content that is sexually, racially, or ethnically offensive are not allowed.
- Clothing that advertises or promotes gang-related activities, or any illegal activity is prohibited.
- Any clothing that is deemed inappropriate, too revealing or otherwise a

potential disruption to the learning environment must be covered up, removed or otherwise not worn by students.

Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will not be permitted to attend classes and will be sent to the Student Support Office. They may be required to change their clothes, put on additional clothing, or be picked up by their parent/guardian so they can change their clothes and return to school.

Discipline Procedures

Discipline at Innovation is a full school, student and family effort. It begins in the classroom with strong classroom management and is supported by the Student Support Team, Counseling staff, and the entire Innovation community.

The Student Discipline Team (SDT) replaces the role of the Dean found at many other schools. The SDT works to minimize disruptions in school, freeing students and staff to focus on learning. They do this by enforcing disciplinary consequences, and by using techniques such as the restorative justice program, conflict mediation protocols, and positive reinforcement to support student success.

Detention, suspension and, in extreme cases, expulsion, are also tools that the SDT uses when appropriate to promote a safe, positive and peaceful school environment.

A copy of the Student Code of Conduct may be found on Innovation's website. www.innovationhighschool.org. Simply click on the "Students and Parents Page" and navigate to the bottom of the page.

Drug & Alcohol Policy

Innovation is a drug and alcohol-free environment. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all students and staff. This policy applies to all students and visitors. Substances covered under this policy include alcohol, illegal drugs, inhalants, and prescription and over-the-counter drugs. A copy of this policy is available on Innovation's website (www.innovationhighschool.org) on the "Students and Parents" page.

Attendance Policy

Attending school **every day** is **vital** to student success. Our attendance policy promotes excellent student attendance, which leads directly to increased academic success.

Absences affect a student's grades, school performance and ability to be promoted from grade to grade. For these reasons, students with poor attendance records may be ineligible to participate in athletic activities, extracurricular activities, college and other school trips.

Our Attendance Coordinator meets with students and their families when students lose valuable instructional time due to unexcused absences and latenesses. During these meetings, attendance records and student progress reports are reviewed, and the academic consequences of excessive absences are explained. In addition, excessive absences may result in reports to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion.

For more information about attendance please contact our Attendance Coordinator, Sean McClenathan: sean.mcclenathan@innovationhighschool.org

Lunch & Food Policy

All students are permitted to leave the school grounds for lunch. However, this privilege may be revoked. **Behaviors that lead to the revocation of the off-campus lunch privilege include:**

1. Coming back from lunch late;
2. Attendance dropping below 90%;
3. Any Tier 3 behavior (including violence, bullying, theft, cutting, verbal, physical or verbal aggression and any disruption of the learning environment).
4. Teacher and/or SDT referral

Students MAY NOT bring food into any part of the building above the first floor, and MAY NOT bring food into any classrooms or hallways.

Students may not finish meals above the first floor and cafeteria. They must put the food away in their bag or throw it out. Students are not to bring glass bottles of any kind into the building. Violation of these rules will result in a parent notification, suspension of lunch privileges and detention. For more information on these policies contact the SDT at

SDT@innovationhighschool.org

School Nurse

There is a NYC Department of Health registered nurse present in our M099 building from the hours of 9am-3pm. Students who need to see the nurse must first go to Innovation's Main Office (Room 210) to receive a referral form. Innovation staff members are not permitted to dispense any medication to students - this function is reserved for the nurse. The M099 nurse is not an Innovation employee and any concerns or communication regarding the nurse should be made to the NYC Department of Health at **(917) 492-6953**.

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Program

The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation offers a four-year, full-time CCR class, which is unique in its depth and scope. Starting from the first day of high school, students learn about college, career options, and the relationship between the two. They also build research, writing, critical thinking, organization and public speaking skills. The goal of the CCR program is to provide Innovation's students with the knowledge and skills they need to manage their educational experience and set the foundation for lifelong learning.

For many children, the path from high school to a career and successful adult life is clear. Growing up in a "college-going culture," they are surrounded by adults who serve as models for them. The connection between academic achievement and success later in life is evident, and is deeply ingrained in the culture. For the students at Innovation, many of whom will be the first in their family to go to college, we are providing this "college-going culture" at our school to level the playing field.

We want our students to leave Innovation with as many career and education options on the table as possible. Our CCR program helps our students to see the connections between what education offers and the future careers they want to have. Students begin to make meaningful plans for their lives to come, starting in 9th grade.

For more information on the CCR program contact the CCR Team at CCR@innovationhighschool.org

AVID

Innovation has integrated the AVID (“Advancement Through Individual Determination”) program into its College and Career Readiness program to support school wide learning and performance for students in grades 9-12. The purpose of the AVID program is to restructure the teaching methods at Innovation to support open access to a rigorous and quality core curriculum. AVID helps to ensure that students graduate ready for a college or career experience of their choice. Each year, freshmen will have the opportunity to apply and interview for AVID. Please reach out to Tereena Somayya, AVID Coordinator and Counselor, for more information about this exciting program: tereena.somayya@innovationhighschool.org

LEAP (Learning, Engagement and Promotion)

LEAP is an academic pathway to help 11th and 12th graders who are falling behind in their graduation requirements, and are having trouble passing the Regents exams. By engaging prior knowledge and maintaining a strong focus on test-taking skills, LEAP condenses a year-long class into half the time. The program is similar to an exercise regimen: if the trainer and the trainee are both willing to accept the challenge of a highly disciplined and rigorous program, results are almost guaranteed.

Target candidates are 11th or 12th graders who have not passed one or more 10th grade Regents exams (Global, Algebra, Living Environment). If there is availability in Session 2 (Feb-Jun), LEAP may accept repeat students or students from 10th grade who require extra support for Regents-specific instruction.

LEAP is designed to lead students to success through a high-intensity interval approach of content building and test-taking skills, matched with a structured routine to minimize disruptive behaviors.

For more information contact the LEAP Coordinator, Ben Caraballo, at benjamin.caraballo@innovationhighschool.org

LIFT (Literacy Intervention and Focused Tutorials)

The Learning Center is a transitional support program designed to help students achieve academic success. LIFT helps students to identify, develop and achieve academic success through a differentiated system of instruction, assessment and support, ranging from help in a specific course to detailed skill development. LIFT provides a structured, supportive atmosphere that inspires a positive self-image and leadership through innovation.

LIFT develops lifelong learners who have the academic, personal and social skills necessary for success. LIFT provides age-appropriate learning experiences through a pedagogical approach tailored to students' individual needs. LIFT is a model that promotes collaboration in all areas of academia and fosters teamwork and solidarity.

For more information contact the LIFT Coordinator, Daysi Polanco, at daysi.polanco@innovationhighschool.org

BASE (Behavior and Academic Support Environment)

BASE helps students develop soft skills that foster and sustain prosocial relationships. A student's ability to exercise control and discipline are key personal and social skills necessary for success in adult life. BASE provides age-appropriate social skills, instruction and conflict resolution training through a pedagogical approach tailored to students' individual needs. BASE staff members collaborate with classroom teachers, parents, and administrators in all areas of behavioral development.

For more information contact the BASE Program Specialists, Kendred Smith or

Danielle Martin.

kendred.smith@innovationhighschool.org

danielle.martin@innovationhighschool.org

Counseling Department

The mission of the Innovation counseling department is to assist students with their social and emotional well-being to promote academic success. Our services include group and individual mandated counseling, at-risk counseling, crisis intervention, and student and family support.

Our goals are to promote lifelong learning, personal and academic growth, and to aid students in becoming responsible, socially aware and productive members of society.

We believe that collaboration among school counselors, educators, outside service providers and parents will ensure that the needs and goals of every student are addressed so that each student can achieve success.

For more information on this Department, you can contact them at

Counseling@innovationhighschool.org

Electronics Policy

Students may not talk on their cell phones during class. If a student needs to use a phone, they may use the phone in the main office or a classroom phone with the teacher's permission. Cell phones must be muted during the school day.

Acceptable Use:

- May be used for academic purposes during the school day with permission from teacher.
- May be used during transition periods (hallways) and during students' assigned lunch.

Unacceptable Use:

If a cell phone / electronic device is audible, causes a disruption to the learning environment, or is used in a manner deemed as inappropriate by a staff member the following consequences will result:

- 1st: Verbal Warning.
- 2nd: Teacher confiscates the device but returns it at the end of the period.
- 3rd: SDT confiscates the device. Student must meet with the SDT Coordinator to retrieve the item. Detention may be assigned. Item will be returned to the student at the end of the day.
- 4th: SDT confiscates the device. Detention is assigned. Only a parent can retrieve the item from SDT or an administrator. Any further violation will require a parent conference and could result in a loss of privileges for a determined length of time at the administrator's discretion. The device will not be returned before the parent conference is held.

Transportation

Full-fare transportation means that if your child qualifies, their trip to and from school won't cost you anything. Children eligible for full-fare transportation receive either a student MetroCard or free yellow bus transportation.

Innovation HS is responsible for giving out MetroCards but does not determine eligibility: NYC Department of Education determines who receives Metrocards. Should you have any questions about this policy, contact the main office at office@innovationhighschool.org

Protocols for Visitors

All visitors to our school must first check in with school safety, located at the main building entrance. You will be asked for ID and directed to the Main Officer (Room 210). All visitors, including parents, must wear the Innovation nametag, to ensure that we maintain a safe and secure school environment.

Enrichment Programming

Innovation's Enrichment Week Program is a two-week session in the Spring. During Enrichment Week students engage in project-based and experiential learning, on a single topic, based on student interests and needs. The topics are developed by teachers and students working collaboratively.

If a student needs academic remediation, or to make up for a class, this is also the time to make sure that they are on track. Participating in Enrichment Week programs is just like a regular school day with the same rules and regulations. Requirements for special programs like out of state practicums (we have previously taken practicum experiences to Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Florida, Washington DC, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee) and with partner organizations are similar to the criteria outlined above but may include special prerequisites depending on the program.

Any questions about enrichment programming can be directed to learning@innovationhighschool.org

Athletics at Innovation

Participation in interscholastic athletics promotes the development of physical, mental and social skills, a positive self-image, an understanding of teamwork and cooperation, and sharing of personal experiences. Everyone involved in the Innovation athletic program, both coaches and athletes, possess a unique opportunity to teach other participants positive life skills and values.

Like our academic colleagues, we take our coaching roles seriously. Our coaches seek to instill in individual athletes the dedication, discipline, desire and the spirit of commitment and personal sacrifice that a successful team depends upon. Making such a commitment helps nurture integrity, pride, loyalty and character in our students.

In order for students to be eligible to participate in Athletics at Innovation they must meet the following criteria:

Academic - Student-athletes must be on track for graduation. Innovation will be offering a study hall for students who need extra assistance. Student-athletes who are not on track for graduation will be mandated to attend study hall and will have additional requirements as mandated by the Athletics team.

Attendance/Punctuality – Student-athletes must maintain an attendance rate of 90%. All excused absences must be reported to our Attendance Coordinator and will not count against the student. Students are also expected to be on time to every class, all day, every day.

Behavior – Student-athletes must not have any negative behavior anecdotes.

Consequences for not meeting these standards will be determined by the Athletic Director, Coaches and the Student Support Team.

For more information about this program, contact the Athletic Coordinator, Ivor Morrison at ivor.morrison@innovationhighschool.org

Parent Teacher Organization

The Parent Teacher Organization is a body of parents/family members and Innovation staff that meets to discuss the needs of the school, from a Parent's perspective. This year the PTO will meet in October to discuss their focus for the year. In general, this is the group of people who you can reach out to when you would like assistance navigating the school from a parent perspective.

To contact the PTO please email Elsie Encarnacion the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator at

elsie.encarnacion@innovationhighschool.org

Parent Teacher Conferences

Below is the list of all scheduled Parent Teacher Conferences. All evening conferences are from 6-8pm and afternoon conference are from 1-4.

Meeting #1 (Afternoon) - Wednesday December 2nd, 2015

Meeting #1 (Evening) - Wednesday December 2nd, 2015

Meeting #4 (Evening) - Wednesday April 13th, 2016

Meeting #4 (Afternoon) - Wednesday April 13th, 2016

For more information on these dates, or any questions, contact the main office at office@innovationhighschool.org, 212-722-5871, or Elsie Encarnacion at elsie.encarnacion@innovationhighschool.org

Parent Complaint Procedure

If you have a concern or problem involving any staff member at Innovation, we urge you to resolve the problem by speaking directly to that staff member. If you

are unable to resolve the problem to your satisfaction, you may contact Pablo Torres, Innovation’s Director of Student Life and Community Engagement, at [212.722.5871](tel:212.722.5871), or pablo.torres@innovationhighschool.org. If Mr. Torres is unable to resolve the problem, you may also contact our principal Terence Joseph, at terence.joseph@innovationhighschool.org, or our Executive Director, Stephen Falla Riff, at stephen.fallariff@innovationhighschool.org, or by calling [212.722.5871](tel:212.722.5871). If the problem remains unresolved, you may also contact the Acting Chairperson of Innovation’s Board of Trustees, George Sarkissian, at george.sarkissian@innovationhighschool.org, or by calling [212.722.5871](tel:212.722.5871).

School Management Team

The School Management Team (“SMT”) is responsible for all aspects of the Innovation’s daily operations. If you need information, are unable to resolve a concern or otherwise need to make contact with the school leadership, please contact them at the email addresses below or call the school at **212-722-5871**.

Name	Title	Email
Stephen Falla Riff	Executive Director	stephen.fallariff@innovationhighschool.org
Terence Joseph	Principal	terence.joseph@innovationhighschool.org
Dru Collins	Vice-Principal	dru.collins@innovationhighschool.org
Pablo Torres	Director of Student Life & Community Engagement	pablo.torres@innovationhighschool.org

Board of Trustees

Innovation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees. The Board meets monthly and if you would like to attend a Board meeting, please check the calendar at www.innovationhighschool.org for the next Board meeting or call **212-722-5871** to find out the next meeting date. You are welcome to attend and we have public speaking as a component of every meeting.

If you would like to reach out directly to the Board of Trustees, you may contact our Chairperson, George Sarkissian, at 212.722.5871 or george.sarkissian@innovationhighschool.org.

Contacting Staff

If you need to contact staff, feel free to email them at their official school address or call our main line. While our staff and teachers are generally busy during the day, we place a high value on parent engagement and our team will respond to you as soon as practicable

The format of our email address system at Innovation is **firstname.lastname@innovationhighschool.org** For example, Terence Joseph's email address is **terence.joseph@innovationhighschool.org** If you need assistance contacting a staff member, please call **212-722-5871** and our office staff will pass on the information for a phone call or email response, based on your preference.

FERPA Policy

The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation (“Innovation” or the “School”) protects the privacy of student records in accordance with the Family

Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”). For more information regarding your FERPA Rights, please see the Innovation FERPA Policy, Director Information Notice, and FERPA Frequently Asked Questions on the Students and Parents page of Innovation's website: <http://www.innovationhighschool.org>

Dignity for All Students Act Policy

Innovation is committed to providing our students with a learning environment that is free from harassment and bullying of all kinds. Therefore, we are fully committed to enforcing the Dignity for All Students Act (the “Dignity Act”), which provides that students have the right to feel safe and respected, and to work and learn in an environment that is free from harassment and bullying of all kinds, including sexual harassment and bullying. It applies to harassment and bullying between students, and harassment of students by adults (teachers, administrators and staff). For more information regarding your rights, please see our Dignity Act Policy, which is posted on the Students and Parents of page of Innovation's website.

2015-2016 Annual Calendar

Tuesday	September 8	School begins for all students
Mon. - Tues	September 14-15	School OPEN (Rosh Hashanah)
Tues. - Wed.	September 22-23	School OPEN (Yom Kippur)

Monday	October 12	School Closed (Columbus Day)
Wednesday	October 14	PSAT (10th & 11th Grade)
Tuesday	November 3	School OPEN
Wednesday	November 11	School Closed (Veteran's Day)
Wed.-Fri.	November 25-27	School Closed (Thanksgiving Break)
Wednesday	December 2	Parent Teacher Conference #1
Mon. - Fri.	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	School Closed (Christmas Break)
Monday	January 11	School Closed (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
Tues.-Thurs.	January 26-29	Regents Week
Monday	February 1	School Closed (Professional Development)
Monday	February 8	School OPEN (Lunar New Year)
Mon. - Fri.	Feb. 15 - Feb. 19	School Closed (Midwinter Break)
Mon.-Wed.	March 14 - March 23	Enrichment Week
Thursday	March 24	School Closed (Professional Development)
Fri. - Fri.	March 25- April 1	School Closed (Spring Break)
Wednesday	April 13	Parent Teacher Conference #2
Monday	May 30	School Closed (Memorial Day)
Monday	June 13	Last Day of Classes for all students
Tues.- Thurs.	June 14 - June 23	Regents Week
Friday	June 24	Stepping up Ceremony
Thursday	June 30	12th Grade Graduation