

## **CODE OF CONDUCT OF**

### **THE RENAISSANCE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR INNOVATION**

The highest standard of ethical conduct and fair dealing is expected of each employee, officer, director and volunteer (each, a "School member") of The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation (the "School", "we"). The School's reputation is a valuable asset, and the School must continually earn and embrace the public's trust. The School members' obligations as a group are both legal and ethical. Each School member promises to carry out his/her duties with the very highest ethical conduct and to carry out school requirements under the applicable New York State and City statutes, official charter, and federal laws that apply.

School members must assure that all actions and decisions are done to better serve students since this is the primary reason for the school's existence. School members must maintain loyalty to the interests of the charter school's purpose and mission. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any member.

This policy provides general guidance on the ethical principles that must be followed by each employee, director and volunteer of the School ("you"). As no guideline can anticipate all situations, the School depends on your honesty and good judgment of every individual.

If you have any questions about this Policy, it is your responsibility to consult the Principal or any other officer or trustee of the School that may be designated by the Principal as the contact person for this policy from time to time (the "Designated Person"). Only the Designated Person may make exceptions to this Policy.

You are expected to promptly disclose to the Designated Person or any member of the management of the School anything that may be in violation of this Policy. The School will not tolerate retaliation or retribution against anyone who brings violations to management's attention.

#### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

The School's activities are to be conducted in compliance with the letter and spirit of all laws and regulations. You are charged with the responsibility of understanding the applicable laws, recognizing potential dangers, and knowing when to seek legal advice.

#### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

The School has an existing Conflict of Interest Policy that was adopted by the Board of Trustees of The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation, which is incorporated herein. A copy of the policy is maintained by the Secretary of the School and is available upon request.

**ARTICLE III**  
**Giving and Receiving Gifts**

You may not give or receive money or any gift to or from a supplier, governmental official, or other organization. Exceptions may be made for gifts that are i) customary and lawful, and/or ii) of nominal value, and/or iii) are authorized by the Designated Person.

You may accept meals and refreshments if they are infrequent, are of nominal value, and are in connection with business discussions.

You should inform anyone doing or desiring to do business with the School that all gifts other than advertising novelties are discouraged. If you do receive something or a benefit of more than nominal value, you should report it promptly. It will be returned or donated to a suitable charity.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**Political Activity**

The School recognizes that you may, in your individual capacity, participate in the political process by supporting political parties, candidates, or causes. However, the School is a tax-exempt organization that is prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign of or support or opposition to any candidate. The School may not contribute anything of value, including an employee's time, to political campaigns, publish or distribute materials on behalf of any candidate or party, or engage in any other activity which may be considered in support of or in opposition to any candidate.

You may personally contribute to a candidate or party of their choice. However, you may not be compensated or reimbursed by the School for your personal contribution. Any efforts devoted to political activity must be outside working hours. Unless authorized by the Designated Person, it must also be clear that any statements on public issues are not those of the School.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Personal Conduct**

We strive to provide you with a healthy, safe and positive environment. The climate at the School must be free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, alienage or citizenship or any other factors unrelated to the School's legitimate interests.

We will not tolerate sexual advances or comments or any other conduct that creates an intimidating or otherwise offensive environment. Similarly, the use of racial or religious slurs, or any other remarks, jokes or conduct that encourages or permits an offensive environment will not be tolerated.

If you believe you are subject to improper conduct, or become aware of the improper conduct of others, you should bring this to the attention of the Designated Person. All complaints will be investigated promptly.

Other activities that are prohibited because they are not conducive to a good environment are threats or violent behavior or possession of a weapon on the School's premises or while conducting School business. Also prohibited are the use, distribution, sale or possession of alcohol, drugs or any controlled substance on the School's premises or while conducting School business. You may not be on School premises or conducting School business if you are under the influence of controlled substances, illegal drugs, or alcohol.

#### **ARTICLE VI**

### **Employee Privacy and Other Confidential Information**

The only personal information about employees that the School collects is that which relates to their employment. Access to this information is limited to people with a need to know and any release of the information to others must be authorized in advance by the Designated Person. Personal information is released outside the School only with employee approval, except to verify employment or to satisfy legitimate investigatory or legal requirements.

If you have access to any School confidential information, including private employee information, you are responsible for acting with integrity and in accordance with this policy. Unauthorized disclosure or inappropriate use of confidential information will not be tolerated.

#### **ARTICLE VII**

### **Use and Protection of the School's Assets**

You have a duty to preserve the School's assets. Because we are a charitable, non-profit organization, it is imperative that everyone demonstrates cost control and follows vigorous procurement standards. Acquisitions of goods and services must be at the best possible price and quality.

You may not use School employees, materials, equipment or other assets for any unauthorized purpose. Assets must be periodically tracked and inventoried, with appropriate action taken if there are any losses.

#### **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Accounting and Financial Reports**

You must record and report financial information accurately and in accordance with applicable laws. Reimbursable business expenses must be reasonable, accurately reported, and supported by receipts.

The School's financial statements, and all books and records on which they are based, must accurately reflect all of the organization's transactions. All disbursements and receipts of funds must be properly authorized and recorded. No undisclosed or unreported fund may be established for any purpose.

Those responsible for the handling or disbursal of funds must assure that all transactions are executed as authorized and recorded to permit financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

## **ARTICLE IX The Dignity for All Students Act**

Innovation complies with the Dignity for All Students Act (“the Dignity Act”), an act amending the New York State Education Law to provide that no student shall be subjected to harassment or bullying by employees or students on school property or at a school function.

Students have the right to feel safe and respected, and to work and learn in an environment that is free from harassment and bullying, including sexual and other types of harassment and bullying. Innovation prohibits all forms of harassment and bullying as defined in this policy.

### **Definition of Harassment and Bullying**

Harassment and/or bullying (“harassment”) is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. Such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, sex, or any category protected by law. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs, quips or negative stereotyping that relate to any of the categories above. This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute harassment.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment and bullying. It may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples of the type of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include demands for sexual activity; sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; sexual innuendoes or suggestive jokes; comments of a sexual nature to describe an individual or an individual's body; unwelcome physical contact such as touching, pinching or brushing the body; any type of coerced sexual activity; displays of sexually suggestive

objects or pictures; and obscene gestures or materials. This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute sexual harassment.

Romantic or sexual relationships between adults (teacher, administrator or staff member) and students are expressly prohibited.

### **General Procedures for Reporting Complaints**

Innovation encourages all members of the School to report all incidents of harassment, regardless of who the offender may be. Innovation will take prompt, reasonable action to prevent, investigate and remedy the offensive conduct.

If a student feels comfortable speaking to the offender directly and requesting that the harassment stop, Innovation encourages the student to do so. If the student is not comfortable speaking directly to the offender, or if the harassment does not cease, the conduct should be reported to Deborah DaGiau, Innovation's Dignity Act Coordinator, or to the Director of Operations (the "Point Persons"). Any student or parent who believes that he or she (or his or her child) has been or is being harassed or bullied by a student or by an adult should report to one of the Point Persons.

Innovation recognizes that false accusations can cause serious harm to innocent persons. Although the School encourages complaints made in good faith, if an investigation reveals that a student knowingly or maliciously accused another person falsely of harassment, the School will take all appropriate action.

### **Investigations**

Innovation will take prompt, reasonable action to prevent, investigate, and remedy instances of harassment. All allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated. The investigation may include interviews with the parties involved, and when necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have relevant knowledge. The School will attempt to protect the privacy of the individuals involved in an investigation, but cannot guarantee confidentiality.

### **Discipline**

If the School determines that *Innovation's* policy prohibiting harassment and/or bullying has been violated, Innovation will take disciplinary action against the offender. Discipline may include, but is not limited to, suspension or expulsion for students, and, for school staff, probation, suspension or termination of employment.

### **Retaliation**

Innovation prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports harassment/bullying or participates in an inquiry of such report. Any person who retaliates against a student for reporting any perceived acts of harassment/bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

Any questions about this policy should be directed to our Dignity Act Coordinator, Deborah DaGiau, or to Stephen Falla Riff.

**ARTICLE X  
Compliance**

Failure to comply with this Policy will result in disciplinary action that may include reimbursement of the School for any losses or damages, termination of employment or office, and referral for criminal prosecution. Action may also be taken against supervisors or others who fail to report a violation or withhold relevant information concerning a violation of this Code of Conduct. You must sign the attached Certification.

**ARTICLE XI  
Adoption of Policy**

This policy was adopted, as amended, on September 24, 2012, by the Board of Trustees.

**CERTIFICATION**

I certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the Amended Code of Conduct, adopted by unanimous vote of the Trustees, present at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which a quorum was obtained, held at the Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation on September 24, 2012.

Dated: September 27, 2012  
New York, New York



Leanne Sajor  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

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