



**STEM SCHOOL**  
**HIGHLANDS RANCH**  
*Never Stop Innovating*

2021/2022

Student/Parent  
Handbook

Revised July 2021

# Table of Contents

(Click on the title to jump to that page)

<b>Daily Schedules</b>	<b>7</b>
Secondary Schedule	9
Late Start Schedule	10
Virtual School Day for Inclement Weather	10
Virtual School Day Q&A	10
Virtual Fridays	11
<b>Office Procedures and Support</b>	<b>11</b>
Health and Medication	11
Mandatory Student Fees	12
Lockers	12
Lost and Found	12
Messages and Deliveries	12
Parent Involvement and Volunteering	12
Volunteer and Chaperone Expectations	13
Visitors	14
Parking	14
Way to Go (School Carpool)	14
School Pictures	15
Student ID Cards	15
<b>Academics, Curriculum, and Accountability</b>	<b>15</b>
Academic Honesty and Integrity	15
Activity Eligibility	16
Curriculum and Planning	17
Field Trips	17
Curriculum Committee	18
Curriculum Suggestions and Concerns	18
Canvas	18
Assignments	19
Homework Expectations	19
Grading Policy	20
Make Up Work: Excused Absences	20
Late Assignments	21
Exceptions: AP and Concurrent Enrollment	21
Instructional Technology	21

Assessment	22
Graduation Requirements and Participation in Graduation Exercises	22
Progress Reports	22
Promotion/Retention Requirements (Middle School Policy)	23
Honor Roll	23
Academic Letter	23
<b>Student Support Services</b>	<b>23</b>
Learning Support Services (Special Education)	23
504s	24
Gifted and Talented	24
English Language Development	24
MTSS	24
<b>Student Experience: STEM School Culture</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Student Support Team</b>	<b>25</b>
Anonymous Reporting	25
<b>STEM Formula for Character</b>	<b>25</b>
Sources of Strength/No Place for Hate	26
Cafeteria and Lunch	26
Dress Code Policy	26
After-School Programs, Activities, and Athletics	27
Student Council	27
Dances	27
School Safety	28
Arrival and Departure	28
Late Pick-Up Policy	28
Attendance, Absences, Tardiness and Truancy	29
Attendance	29
Absences	30
Excused Absences	30
Tardiness	31
Truancy	31
Closed Campus	32
Leaving School	32
Emergency Closing, Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals	32
Delayed Opening	33
Early Dismissal	33
Closing School	33

Emergency Protocol	33
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	34
Tobacco and Drug Free Zone	34
Technology	35
Cell Phones	35
Netiquette (Internet Étiquette)	35
Technology – Acceptable Use Policy	36
Technology Misuse	38
Protecting Student Information	38
Information Technology	39
<b>Communication</b>	<b>41</b>
Change of Contact Information (Address, Phone Number, etc.)	41
<b>Grievance and Complaints</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Whistleblower Policy</b>	<b>43</b>
1. Purpose and Policy	43
2. Questions, Suggestions, and Informal Grievances	43
3. Formal Complaints	44
4. No Retaliation	44
5. School’s Compliance Officer	44
6. Accounting and Auditing Matters	45
7. Requirement of Good Faith	45
8. Confidentiality and Anonymous Complaints	46
9. Handling of Reported Violations	46
10. Posting of Policy	46
<b>Disciplinary Philosophy &amp; Procedures</b>	<b>46</b>
Philosophy of Discipline at STEM School Highlands Ranch	46
Principles of Discipline	47
Restorative Practices	48
Restorative Discipline	48
STEM School Highlands Ranch Student Honor Code	49
Elementary Behavior Expectations	49
Assembly Behavior	49
Appropriate Media Policy	50
Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation	50
Inappropriate Behaviors	51
Roles in the Disciplinary Process	52
Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior	52

Items Not Allowed at School	54
Emergency Protocol	55
Student and Family Acknowledgment Form	57

# STEM School Highlands Ranch 2021-22 Academic Calendar

August 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

16 Student: 20 Teacher Days

September 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

20 Student: 21 Teacher Days

October 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14*	15*	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

15 Student: 16 Teacher Days

November 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

16 Student: 17 Teacher Days

December 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	19	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

12 Student: 13 Teacher Days

January 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

19 Student: 20 Teacher Days

February 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

18 Student: 19 Teacher Days

March 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10*	11*	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

17 Student: 18 Teacher Days

April 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

20 Student: 21 Teacher Days

May 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26*	27**	28
29	30	31				

18/19 Student: 20 Teacher Days

June 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	19	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	19
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

School Closed/Holidays  
 First/Last Day of School

Planning/Professional Development  
 Graduation Day - School Closed  
 New Teachers Only

## Important Dates:

August 2 New Faculty Starts  
 August 4 Faculty Returns  
 August 10 First Day of School-All Students  
 September 6 Labor Day - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 September 24 Professional Development for Staff - NO SCHOOL  
 \*October 14 Evening Conferences (Open House) - REG. SCHOOL DAY  
 \*October 15 Parent/Teacher Conferences (Open House) - NO SCHOOL  
 October 18-22 Fall Break - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 November 12 Professional Development for Staff - NO SCHOOL  
 November 22-26 Thanksgiving Break - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 December 17 Teacher Workday - NO SCHOOL  
 Dec 20-Dec 31 Winter Break - SCHOOL CLOSED

January 3 Teacher Workday - NO SCHOOL  
 January 4 First Day of Spring Semester for ALL Students  
 January 17 Martin Luther King Jr Day - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 January 18 Professional Development for Staff - NO SCHOOL  
 February 21 President's Day - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 \*March 10 Evening Conferences (Open House) - REG. SCHOOL DAY  
 \*March 11 Parent/Teacher Conferences (Open House) - NO SCHOOL  
 March 14-18 Spring Break - SCHOOL CLOSED  
 April 22 Professional Development for Staff - NO SCHOOL  
 May 19 Graduation Day - NO SCHOOL  
 \*May 26 Half Day/Last Day Elementary only  
 \*\*May 27 Half Day/Last Day Secondary only

Download calendar [here](#)

## Daily Schedules

### K/1 and ELEMENTARY BELL SCHEDULE

ELEMENTARY SCHEDULE						
	Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
7:40 AM	<b>Morning Routines and Math (7:50-8:30)</b>	<b>Math (7:50-9:30)</b>	<b>Math (7:50-9:30)</b>	<b>Math (7:50-9:30)</b>	<b>Math (7:50-9:30)</b>	<b>Math (7:50-9:30)</b>
8:00 AM						
8:10 AM						
8:20 AM	<b>PBL plan time in AM</b>					
8:30 AM	<b>Specials (8:30-9:15) 45 mins</b>					
8:40 AM						
8:50 AM						
9:00 AM						
9:10 AM						
9:20 AM		<b>Specials (9:17-10:02)</b>				
9:30 AM						
9:40 AM						
9:50 AM						
10:00 AM				<b>Specials (10:05-10:50)</b>		
10:10 AM						
10:20 AM						

10:30 AM	<b>Lunch and Recess (10:35 -11:20)</b>						
10:40 AM							
10:50 AM							
11:00 AM			<b>Lunch and Recess (11:00-11:45)</b>				
11:10 AM							
11:20 AM			<b>Lunch and Recess (11:25-12:10)</b>			<b>Specials (10:55-11:40)</b>	
11:30 AM							
11:40 AM							
11:50 AM				<b>Lunch and Recess (11:50-12:35)</b>			
12:00 PM							
12:10 PM			<b>Specials (12:15-1:00)</b>				
12:20 PM							
12:30 PM					<b>Lunch and Recess (12:15-1:00)</b>		
12:40 PM							
12:50 PM						<b>Lunch and Recess (12:40-1:25)</b>	
1:00 PM							
1:10 PM					<b>Specials (1:05-1:50)</b>		
1:20 PM							
1:30 PM							
1:40 PM							
1:50 PM							
2:00 PM							
2:10 PM							
2:20 PM							
2:30 PM	<b>Dismissal 2:25</b>	<b>Dismissal 2:25</b>					
			<b>Dismissal 2:35</b>	<b>Dismissal 2:35</b>	<b>Dismissal 2:35</b>	<b>Dismissal 2:35</b>	

\*Grade levels have flexibility in determining times for additional breaks and recess.

Download elementary school schedule [here](#).



## Secondary Schedule

### Secondary Bell Schedule with All Period Friday 2021-22

BLUE DAY Mon/Wed	GOLD DAY- Tue/Thur	Friday
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Period	Time	Period	Time	Period	Time
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1	7:00-7:45	1	7:00-7:45	1	7:00-7:45
2	7:50-9:30 (100+5)	3	7:50-9:30 (100+5)	2	7:50-8:35 (45+5)
				3	8:40-9:20 (40+5)
4	9:35-11:10 (95+5)	5	9:35-11:10 (95+5)	4	9:25-10:05 (40+5)
				5	10:10-10:50 (40+5)
Lunch	A)11:15-11:45 B)12:00-12:30 C)12:45-1:15 ( 30 Min)	Lunch	A)11:15-11:45 B)12:00-12:30 C)12:45-1:15 (30 Min)	Lunch	A)10:55-11:25 B)11:32-12:02 C)12:10-12:40 (30 Min)
6	A) 11:45-1:15 B) 11:15-12:00 /12:30-1:15 C)11:15-12:45 (90+5)	7	A) 11:45-1:15 B) 11:15-12:00 /12:30-1:15 C)11:15-12:45 (90+5)	6th	A)11:25-12:40 B)10:55-11:32/12:02 -12:40 C)10:55-12:10 (75+5 )
				7	12:45-1:25 (40+5)
8	1:20-2:55 (95)	9	1:20-2:55 (95)	8	1:30--2:10 (40+5)
				9	2:15--2:55 (40)
10	3:00-4:45 Intervention	10	3:00-4:45 Intervention	10	3:00-4:45 Intervention

	3:00-3:40		3:00-3:40		3:00-3:40
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## Late Start Schedule

STEM does not mimic the Late Start Policy and schedule put forth by DCSD. In the event that Douglas County calls for a Delayed Opening, STEM's [Virtual School Day Policy](#) will take effect.

## Virtual School Day for Inclement Weather

### Virtual School Day

In the event DCSD determines that the district should follow the Delayed Opening protocol, STEM School Highlands Ranch will abide by its Virtual School Day Policy. When it snows, our school's operation and instructional expectations will be determined by one of these three scenarios:

- 1) Snow Day – Douglas County Schools (check [www.dcsdk12.org](http://www.dcsdk12.org)) calls a snow day – **The STEM building is closed and implements a Virtual School Day with 20% of the learning being synchronous.**
- 2) Late Start Day – Douglas County Schools calls a Late Start day – **STEM is closed and implements a Virtual School Day with 20% of the learning being synchronous.**
- 3) All Schools Open – Douglas County Schools declare Highlands Ranch area schools open - STEM is open and operating to our regular schedule.

## Virtual School Day Q&A

**What is a Virtual School Day?** The school is closed and our students complete work from home.

**Where do we find the assignments?** Our faculty advises our students where to find the Virtual School Day assignments. Our teachers will clearly label what the student is expected to do that will be equivalent to a class period.

**Would this be similar to Virtual Fridays?** Yes! Just like our Virtual Friday students, when the completed assignment is uploaded by the student, the student is coded "activity" and not absent. We will count this as an instructional day similar to a field excursion.

**Must your student stay home on Virtual School days to complete the assignment?** Students do not need to remain at home but the school will be closed; however, the student must submit the assignment according to the due date/time as indicated by the teacher.

**What if our Internet is out due to the weather or we do not have Internet at home?** If the student does not have Internet due to weather or other reason, students will have a few days to complete the work.

**If DCSD calls a snow day, do we still have a Virtual School Day?** Yes. Snow day means the school is closed, but STEM will be conducting coursework remotely.

**If DCSD calls a Late Start Day, will STEM be open?** No. STEM will be closed. It is a Virtual School Day.

**Will a virtual day impact the way in which the blue/gold days are scheduled?** No. The virtual day will be called for that day alone and will not change the following days. For example: If a virtual day is called on a blue day the students will work on the assignments for that day and will return the next day which would be a gold day.

## Virtual Fridays

Middle school students will have the opportunity to attend STEM four days per week, with Fridays designated as an asynchronous virtual school day, so long as the following requirements are met:

- There is a confirmed conflict with the student's involvement with activities outside of school.
- The student must maintain a 3.5 GPA. The school registrar will identify the student's most recent semester's GPA and give their permission for the student to be on a 4-day week only if that GPA is at least a 3.5.
- The student must have permission from all of their teachers.
- The student must maintain good attendance.
- The student must re-apply for the 4-day week each semester. The STEM School Administration maintains the discretion to approve extenuating circumstances.

## Office Procedures and Support

### Health and Medication

- Tylenol will not be administered to any student in the health room.
- Middle and High School students may assume the responsibility of bringing to school and administering their own "Over the Counter" medication provided they carry only enough for one day. Students using poor judgement in carrying and taking their own medication will have such medication confiscated by school personnel, and parents or guardians will be notified.
- Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students may assume responsibility for bringing to school and administering their own prescription medication providing they carry only enough for one day and have self administration "Permission to Carry Medication" form on file in the school office.
- Students using poor judgement in carrying and taking their own medication will have such medication confiscated by school personnel, and parents or guardians will be notified. A structured plan will then be developed for the administration of the medication.
- Any parent or guardian who chooses not to sign the "Permission to Carry Medication" form may request that a structured plan be devised for his or her student.
- Parents of students that wish to have prescription medication administered to their student at school will need to complete a "Student Medication Request and Release

Agreement and Physician's Signed Order" and have it on file in the school office for each medication or change of medication.

- The parent or guardian shall furnish the medication in the original pharmacy labeled container and sealed in an envelope.
- The pharmacy label shall state the student's name, medication, dosage, number and/or time(s) of doses per day and the name of the prescribing physician.
- The medication shall be administered by school personnel, only in accordance with the instructions on the prescription label.
- All forms that you may need are available at the STEM Website under "Health Room," the STEM Office or the Douglas County Website under Health Services/Medication and Policy Forms.

## Mandatory Student Fees

View and download the mandatory fees [here](#).

## Lockers

Each middle school student has the option of renting a student locker. These lockers are issued clean and it is the student's responsibility to keep them clean and neat during the year. If, during the course of the year, a locker becomes in need of repair, the student should contact the office. Combination locks will be issued to students who pay the rental fee. Lockers and locks will be assigned and registered with the front office. It is the student's responsibility to keep the combination secure. Students should NEVER give their combination to a friend. Lockers will be checked at the end of the school year and fines assessed for any damage. All lockers are the property of the school and may be opened by school authorities for reasonable suspicion that a violation of law or school policy has occurred.

## Lost and Found

Articles found in and around the school should be placed on the table outside the cafeteria for each school, where the owners may claim their property. High value lost property (cell phones, etc) should be taken to the front office. Students can claim their property through identification.

\*\*Unclaimed clothing items are donated after Spring Break and at the end of the year.

## Messages and Deliveries

Items for students may be dropped off at the front office. A table will be made available in front for parents to drop off items such as lunches, homework, projects, etc. for students to retrieve during the day. Items of significant value such as cell phones or laptops should be taken directly to the front desk (and not left on the delivery table). Once an item has been placed on the "delivery table" parents should notify their students. This may be accomplished via text or voicemail if available or can be arranged with the front office staff.

## Parent Involvement and Volunteering

STEM School Highlands Ranch is a school of choice. As such, STEM recognizes the value of parental involvement in the school and wishes to provide avenues for parents of STEM students to contribute to the success of STEM. Teachers will provide meaningful opportunities for parents to participate in the classroom. The following are specific expectations for any parental involvement in the classroom.

- Teachers are the final authority in the classroom.
- Teachers have their own teaching style, which is to be respected by all room volunteers.
- Volunteers must be under the direct supervision of certified staff at all times.
- Volunteers must check in with the front office before entering the classroom.
- Under no circumstance is it acceptable for a parent volunteer to confront a teacher about an issue in the classroom, or any other part of the school, when students are present.
- Should a parent volunteer be deemed incapable of securing the health, safety and welfare of the students and/or the school by Administration, the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level reserves the right to deny direct access to students and/or classroom related activity and/or campus per statutory authority.

### **Parent - Teacher Interaction**

At the center of the educational process is the student, teacher and parent. A fully functioning classroom is one in which teachers and parents are working together on behalf of the best academic interest of students. It is expected that parents and teachers make every effort to work positively with each other at every turn. As adults, we must model positive interaction for our students. The following parameters will help facilitate a positive, professional relationship between parents and teachers:

- Parents will call in advance to set up meeting times with teachers.
- Teachers will make every effort to communicate with parents in a timely manner.
- Parents and teachers will always keep the best interests of the student(s) the highest priority.
- A teacher's right to professional educational practice will be respected.
- Teachers will champion parents as central to the educational process.

## Volunteer and Chaperone Expectations

Families of STEM students are asked to donate at least 30 hours of volunteer time per year. In order to keep track of volunteer hours, STEM uses a volunteer management program called HelpCounter. In order to set up your family account, track hours, and indicate areas of interest please visit our HelpCounter website or access this website from [stemk12.org](http://stemk12.org). Before volunteering, parents and guardians will be asked to sign a volunteer DCSD Volunteer Agreement. For more information regarding volunteers please go to the [Volunteer page](#) on the STEM website or view the Douglas County Volunteer Handbook.

We welcome, appreciate and value parent participation as volunteers for our school programs. The following guidelines require that Volunteers and Chaperones:

- Must report chronic or severe disciplinary issues to the supervising faculty members.
- Must report violations of district policies to the supervising faculty members.
- Must use appropriate and acceptable language at all times.
- Must conform to school district policies that forbid the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs by students or adults at school or at school-related events.
- Must enforce the anti-harassment/ bullying policy.
- Must not verbally harass students or make physical contact intended to discipline.
- Must abide by the rules for confidentiality pertaining to information about particular students.
- Must report any information of a personal nature or information that relates to child safety to the supervising faculty member, school counselor, or Assistant Director of student experience for the student's grade level.

## Visitors

All visitors must report to the main office before going to any other part of the school. All individuals wishing to enter the school will be required to submit their driver's license or proof of identification to be scanned before entering. Anyone who wants to distribute or post notices must receive approval from the office in advance. Community announcements will be posted on the Community section of the [stemk12.org](http://stemk12.org) website. All fliers and informational brochures posted or available from the front desk must be produced or sponsored by STEM or DCSD. All posters, fliers, etc. hanging within the school must be approved and initiated by a school administrator.

Students may not bring a visitor to school for the purpose of attending classes with them. Students who may have a visiting guest in their home and want to show them their school may invite them to have lunch during the regular school lunch period.

At times, students may visit our school as prospective students from other schools. The school counselor may coordinate the arrangements for these visits and teachers will be given 24-hour notice that they will be having a visitor to their classes.

## Parking

Student parking permits are available in the main office for a fee to students who qualify. Students may only park in the parking lots if they have paid for a parking pass and registered their car with the high school front office. STEM reserves the right to have any vehicle removed that has not been properly registered. Due to limited parking on site for students, parking passes will be awarded on a lottery basis with upperclassmen getting priority for the parking spots.

## Way to Go (School Carpool)

The STEM School Highlands Ranch is partnering with Way to Go: Schoolpool to assist families that are interested in carpooling, walking and/or biking to and from school with other families. If you are interested in this program please visit our website.

## School Pictures

We have contracted DR Photo to photograph students for individual pictures. Those photographs will be transferred onto a photo ID for all students within 2-4 weeks of the photograph session. School pictures will be taken during school at the beginning of the year. There will be an opportunity to retake pictures some time in September or October of the school year. Elementary students will also have class pictures taken in the spring.

## Student ID Cards

Middle and High School students are issued photograph identification cards as soon as feasible at the beginning of the school year. Identification cards are used for student identification purposes, such as entrance to special events, evening activities and sporting events, checkout of materials, etc.

## **Academics, Curriculum, and Accountability**

### Academic Honesty and Integrity

Administration, faculty and staff at Stem School Highlands Ranch strive to provide diverse opportunities in a safe, caring, and challenging environment. Our school community encourages respect and responsibility, fosters creativity, and promotes stewardship and a commitment to excellence. Students are expected to turn in work that is their own. When students turn in work that is not their own, assist others in doing so, or deliberately hinder their classmates' learning, they violate the integrity we strive for as an academic community.

These types of dishonesty are not only counterproductive to our mission, but are also illegal in certain circumstances. Understanding that the following may not illustrate every possible circumstance of academic dishonesty, Stem School Highlands Ranch defines academic dishonesty as the following:

- Plagiarism, which is defined as the presentation of another person's language, ideas, or thoughts as one's own work in the preparation of a paper, laboratory report, examination, oral presentation, or homework. This includes information downloaded from the Internet or otherwise shared electronically.
- Dishonest conduct during a quiz, test, exam, or other assessment.
- Copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy your work (except when told to do so by a teacher, i.e. notes from a missed class).
- Taking another student's computer or personal item without permission.

- Taking a non-circulating book out of a classroom without permission.
- Altering a file on a "groups" server folder, therefore potentially interfering with another student's ability to complete an assignment.

If a student participates in any of the above actions or other action deemed a violation by a teacher, the following disciplinary action(s) may be taken:

- A meeting with the Director of the school most appropriate for the student's grade level, student, the student's parents and teacher to discuss the violation.
- Students may be required to re-do the assignment.
- Students may be required to re-do copied work.
- Students may be assigned to detention for taking books and materials without permission.
- Students may be required to re-take a quiz, test, exam or other assessment.
- Students may lose technology privileges if they interfere with server folders, access inappropriate sites, or interfere with any Infinite Campus application
- For high school students, a second offense of academic dishonesty in an academic year may result in an "F" in the course for the semester.
- Please note that in extraneous circumstances, additional action may be taken as determined by the STEM administration.

## Activity Eligibility

At STEM, our focus is on academics just as "student" is the first word in "student athlete." Yet, athletics and activities are privileges that students are encouraged to participate in. In order for each student athlete to be eligible to participate in his or her chosen sport/activity, he or she must maintain a grade of at least C in all core classes (Science, Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics, English, Social Studies) and cannot be failing any class that student is enrolled in. Weekly grade checks will be completed based on the process included below and any academically ineligible students will not be allowed to participate until the next grade check occurs AND the grades are all C or higher. One "D" grade will constitute suspension of practice and game privileges until the grade is brought up. A combination of "F" grades and "D" grades may result in the suspension/dismissal from the team until the grades are brought up or for the remainder of the season.

Eligibility will be checked every Wednesday during the season. The Athletic Director, or a representative, will contact teachers to inquire about any students on the team who do not have at least a grade of C in a class. The student will remain ineligible until he/she can prove to the coach and/or Athletic Director the he/she is passing the class. This can be provided by each respective teacher in the form of an email or handwritten note, and must be received by the coach prior to the student's reinstated eligibility. "Word of mouth," and notes or emails from parents or the students themselves are not acceptable forms of proof.

In the event that a student cannot participate in an activity due to academic ineligibility, there will be no refund of fees for that activity.



A school administrator shall have the authority to declare a student ineligible based on inappropriate behavior, detention, excessive absences, suspension or expulsion.

## Curriculum and Planning

Teachers must submit to the Director of Curriculum and Accountability, a syllabus for each course. The syllabus will include information related to the scope and sequence of topics that include the Colorado Academic Standards, grading expectations, and individual teacher policies. Teachers acting in a professional capacity deliver the content, skills, and knowledge to prepare our students for successful post-secondary endeavors. Our teachers work every day to design and implement an effective curriculum. In addition, teachers within and between departments work to ensure that the sequence of learning is connected across disciplines and between grade levels.

Particularly at STEM, focused on science, technology, engineering, and math, and during this period of tremendous advances in the STEM fields, our curriculum is critical to our success. We are focused not only on the content, but the methods of instruction, tools of assessment, and alignment with best practice and educational research. Our teachers follow State of Colorado standards, with attention to the admission requirements of selective and highly selective colleges and universities. As a public school, STEM works hard to ensure that each young person gains an understanding about a wide range of opinions and perspectives so that they are well able to lead successful lives, with a strong character and respect for all.

Because the curriculum is of great interest to parents and students, the STEM Board has established a Curriculum Committee involving the Director of Curriculum and Accountability, teaching staff, parents, and students. Any stakeholder of the School is welcome to attend meetings. The Committee is advisory to the School Board. The Board attends to the overall tenor of the curriculum and to the financial resources required by certain curriculum-based requests from the School. The specific components of the curriculum for any one class, grade level, or sequence of courses are developed by teachers and are overseen by the Director of Curriculum and Accountability and the Executive Director.

## Field Trips

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of field trips. Most field trips are for one day, but there are grade level overnight field trips. Students who ride the bus to a field trip location must return to school on the bus.

Students who do not represent STEM School Highlands Ranch with safe, respectful, and responsible behavior may not be permitted to attend class, grade level, and team field trips. Teachers may, at their discretion, permit these students to attend a field trip provided that the student's parent(s) accompany him/her on the field trip.

Students, who will not be participating in a field trip activity, whether it is a one-day field trip or an overnight field trip, are still required to attend school. Teachers will arrange for students who are not attending a field trip to work in an alternate classroom during the

school day. Students who do not attend on the day(s) of a field trip will accrue unexcused absences for the day(s) that they miss.

Parents must pick up students promptly after field trips. If a student is not picked up promptly, teachers are required to call the authorities to take your child home. Parents attending field trips must be cleared (get fingerprinted, badged, etc.) before doing so. Please see Volunteers and Chaperones, for additional information.

## Curriculum Committee

Every month, the Curriculum Committee holds a 1.5-hour session focusing on one particular area of the curriculum, such as Language Arts, Math, Science and so forth. The meeting will begin with a showcase project or assignment that demonstrates success. Then the Committee will discuss with faculty and others present the overall approach of the Department, supported by course syllabuses and other documents that help the Committee members understand the scope and sequence of instruction. Because these meetings occur on a monthly basis, and because there are many departments in the School, a curricular issue from any Department can be raised for discussion during the time remaining. These meetings may also consider new texts, new approaches, new forms of assessment, and best practices and other insights from research. The Committee will then advise the Board and the School leadership of their insights and guidance.

## Curriculum Suggestions and Concerns

If a parent or student has suggestions (for a problem-based learning opportunity, for example) or concerns about the curriculum, the first step is to discuss your suggestion or concern with the classroom teacher. Very often these are wonderful discussions that help the teacher and perhaps the entire School. If there is a concern that remains unresolved, then the parent or student is invited to bring their suggestion or concern to the Director of Curriculum and Accountability and/or the monthly Curriculum Committee meeting for discussion. Concerns should not be taken directly to Board members as this Committee advises the Board. Please inform the Committee Chair in advance if you have a suggestion or concern to bring to the discussion. Please understand that this Committee acts in an advisory capacity to the Board, and that the Board and School leadership strongly believe in the professional discretion of our teachers. STEM expects teachers to provide a broad range of content and perspective (both individually and collectively), so that our students learn to think critically, acquire necessary skills, develop a strong character, and to effectively articulate their own opinions and beliefs while respecting those of others.

## Canvas

Canvas is the Learning Management System that parents can use to stay informed of their student's grades and missing assignments. Grades for completed work, and indications of missing work will be posted on the Canvas site. Please allow teachers sufficient time to assign grades for each assignment. Once an assignment has been turned in, or the test is

taken, the grades should be posted within two business days depending on the length of the assignment.

Elementary classrooms will communicate major assignments, projects, and problem based learning experiences, to students and parents. Not every assignment will necessarily be posted as hands on learning experiences may not have the ability to be uploaded. Please reach out to the classroom teacher if you have questions.

Canvas Links for Parents and Students:

- [Students](#)
- [Parents](#)

## Assignments

Each teacher will provide his/her classes with a syllabus available on the teacher's Canvas site. Depending on the teacher and the needs of the course, that syllabus may be highly detailed or only general in nature.

All assignments and their due dates, and assessments dates, will be posted on the teacher's Canvas site for each class. Each student is responsible for using this information about assignments, assessments, and dates to complete work on time or to make up work when ill or absent. See details about make-up work and late assignments below.

Realizing that STEM students are often quite engaged with clubs, sports, and many different activities each evening, teachers will provide information about assignments, assessments, and due dates for the coming week by the preceding Friday evening to help students plan ahead to successfully complete their assignments. The nature of some work, or necessary changes in course schedules, may make preceding-Friday assignments not always possible.

## Homework Expectations

Homework is designed to provide students with an important opportunity to practice and to extend what they are learning. The amount of homework will vary based on the grade level, unit, the student's own work habits, and the appropriate use of class time.

In general, elementary students should expect approximately 20-30 minutes of homework each day, middle school students should expect approximately 20 minutes of homework per day for each class. High school students should expect approximately 20 to 30 minutes per day per class. Honors/accelerated, concurrent enrollment and AP classes may have additional requirements as determined by the instructor.

If a middle school student is enrolled in a high school level course (or a high school student in a middle school level course) the homework expectations are for the level of the class, not the grade level of the student. This means that an 8th grade student taking a high school level math class can expect 20 to 30 minutes of homework per day from that class, as is typical of high school classes at STEM, even though the student's grade level is in middle school.

## Grading Policy

Each teacher will make his or her grading policies clear to their students through information posted to their class website, either as a separate document or part of their course syllabus, and as discussed in class. Where appropriate, teachers will provide grading rubrics outlining the expectations for specific assignments. The overall grading system, and as used for transcripts, is as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>GPA Value</b>	<b>AP/CE</b>
A	90-100	4.0	5.0
B	80-89	3.0	4.0
C	70-79	2.0	3.0
D	60-69	1.0	2.0
F	0-59	0.0	1.0

Within two days of a due date for an assignment all teachers will indicate if an assignment is missing or submitted but has not yet been graded. This is to help inform both parents and students whether or not assignments have been received and are in the process of being graded.

### Make Up Work: Excused Absences

For excused absences, students have two full days for every day missed to turn in their assignments. This means that if a student is excused and misses on a Tuesday, they can catch up on their work on Wednesday and Thursday, and all assignments are due as their classes meet on Friday. If a student is excused and misses on a Thursday, their assignments are due as their classes meet on Tuesday (weekend days are not counted.)

If the student is excused for four days, they would have eight full days to work on their missing assignments and complete their missed quizzes and tests. If a student misses Wednesday through Monday as an example, they could work on their missing assignments for the following eight school days beginning Tuesday when they return, with everything due when their classes meet on the Friday of the following week.

Students have the responsibility to remind their teachers that they were excused and absent, and to check their teachers' Canvas pages for assignments and assessments that were due during their absence. Students have the responsibility to work with their teachers to set times and dates to make up specific tests and quizzes, and to arrange for alternate assignments if appropriate.

Teachers have the responsibility to inform the student about the assignments, quizzes and tests given during excused absences by maintaining this information on their class websites.

Teachers may modify assignments and due dates at their discretion. For example, a science lab that occurs while a student is absent is not likely to be re-constructed when the student returns to school. Instead, the teacher will provide an alternative assignment, or

modify the due date. Students may also make up assignments during office hours with individual classroom teachers.

Parents are encouraged to pick up work assignments from their child's teachers so that students who are home sick can begin to catch up as soon as possible.

## Late Assignments

Completing assignments on time is not simply to keep the course moving on schedule; it is to ensure that students have done the work to learn the current content of the class, before they move on to the next topic. When students fall behind they are not able to learn the new material as effectively or efficiently.

Late assignments are graded with the typical expectations of the assignment.

We have a wide variety of assignments at STEM, from daily assignments to very long-term and complex projects and problem based learning opportunities.

### **For Regular Assignments**

Regular assignments should be submitted by the due date to ensure the understanding of material prior to moving on to more complex tasks.

### **For Problem Based Learning Assignments**

Problem based learning activities sometimes culminate in presentations, evaluation by professionals or other events. In these cases students may be required to present on specific days without the opportunity for extended due dates

## Exceptions: AP and Concurrent Enrollment

All classes at STEM may follow these policies except for courses taken for Concurrent College Credit, such as Concurrent Enrollment courses through Arapahoe Community College or other institutions of higher learning and AP classes, in which case the instructor may provide alternatives in keeping with the college-level work of the course. Courses taken under the direction of another institution will follow that institution's policies. Extenuating circumstances, either from the teacher's perspective or from the student's may occur which require adjustments to these policies on a rare and case-by-case basis.

## Instructional Technology

Teachers utilize a variety of instructional technology applications and websites to support student learning within classrooms. Apps and web resources are vetted through a school process and in accordance with [HB 16-1423](#). Additional information related to this can be found on the school website under [Student Data Privacy](#). Each year, teachers will communicate and provide families with information regarding apps and/ or websites utilized as part of our school wide instructional model.

STEM purchases equipment to be used by K-4. It is the responsibility of the parent for any damages that are incurred by your student.

## Assessment

A variety of assessments are administered throughout the school year. Some assessments are mandated by the state or district. At STEM School, we strive to utilize assessment practices that provide usable student data that provides insight into student achievement and learning. Teachers use assessments within the classroom to guide instruction with respect to student needs. For additional information related to assessments administered at STEM, please visit the website to learn more about [State Mandated Testing](#).

## Graduation Requirements and Participation in Graduation Exercises

In order to graduate and also to participate in graduation exercises students must meet all of the following:

1. Successfully complete all of the “academic requirements,” as in the [Academic Planning Guide](#), including correspondence and other out-of-school coursework no later than forty-eight hours prior to graduation exercises;
2. Be a full time student (as defined as taking the equivalent of six classes per semester which are transcribed through a district school);
3. Completion of 20 hours of community service
4. Completion of ICAP
5. Wear, without alteration, the designated cap and gown and must have appearance and dress that conforms with standards established by the Board of Education and/or building Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student’s grade level;
6. Demonstrate behavior (during the semester prior to graduation) deemed by the building Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student’s grade level, to be compatible with the district’s Responsible Citizenship Expectations and, as described in IKF-R-1;
7. Cooperate fully with the school’s staff during all school sponsored senior activities, including graduation exercises; and,
8. Return all school/district property and clear all outstanding debts owed the school.

## Progress Reports

Reports of academic progress will be issued by teachers as a tool to both inform parents and students on student class performance and to encourage communication between parents/students and teachers. The periodicity of these reports is at the discretion of the teacher. Parents and students are encouraged to use Canvas to monitor student performance in all classes.

## Promotion/Retention Requirements (Middle School Policy)

If a middle school student does not pass three or more core classes (Science, English, Social Studies, Engineering/Technology and/or Math) they are at risk of retention. Retention warnings will be issued at the end of the second and third quarters. The administrative team of the STEM School Highlands Ranch makes final retention decisions. High school students must retake or otherwise fulfill coursework as needed to meet STEM Graduation Requirements.

## Honor Roll

Students that attain "Honor Roll" status will be recognized in published form. "Honor Roll" status will be at two levels, Honor Roll and Director's Honor Roll for the student's grade level's Scholar. Honor Roll will be defined as any student receiving a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or above for a semester grade. Director's Honor Roll for the student's grade level's Scholar will be defined as students that achieve a GPA of 3.80 or above for a semester grade. Honor roll will be published each semester.

## Academic Letter

STEM School Highlands Ranch is focused on rewarding Academic Excellence among students. We are excited to announce that students will be recognized through the new Academic Letter Recognition Program. The criteria for earning an Academic Letter is as follows:

Students must achieve a grade point average of 3.8 or above for two consecutive semesters while attending STEM School Highlands Ranch. The recipient of the award will receive an Academic Letter after the first year of earning this accomplishment. A student that achieves this accomplishment for a second year will receive an academic pin. We are looking at expanding this award to include a third year award and fourth year award in the future.

## Student Support Services

### Learning Support Services (Special Education)

At STEM School Highlands Ranch, a continuum of services is offered to students on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) including support for students fully integrated into general education classes and additional support services as needed. Specifically, services address identified needs in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, communication, motor difficulties, and psychological/social emotional needs through individualized help and specialized academic instruction.

The goal of the Learning Support Services (LSS) department is to provide students with identified special education needs the skills and support necessary to bridge the gaps in their learning. Students are scheduled to maximize contact time between the traditional classroom teacher and fellow students. Special education services are provided in a variety of ways: direct instruction, co-teaching, and consultation as identified on the student's Individualized Education Plan.

## 504s

At STEM we collaborate with students, teachers, and families to develop appropriate 504 plans that meet the needs of learners with disabilities by providing accommodations to help students benefit from the educational programming and activities of the school. [Click here](#) for info about 504 plans.

## Gifted and Talented

At STEM School Highlands Ranch, we strive to make sure that each and every student works to their highest and unlimited potential. We have a strong program for Gifted and Talented students and through both referral and universal screenings we work to identify and serve these students. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) guiding principles indicate, "rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners." Each school level is served by a Gifted education Coordinator. The GT Coordinator will collaborate/consult with classroom teachers to appropriately plan instruction and learning opportunities to meet the needs of gifted/high potential learners.

Gifted Programming is designed to meet the academic, social/emotional, and behavioral needs of students identified with advanced learning needs. Teachers and support staff differentiate learning opportunities to meet these needs.

## English Language Development

Our priority is to support English Learners in gaining proficiency in English in order to communicate effectively, elicit critical thinking, work collaboratively and creatively, value and celebrate diversity, and to graduate with the motivation and ability to pursue higher education and/or competitively compete in and contribute to the global workforce.

## MTSS

MTSS is a framework STEM uses to take a preventative and proactive approach to respond to the needs of all students academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. It is led by our MTSS Coordinator who facilitates data collection and collaborative problem-solving discussions to help improve student outcomes. This framework is in place to help meet



the needs of our students as it allows for the progression of more targeted intervention when needed. More information on MTSS can be found on CDE's website at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss>.

## Student Experience: STEM School Culture

### Student Support Team

The mission of the Student Support Team at STEM School Highlands Ranch is to provide every student with the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive in an environment that is safe, challenging and nurturing. We are dedicated to helping the entire student body reach their full potential while feeling empowered, respected and supported.

[Click here to](#) determine your child's student support team member. Counselors, social workers, and psychologists work with students individually and in small groups to support students' mental health, as well as providing academic and college & career planning.

### Anonymous Reporting

STEM School Highlands Ranch uses both [Safe2Tell](#) and [Text a Tip](#) as anonymous reporting options for students and their families.

**Safe2Tell Colorado wants every student to know - telling isn't "snitching." Telling is when you need to keep yourself or someone you know safe from threats, harmful behaviors or dangerous situations.**

**Not sure if you should use Safe2Tell? If you don't, who will?** We need your help to improve your school and community. By calling, you can help stop a friend from committing suicide, get another student off drugs, or stop a bully from making other people miserable. If you have information about these topics, please call.

### STEM Formula for Character

Stem School Highlands Ranch Highlands Ranch expects all students, parents, faculty and staff to abide by the STEM Formula for Character: Honesty, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, and Empathy. Failure to abide by the STEM Formula for Character may result in disciplinary action.

**Honesty:** Telling the truth, even when it's not easy

**Integrity:** Doing what is right, even when no one is watching

**Respect:** Treating everyone--staff, students, volunteers, oneself, & property--with kindness

**Responsibility:** Being accountable for one's actions and decisions

**Empathy:** The capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within the other person's frame of reference



## Sources of Strength/No Place for Hate

*Sources of Strength* is a positive messaging program that uses the power of Peer Leaders and social networks to help students find their voice in creating a positive change in their school. The program's goal is to bring awareness to each student's individual strengths.

No Place for Hate® is a self-directed program helping all members of your school community do just that. Learn more about how to join the No Place for Hate® movement and see how it can help your school create a more equitable and inclusive climate.

## Cafeteria and Lunch

Behavior in the cafeteria should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. Upon entering the cafeteria for lunch, students will line up and go to the serving area when called or find seats at available tables. Students waiting in line should do so in an orderly manner. Cutting into the line (or allowing cutting) is not allowed. Students should not overcrowd a table and must ensure that the table and surrounding floor area are clean prior to dismissal. No food is permitted outside the designated eating areas. Students should not share food items with each other. Stealing or hiding food is a serious matter and will not be tolerated. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and throw all trash away in appropriate trash receptacles or recycle bins.

## Dress Code Policy

The students' general appearance should be crisp, clean, and sharp. Attire should not be distracting to the educational process. Clothing should not be torn. At no time are pants to be worn below the waist or hanging from the hips nor should undergarments be visible. It is the parent's responsibility to buy pants that fit properly. Pajamas and slippers are not allowed. Hats may be worn outside during fall and winter months, but never inside the building. All skirts and shorts must reach below the student's fingertips when their arms are fully extended and their hands are placed on their thighs. Students should not show any midriff area, undergarments (including bra straps) and shall not wear clothing with spaghetti straps or any other apparel that shows cleavage. Leggings/yoga pants should not be worn unless needed for physical education classes, or under shorts or skirts. Clothing that has offensive or distracting language or graphics is not permitted. Clothing may not advertise or promote any product or activity that is subject to age restrictions, i.e. alcohol products, guns/weapons, tobacco products, adult-only behaviors or products.

We realize that "inappropriate dress" may be difficult for parents to determine, especially when pressured by young adolescents who respond to dress codes with "everyone dresses like this!" In an effort to build a school environment with a foundation of mutual respect, we encourage students to focus on academics and not their neighbor's choice of clothing. With students, parents and school personnel working toward the same goals in this regard, clothing can maintain its place as an area of self-expression in a positive way. Violation of

the STEM School Highlands Ranch Dress Code may result in disciplinary actions outlined in the Disciplinary Procedures section of this document.

## After-School Programs, Activities, and Athletics

STEM Enrichment operates separately from STEM School Highlands Ranch. STEM School Highlands Ranch contracts with STEM Enrichment to offer a variety of Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) after-school, during the 3 p.m. (2:45 p.m. for Elementary) to 5 p.m. time-slot.

STEM Enrichment will be open to all students in the South Metro Denver area. Students who are participating in any before or after school activity MUST:

- Register for the activity and have parents' permission.
- Report promptly to the activity.
- Bring all personal items to the activity with them.
- Not leave the building unless signed out of the activity.
- Leave the building promptly at the conclusion of the activity.

In accordance with STEM School Highlands Ranch policy, STEM School Highlands Ranch students will not be allowed to stay in the school building after school or before school if they are not enrolled in a class, BASE (Before and After School Enterprise) or STEM Enrichment activity. Students who are not participating in an after-school activity must leave the school building immediately at the end of the academic day. See Arrival and Departure below.

An ever-changing slate of programs is being offered to meet the needs and desires of STEM students and feedback is always welcomed and encouraged. For an updated listing of current program choices along with volunteer opportunities, [click here](#).

## Student Council

Representatives from all grades at STEM make up the Student Council. Students are selected through an application process that requires interested students to write answers to questions about their desire to serve the student body or by other means to be determined/ratified by the STEM School Highlands Ranch Constitution developed by the High School Civics class each year. The group will perform duties as outlined in the STEM School Highlands Ranch Constitution. The Student Council sponsors school dances, spirit activities, contests, and service learning projects throughout the year.

## Dances

STEM School Highlands Ranch dances are jointly sponsored and coordinated by the Student Council. At least six adults (three teachers and three parents) act as chaperones for all school dances. Dances are for currently enrolled students. Students may bring an age-appropriate guest to High School Dances only by registering that individual with the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level in advance. Students must remain in the dance area for the entire dance unless signed out by a parent/guardian. If a student leaves, he/she may not return. Students not attending the dance are not

allowed to loiter outside or in the parking lot. Students who are not picked up within an appropriate time after the dance ends are subject to fees. All school rules and policies apply during the dance. Administration and chaperones reserve the right to remove the student and/or his or her guest if school policy is not being followed.

## School Safety

### Arrival and Departure

#### Secondary Students

Please refer to the Bell Schedule for arrival and departure times. Please do not arrive before 7:30 a.m. unless enrolled in a first period activity. Middle and High School staff members are on duty from 7:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. Please note that some teachers may be on an “alternative schedule” meaning that they either teach a first or tenth period class. In this event, please contact that teacher directly for their designated office hours. Students are expected to leave campus after the final bell sounds unless they have permission to remain on campus (e.g., Office Hours, Detention, Homework Club, BASE, Enrichment activity or class, etc.). Middle and High School students are not to remain on campus past 3:15 p.m. unless under the direct supervision of a staff member.

#### Elementary Students

Elementary students may be dropped off starting at 7:20am. Elementary staff members are on duty from 7:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Elementary students must line up in their designated class area. Teachers will pick up their students at 7:30am from the driveline. Elementary students arriving after 7:40am will need to be signed in by their parent and/or guardian and are marked as tardy. Elementary students must be picked up when their grade levels are released and at the designated pick up times. Students riding home in a car must be picked up at school by 3:15 p.m. Students who remain after 3:15 p.m. will be subject to the late pickup fees and policy. Parents should remain in their vehicle when picking up their student(s) and must follow all [Driveline procedures](#) in order to ensure and maintain safety protocol.

### Late Pick-Up Policy

Student safety is the highest priority of the STEM School in Highlands Ranch. Therefore, we make every effort to ensure that all students are under appropriate supervision until they return to you at the end of their school day.

For that reason, we are concerned about students who are left after dismissal time or who are dropped over early in the morning. The school is not, and cannot, be staffed to provide supervision for students in these situations; hiring extra personnel to supervise is beyond our financial resources. In addition, children can feel confused and apprehensive when they are not picked up on time. We recommend that families utilize the BASE program, a state-licensed after school program for students under the age of 12.

Parents are required to pick up children within 20 minutes of dismissal. Our Elementary School dismissal is at 2:25 p.m. for Kindergarten and First Graders.

Our Second through Fifth Graders are dismissed at 2:35 p.m. Parents of ES students arriving after 3:15p.m., will be charged \$1.00 per minute. Middle School and High School students are dismissed at 2:55 pm. Parents arriving after 3:15 pm will be charged \$1.00 per minute.

Any students staying after school for any reason (i.e. Enrichment offerings, working with classroom teachers, BASE or After School Care) are required to be in the appropriate location immediately upon dismissal of school. The school is not responsible for students not adhering to this policy.

Please note that all late fees will be added to the parent's My School Bucks account.

If a parent has not arrived to pick up their child and cannot be reached by phone within 15 minutes after dismissal time, we will call the emergency contact(s) listed on their enrollment forms. The Department of Social Services and/or the Douglas County Police Department will be contacted if parents cannot be contacted or do not arrive within 30 minutes of closing time. Thank you for your assistance in this safety matter.

## Attendance, Absences, Tardiness and Truancy

### Attendance

State law requires that all students from age six (6) up to age seventeen (17) regularly attend school. The basic responsibility for regular school attendance lies with the students and with the parents. The role of the school in attendance matters is one of cooperation, counseling, and reporting to parents and the school district. The law expects parental cooperation. It is the duty of the school officials to know the whereabouts of students during the school hours.

Students may be excused for specific purposes only when signed out appropriately through the main office. Attendance is taken during the first 10 minutes of each class period and a record is kept of absences from each class. Hours of absence will be accumulated and recorded on report cards and on permanent school records at the end of each school year.

Excessive absence (excused or unexcused) of 5 days or more may require a conference with administration to ensure that the student's academic and health needs are being met. Once a student has been absent (excused or unexcused) from a class 7 days or more, the student may be in jeopardy of failing that class, per the discretion of the teacher and STEM administration.

## Absences

Absence from school during regularly scheduled school hours.

- If a student is expected to be absent, parents may excuse the absence by calling STEM between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. within 48 hours of the absence. A written excuse is not necessary if the parent has made a phone call.
- A student shall not leave the school during the school day without reporting to the appropriate school office and obtaining permission, unless off campus lunch privileges apply. Failure to report to the office shall result in being charged with an unexcused absence or truancy.
- If a student becomes ill while in school, he/she shall report to the main office. An attempt will be made to contact a parent before allowing the student to go home. All students will be asked to list two (2) additional people whom the school may call if contact cannot be made with either parent. The student will be retained until contact can be made with a responsible adult who will take charge of the student.
- Students who are excused must leave the school and / or be off school grounds.
- A student must be in attendance during the day of an evening activity in order to participate in the evening activity, unless he/she has an excused absence.
- Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences may be denied credit for the course.
- Students who accumulate seven (7) total absences (excused or unexcused) per semester may be denied credit for the course.

## Excused Absences

An excused absence is defined as resulting from temporary or extended leave from school for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- Family emergency (death, serious illness)
- Funeral
- Dental or medical appointments that cannot be made on Saturdays or after school hours
- School sponsored activities
- Prearranged absence by the parent. This will require advance make-up work except in emergencies, which will be evaluated and determined valid or invalid by the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level.
- Any absence where the student is accompanied by the parent.
- Absences when a student is in custody of a court or law enforcement authority.
- Other absences approved by the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level.

An absence from school without the authorization of the parents or the school for reasons not acceptable as defined above as "excused absence" is an unexcused absence and shall be considered truancy.

Missed work for unexcused absences may not receive full credit. This decision is at the discretion of the teacher and administration. An unexcused absence is defined as:

- An absence that the parent/guardian is unaware of, and/or not accepting of the reason for absence.
- An absence not excused within 48 hours and, therefore, unwilling to excuse.
- An absence that the school does not accept as legitimate.
- Missed work for unexcused absences may not receive full credit.
- Four (4) unexcused absences during any one month or a total of ten (10) unexcused absences during any school year will qualify the students “habitually truant” according to DCSD policy.

## Tardiness

Punctuality is one of the self-disciplines that students are encouraged to learn. Students are expected to be punctual for all classes throughout the year.

Being tardy is the failure to appear on time and is considered a form of absence. Tardiness is defined as not being in the student’s designated seat, with all materials setup, when the bell rings. Teachers may further define a tardy policy in their course syllabus.

- Students will be disciplined in accordance with the STEM School Highlands Ranch discipline policy listed below.
- Students can earn an unexcused absence by acquiring three (3) tardies.
- Students who are more than 10 minutes late for class will earn an unexcused absence.
- Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences may be denied credit for the course.
- Common problems such as car trouble, oversleeping, or forgetting materials in a locker are unacceptable reasons for tardy arrivals to school or class.
- A tardy to a student’s first class of the day can only be excused with a doctor’s note.

## Truancy

**Phase 1.** Upon acquiring two (2) excused or unexcused absences within one month or upon acquiring five (5) excused or unexcused absences within a school year, STEM may notify the parent/guardian of the student in writing to alert them that their student is at medium risk of being qualified as Habitually Truant. This notification will include the number of excused/unexcused absences that have been recorded for the student and a summary of parental obligations regarding compulsory attendance policies and laws. An agent of the school will attempt to ascertain the reason for the student’s high number of absences and counsel the parent/guardian and student about the importance of attendance from both an academic and legal perspective.

**Phase 2.** Upon acquiring three (3) excused or unexcused absences within one month or upon acquiring eight (8) excused or unexcused absences within a school year, STEM may notify the parent/guardian of the student in writing to alert them that their student is at high risk of being qualified as Habitually Truant. This notification will include the same information as the previous notice and add information about the school’s legal responsibility to move toward legal action in case the student’s excused/unexcused absences equal or exceed four (4) or more excused/unexcused absences with a month or equal or exceed ten (10) or more excused/unexcused absences in a school year. An agent

of the school will organize a meeting with the parent/guardian and the student to develop a plan for the student with the goal of assisting the student to remain in school.

**Phase 3.** Upon acquiring four (4) or more excused or unexcused absences within a month or acquiring ten (10) or more excused or unexcused absences within a school year or calendar year, STEM may present to the Board of Directors Exhibit A, Exhibit B and Exhibit C as documentation of the school's enforcement of compulsory attendance. The Board of Directors shall notify the parent/guardian in writing that the student is now considered Habitually Truant and that the matter shall be reported to the Douglas County Truancy Review Board.

**Phase 4.** The Douglas County Truancy Review Board may pursue judicial proceedings to compel compliance with the compulsory attendance statute and/or to enlist community resources. Possible consequences of judicial proceedings may include, but are not limited to, contempt, jail or fines. The Board of Directors may combine the notice of Habitual Truancy to parents/guardians and summons. If combined, the petition shall state the date on which proceedings will be initiated, which date shall not be less than five days from the date of the notice and summons. The notice shall state the provisions of this article with which compliance is required and shall state that the proceedings will not be brought if the child complies with that provision before the filing of the proceeding (C.R.S. § 22-33-108(5)).

## Closed Campus

STEM School Highlands Ranch is a closed campus for students in grades K through 9. Once students have begun their school day, they are required to remain on campus until the completion of the school day unless appropriate arrangements have been made and/or approved by a parent or guardian. Students in grades 10th-12th will be granted open campus privileges.

## Leaving School

Students are not permitted to leave school grounds at any time during the school day. The only exception to this rule is students who are participating in off campus lunch privileges. If a student must leave because of illness, medical appointments, or family emergencies, a parent must sign their student out. Returning students must sign-in at the office. Individual teachers do not have authority to excuse any student from the school during the school day.

## Emergency Closing, Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals

The following procedures are used to close school or to delay the opening of school due to inclement weather. STEM School Highlands Ranch may follow the closing and/or delay procedures set forth for the Douglas County Highlands Ranch Feeder Area. If the Highlands Ranch Feeder Area is not mentioned, please plan for the school to operate on a regular schedule. The Douglas County School District website and telephone hotline will continue to be your best resource in the event of delay and closure. ([www.dcsdk12.org](http://www.dcsdk12.org); or 303.387.SNOW (7669)). Also note that in the event of nearby lightning, students may be kept



inside for delayed dismissal following the Douglas County School District [lightning protocols](#).

### Delayed Opening

When transportation providers and town road crews feel that road conditions are not safe, the Douglas County Superintendent of Schools is notified and the opening of school may be delayed for 90 minutes. In this case, STEM will revert to a [Virtual School Day Policy](#). The local media outlets will be notified of the delayed opening for their announcements. This information is distributed to television stations no later than 6:00 AM. If at 6:45 AM the roads are still not safe for travel, then the schools will be closed for the day and the procedures listed above will be used to make the “no school” announcement.

### Early Dismissal

Students may be dismissed early from school to ensure their safety home due to inclement weather. The decision on after-school activities will be made by Douglas County School District no later than 1:30 in the afternoon. Changes in school schedules will be posted on the website and announced on local television stations.

### Closing School

If the decision is to close school rather than to delay the opening, the local media outlets will be notified of the decision to close school for their announcements. This information is distributed to television stations no later than 6:00 AM. There may be times when only certain roads or areas are not passable. When conditions prohibit arriving safely and on time, students are not marked tardy. If parents feel that the roads to school are not safe, children may be kept at home. Parents should contact the school to let them know and the absence will be an excused absence.

### Emergency Protocol

Below you will find general information that you should be aware of in the event of an emergency. Please keep in mind that not all information is disclosed in order to protect the safety of staff and students.

- Staff members will not open doors during a lockdown.
- Visitors will be allowed access to students only if the Douglas County Sheriff's Department (DCSD) determines the site is secure.
- The school will adhere to all demands by the DCSD. Please watch this [video](#) by DCSD about the Standard Response Protocol that our school follows.
- Information regarding a lockdown or other emergency at the school will be posted on the school's social media and website ([www.stemk12.org](http://www.stemk12.org)) as soon as possible. However, our main priority will be the safety of the student prior to parent communications. Therefore, we may not be able to answer the phones or return calls as quickly in the event of an emergency.
- Parents are asked not to contact the DCSD for information. This is a firm request of the DCSD.
- We will attempt to provide parents and guardians with accurate information as quickly as possible. However, please understand that events of this nature are very fluid and constantly changing. Also be aware that information from other sources,

such as news media, Facebook or Twitter, may not be accurate. Should your child contact you during such an event, remind them it is important they follow the directions of school staff.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies, and State local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

## Tobacco and Drug Free Zone

STEM School Highlands Ranch is a tobacco free/drug free zone in accordance with state law. We practice 'zero tolerance' for drugs and alcohol at school. Possession of these items at school will result in disciplinary action as stated in the STEM School Highlands Ranch discipline policy. In accordance, vaporizers or similar devices are considered paraphernalia

and may be used to administer tobacco or other drugs. Any drug paraphernalia will be immediately confiscated, the student will be suspended, and the police will immediately be notified to issue a “minor in possession” ticket.

## Technology

### Cell Phones

Cell phones are a fact of modern times. We believe that it is our responsibility to teach students how to use technology responsibly, not prohibit its use. The STEM School Highlands Ranch administration makes accommodations for students to possess cell phones at school under the following guidelines:

- Cell phones are to be used appropriately, without disrupting the teaching and learning process, during the school day.
- Cell phones are the responsibility of the student; STEM School Highlands Ranch takes no responsibility in case of theft or loss of a cell phone.

Any violation of the guidelines listed above may result in confiscation of the cell phone, notification of parents, and suspension of the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school. Continuing infractions will result in more stringent consequences. STEM teachers and the administration reserve the right to confiscate a student’s cell phone if it is hindering their or a peer’s learning or in any way negatively contributing to the class and school culture.

### Netiquette (Internet Étiquette)

Appropriate Internet and/or electronic communication is imperative in today’s professional and personal wireless environment. Here are a few of the basics:

- Don’t SHOUT in all caps. Remember: The person on the other end of a digital communication can’t see your expression or hear your tone of voice.
- Cool off before responding to messages in anger.
- Check messages for misspellings or misstatements.
- Respect others’ privacy and your own (for example, be cautious when giving your phone number to that new Facebook friend).
- Use a clear and understandable email subject line.
- Adjust your tone and style to the situation (for example, don’t use IM-speak or all lowercase letters in an internship application).
- Don’t forward private messages to people to whom they weren’t intended
- Don’t copy others on replies to personal messages.
- When you receive an email which says to send it to everyone you know, please don’t. If you receive a nasty email do not respond to it. Notify your parents or teacher. Do not forward jokes, chain letters or unimportant e-mails without the recipient’s permission.

*Remember: Email is never really private and a copy may exist in cyberspace . . . forever.*

Students: Students are subject to the following specific rules related to social media:

- Do not Plagiarize - Do not copy the work of others. Give proper attribution for quotations and ideas. Write to develop and express your own thoughts.
- Use Appropriate Language - Obscene, insulting, threatening, derogatory, inflammatory and bullying language is not appropriate and almost always detracts from your ideas.
- Respect the Power of Public Media - Honor the wishes of fellow students that information (e.g., compromising stories) be kept private. Always remember that posted information may seem private, but is highly public.
- Do Not Spam - Meaningless, mass and repetitive messages are not appropriate.
- Read, then Reply - Do not skim statements and respond. Understand the thoughts of another before you comment on them.
- Do Not Hack - Never access another person's identity or account, or restricted sources of information.
- Only Use School Media to Communicate with Teachers - Teachers are not permitted to use non-school media to communicate with students and this restriction applies to students as well. Do not attempt to "friend" a teacher on any non-school social media site (such as Facebook) and do not accept a friend request from a teacher.

### **Consequences**

Consequences for behavior inconsistent with this policy may range from warnings and counseling, through requiring a written apology all the way to *termination of staff employment*, expulsion of students, or banning parents from school media and grounds. It is the administration's decision as to which consequence is most appropriate.

Consequences apply to the individual who is not complying with the policy requirements. Never have we nor would we ever punish students for parents behavior.

Parents: Parents are asked to respect the following related to social media:

- Discourage Rumors - Do not rely upon or pass on unsubstantiated information or gossip. If information seems unlikely and inflammatory, it is most likely untrue and inflammatory. When in doubt, go directly to the source.
- Respect Confidentiality - Many personnel issues and many issues involving other families and students are legitimately confidential (and many are confidential by law). If you would not want information about your job or your child made public, do not make or expect to see in public such information about others.
- Debate Issues Constructively - Schools often face legitimate controversies. STEM School Highlands Ranch respects and solicits parent voices in addressing such issues. Effective arguments are usually civil, measured, well-supported and take into account the legitimate reasons for opposing views. Ineffective arguments are abusive, disrespectful of others, and marked by hyperbole or factual carelessness.

### Technology – Acceptable Use Policy

**Policy Purpose** - This policy was developed in accordance with the STEM School Highlands Ranch effort to graduate students of honor and integrity and to encourage those students to use resources in an ethical and responsible manner. It is the intent of STEM to provide the student with guidelines on appropriate use of the school network, the Internet, and e-mail.

**Classroom Technology Monitoring** - The use of educational technology is central to the mission of the STEM School Highlands Ranch. In order to optimize on-task time in the classroom and facilitate better teacher oversight of usage, STEM utilizes technology-monitoring software. Each student enrolled at STEM will be required to have technology monitoring software installed on any device used to access school-provided network and internet.

**Acceptable Use** - Students are expected to use all technology not only lawfully, but also with respect, responsibility, honesty, and integrity. Guidelines for use include but are not limited to:

- Students must use appropriate language and images in all electronic or digital communication or posting. Profanity, vulgarity, or other inappropriate language, gestures, or images are forbidden.
- Students are not permitted to harass, bully, intimidate, stalk, demean, ridicule, deride, or threaten under any circumstances, through any medium or any resource, including but not limited to STEM's technology resources, personal or home computers, personal cell phones, and other personal or home electronic devices, as well as social network sites and internet sites.
- Students are not permitted to search for, retrieve, save, download, forward, text, or display hate-based, offensive, pornographic, or sexually explicit material.
- Students are not permitted to engage in electronic or digital activities that reflect negatively on themselves, or defame or disparage other students, teachers, the community or the school.
- Students will follow all guidelines set forth by their teachers for classroom use of electronic devices. Devices used outside of those guidelines may be confiscated by the teacher and turned over to the Assistant Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level at the teacher's discretion.
- Students are not permitted to copy information and present it as their own work without proper citation. Students will abide by all copyright, trademark, licensing, and other laws governing intellectual property, including those that apply to music, film, and video.
- Students will protect their own personal information and images, and that of others.
- Students are not permitted to pretend to be someone else when posting. This includes, but is not limited to, sending out email, creating accounts, or posting messages, images, or other online content in someone else's name or without permission to post.
- Students are not allowed to attempt to use one another's login or give out their own login information to others.
- Students are not allowed to attempt to use one another's login or give out their own login information to others.
- Students will conserve STEM's technology resources by printing only school-related material, limiting information stored on the network or in email, and refrain from sending or forwarding junk mail, spam, or group emails.
- Students are not permitted to access or alter—or attempt to access or alter—parts of STEM's technology resources that they have not been given express permission to use, including but not limited to bypassing security settings or internet filters, or interfering with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware on school-owned equipment.

- Students are not permitted to damage or disrupt—or attempt to damage or disrupt—school equipment, the network, or the property of others, including but not limited to modifying or destroying equipment, programs, files, or settings on any computer or other technology resource, creating and propagating viruses. If a student has been found to have damaged another student’s property or the property of STEM School Highlands Ranch, that student and their family will be financially responsible for the damaged property.
- Students are not permitted to download or install software on or over STEM’s technology resources without clear and express permission, including but not limited to games.
- Students are not permitted to use or install anywhere on campus personally owned devices such as hubs, switches, routers, wireless access points and servers or server services.
- Students are not allowed to “friend” teachers or invite teachers via a social network site, nor should they accept a “friend” invitation from a teacher unless it relates to official school business—class, athletic team, or student organization.

### Technology Misuse

Inappropriate or unapproved use of technology may result in a loss of technology privileges and/or disciplinary action, as determined necessary by the administration.

### Protecting Student Information

STEM School Highlands Ranch requires 5th grade, middle, and high school students to bring laptop computers to school. Because students bring their own laptops to school, this is considered a BYOD, or Bring Your Own Device, educational organization. Because of this, students may be bringing technical devices to school that contain not only school-related information, but personal information as well. Thus, teachers and staff are not allowed to scan, review, or in any way collect information that could be considered personal in nature. When in doubt, assume the information is personal and it should not be reviewed.

If information on a student’s device is relevant to activities at the School or Enrichment, meaning that it supports the assignments, assessments, projects, and other classroom activities or related homework, or is related to clubs, or Enrichment programs, then the material can be considered relevant to the School or the Enrichment and it can be reviewed, monitored, assessed, collected and stored by teachers, staff and Enrichment coaches for only so long as School or Enrichment policies require.

While in the classroom or other parts of the School and Enrichment, student devices may be monitored to ensure that the student is attending satisfactorily to the classroom or program activities at any given time. Teachers and staff may only monitor the student’s activities to ascertain that the student is, or is not appropriately focused. If the student is not, the teacher should of course correct the situation. This kind of monitoring shall not, however, in any circumstance include the monitoring or review of the student’s past internet activity, application usage, browsing history, or keystroke logging. If a teacher or staff member believes that such information has been collected either intentionally or unintentionally they must inform the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the

student's grade level immediately so that the situation can be reviewed and corrected. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Parents have the right to have students attend school without registering their devices with the monitoring software used by the School or Enrichment.

## Information Technology

### I. PURPOSE.

To support its educational mission, STEM School Highlands Ranch may provide information technology ("IT"), such as computers, networks, Internet access, and electronic-mail accounts, to its students. The STEM Board believes that IT should be used at STEM as a learning resource to educate and to inform, and that STEM has an obligation to teach its students to be responsible IT users.

Subject to this policy, STEM staff shall be free to select and implement IT which STEM, deems best furthers the STEM mission.

While parents and students themselves are ultimately responsible for student behavior at school and student use of STEM IT, the School will make every reasonable effort to ensure that students use STEM IT appropriately and responsibly. To this end, the School has implemented content filtering measures that direct student learning and restrict student access to inappropriate material, in accordance with applicable law. Administrators, teachers, and staff have a professional responsibility to work together and with parents to help students develop the intellectual skills needed to evaluate and choose information sources, to identify information appropriate to the age and developmental levels of the students, and to evaluate and use information to meet their educational goals.

Because all STEM IT is owned, leased, or licensed by STEM, STEM is responsible for all content stored or retained on any STEM-owned IT device or on the STEM's networks (together referred to as "STEM IT activity"). STEM therefore has the right to monitor all School IT activity and students have a limited expectation of privacy in any information they access, receive, or create using or on STEM IT.

STEM IT may periodically fail or be interrupted, leading to loss of data or service interruption, and the School therefore makes no warranties of any kind related to its IT. STEM shall develop and maintain operational policies addressing (1) remote access, monitoring and tracking of school-issued and student-owned computers; (2) student use, rights and responsibilities relating to computers used at STEM; (3) an "instructional technology" policy regarding use of technology in learning, including integrating technology for collaborative purposes, consistent with the STEM mission; and (4) the training of STEM staff with respect to student laptops and privacy, and the administration, oversight, and enforcement of such policies and regulations.

### II. POLICY

A. The Board authorizes the Executive Director to develop rules and procedures (“Administrative IT Policies”) for staff and student use of technology which are consistent with this policy and the following standards.

1. All Administrative IT Policies shall comply with this policy.
2. Before adoption of monitoring software of any nature, STEM shall specifically identify the need for such software and whether there are less intrusive alternatives that can accomplish the same goal or need.
3. Student generated computer data (“SGCD”) is data generated by a student while using a computer. Information or data contained on any such computer is “personal computer data” or “PCD”. PCD includes specific “user logging information” (“ULI”). “Logging” is the process by which a system collects data about a computer network and the individuals using the network. STEM shall treat both SGCD and PCD as “records” as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).
4. Software that has the ability to collect PCD or SGCD shall not be used or implemented prior to the adoption of Administrative IT Policies governing use of such software.
5. STEM shall obtain informed consent from each student’s parent or guardian prior to the installation of any software on any student-owned computer and prior to implementation of any technology which has the ability to collect or monitor PCD, so that prior to the giving of such consent students and their families are fully informed of the ability of any such software or technology to collect and monitor such data and to protect such data.
6. Any technology which permits viewing or collecting of PCD shall not permit such monitoring or collection beyond any legitimate educational interests.
7. Keystroke monitoring technology shall not be used or implemented in the absence of a specific legitimate educational purpose which cannot be achieved without this technology and without specific consent from each student’s parent or guardian.
8. STEM shall not log or access PCD or SGCD other than for legitimate educational purposes. STEM shall maintain a record or log of all access or logging which records each instance of access, the data accessed, the identity of the accessing party, and the legitimate educational purpose for such access.
9. The exceptions allowing STEM staff to access PCD, other than where consent is given, shall be limited to situations where there is a reasonable suspicion of violation of either a law or school policy where there is a risk of harm to another.
10. STEM staff shall complete training regarding technology and technology policies prior to use or implementation of any such technologies.
11. For students (a) who are unable or unwilling to bring personal computers to STEM or (b) whose parent or guardian do not consent to the use or installation of monitoring software on a personal computer, STEM shall use its best efforts to make necessary accommodations to ensure that such student’s education is not adversely affected.
12. For computers issued by STEM, students and their parents shall be required to sign acceptable use agreements, which will detail appropriate and inappropriate use of STEM-owned computers.
13. Remote monitoring of any kind, including activation of webcams, screen shots, audio, and video, shall be prohibited.
14. All procedures shall comply with applicable state and federal law.

B. In addition to rules specifically concerning IT, general policies, regulations, and rules governing student conduct apply to the use of IT. Violating such policies, regulations, or rules may result in the loss of the privilege to use some or all of the School’s IT, discipline



(which can include suspension and expulsion), reimbursement to the School for unauthorized charges or costs, civil legal proceedings, and referral to law enforcement authorities. The School may provide examples of prohibited uses of IT in handbooks or Administrative IT Policies.

Approved by STEM School Highlands Ranch Board on September 25, 2013

Sources:

20 U.S.C. 1232, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

47 U.S.C. 201 et seq., Communications Decency Act of 1995

47 U.S.C. 231 et seq., Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 2000

C.R.S. 22-87-101 et seq., Children's Internet Protection Act

DCSD Policy JICD, Student Use of District Information Technology

## Communication

STEM School Highlands Ranch recognizes the importance of appropriate communication pathways. STEM School Highlands Ranch will maintain a web page and update it regularly with information on events and issues of importance to the community. Email news and announcements will be sent as needed to augment and emphasize items on the web page. Communication between the school and parents is also vitally important to the proper operation of the school. Often misunderstandings can arise when events in the classroom are interpreted through the eyes of our students. Effective communication pathways can reduce or eliminate the impact of these events. The following are provided as a guide for communication within the school and between the school and our community.

- Parents or community members with questions about the conduct of school should make every attempt to contact the appropriate teachers first. Contact may be via phone call, email, or meetings with the teachers.
- Teachers are to make every attempt to respond to email and phone messages within two business days of receipt of the question.
- If parents or community members have questions that do not involve specific teachers, they should arrange a meeting with the Assistant Director of Student Experience for the student's grade level to discuss issues of broader concern. Appointments can be set up by calling the office (303-683-STEM).
- In the event concerns are not satisfactorily met, parents or community members have the option to present the concerns to the STEM School Highlands Ranch Board of Directors. Inquiries to the Board will be routed through the STEM Executive Director (or the highest ranking school official).

Link here for the [Communications Pathways](#). This will help guide you to the right person for your questions and/or concerns. You may reach the communications department directly by emailing: [communications@stemk12.org](mailto:communications@stemk12.org).

### Change of Contact Information (Address, Phone Number, etc.)

Please inform the main office of any change in address, telephone number, and/or emergency number. This will enable us to contact parents in a timely manner when necessary. Upon enrollment, the parent(s) enrolling the student will be considered the

“primary contact.” In cases of joint custody, the primary contact parent is expected to share student/school information with the other parent. The parents should provide the school with a written request if both parents’ request mailings, along with a supply of self-addressed, stamped envelopes. If a restraining or other court order is in effect, it is the parent’s responsibility to provide the school’s administration with a copy of the order in a timely manner.

## **Grievance and Complaints**

The grievance procedure may be used for any situation occurring within the operation or normal procedures of the school, which causes a student, parent or guardian to believe that a student has been wronged. A student, parent, or guardian may initiate the procedure when they believe that a violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of school or Board policy or state or federal law or regulation has occurred. If students or parents have concerns that involve classroom teachers, the Board strongly encourages the concerned persons first to contact the teacher directly to resolve such matters informally whenever possible. If the concern is with the school administrators or support staff, the Board strongly encourages concerned persons to attempt direct contact with the Executive Director or appropriate Director for the student’s grade level to reach a satisfactory resolution, if possible.

### **A. Step 1 – Director of Elementary, Middle, or High School (for appropriate grade level)**

A student, parent or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the respective Director for the student’s grade level to discuss the grievance and seek resolution. The request shall describe the grievance and name the specific policy, rule or law believed to have been violated. The following additional guidelines shall be observed in Step 1:

- A grievance shall be filed as soon as possible, but no longer than thirty (30) days after disclosure of the facts which give rise to the grievance.
- The Director for the student’s grade level may grant the conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the request.
- The Director for the student’s grade level may state in writing his/her position on the question to the student, parent or guardian within five (5) school days following the Director for the student’s grade level conference.
- Only the parent, guardian, or someone acting in loco parentis shall be permitted to join or represent the student in the conference with the Director for the student’s grade level. If a teacher is involved, he or she must also be present.

### **B. Step 2 – Appeal to Executive Director**

If the grievance is not resolved by Step 1 or, if the grievance involves the Director, the student, parent or guardian may appeal the Executive Director’s decision in writing to the Executive Director. A written notice of Appeal to the Board must be made within ten (10) school days following the action of the Director that gives rise to the grievance, or receipt of the written response from the Director. The Executive Director may review the prior decision within five (school days) following receipt of the request. If the Executive Director

needs more information on the matter, he or she may schedule a conference within five (5) days following the receipt of the request. Only the parent, guardian, or someone active in loco parentis shall be permitted to join or represent the student in the conference with the Executive Director. The Director may be present as well in this conference. The Executive Director may state in writing his/her position on the question to the student, parent or guardian within five (5) days following the receipt of the grievance or following the conference.

### **C. Step 3 – Appeal to Board**

If the grievance is not resolved by Step 1 or Step 2 or, if the grievance involves the Executive Director, the student, parent or guardian may appeal the Executive Director’s decision in writing to the Board of Directors. A written notice of Appeal to the Board must be made within ten (10) school days following the action of the Executive Director that gives rise to the grievance, or receipt of the written response from the Executive Director. The Board may review the Executive Director’s decision at the next regular Board meeting which occurs more than four (4) school days after receipt of the Grievance Notice from the parent and shall provide notice and an opportunity to be heard to the parent, guardian or student invoking the grievance written response to the student, parent, guardian, Director and Executive Director within ten (10) school days following the review by the Board. (There will be a 20-minute time limit for each party to present their case. The Board may grant a ten-minute extension.)

## **Whistleblower Policy**

### **1. Purpose and Policy**

STEM School Highlands Ranch (the “School”) requires School board members, employees, students and parents to observe high standards of professional and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. All School board members, employees, students and parents must comply with all School policy, applicable laws and ordinances, regulatory requirements and Douglas County School District (referred to in this policy as “District”) policies applicable to charter schools, except to the extent that the School has obtained waivers from state law and District policies in accordance with the charter school contract.

It is the School’s policy to promptly investigate any complaint about the School as appropriate to the nature of the information in the complaint. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable persons to raise serious concerns within the School prior to seeking resolution outside the School.

### **2. Questions, Suggestions, and Informal Grievances**

The School is committed to welcoming, encouraging and supporting parents and guardians (jointly referred to in this Policy as “Parents”) as key partners in the education of our

students. We value Parents' ideas, opinions and concerns, knowing Parents understand how issues and events affect their students and families.

Parents and students should share their feedback, questions and suggestions regarding the School and its operations with the correct person who can answer their questions and receive their feedback. The School's Communications Pathways document provides guidance for how to provide feedback and get questions, minor concerns and informal grievances addressed.

The School's informal grievance process is intended to provide parties an opportunity to express and resolve grievances at the lowest level possible. The informal process provides neutral facilitation and mediation, with the goal of informal resolution, restitution, and relationship repair. If students or Parents have concerns that involve classroom teachers, they are strongly encouraged to contact the teacher directly to resolve such matters informally whenever possible. The "Grievances and Complaints" section of the School's Student/Parent Handbook outlines the reporting and escalation procedure for informal grievances.

### 3. Formal Complaints

The School fosters an "Open Door Policy" and encourages Parents, students, employees, school board members and community members to share formal complaints regarding the School and its operations with someone who can address them properly. Formal complaints are incidents suspected to have violated School policy, legal or regulatory obligations of the School. The "Grievances and Complaints" section of the School's Student/Parent Handbook outlines the reporting procedure for formal complaints. Unsatisfactory resolution persisting after appeal to the School's Executive Director shall be taken up with the School Board via a written notice of appeal to the School Board.

### 4. No Retaliation

No person who in good faith reports a violation of School policy, law or regulatory requirement shall suffer harassment or retaliation. No School student shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse academic consequence for their Parents' good faith report of violation of School policy, law or regulatory requirement.

A School board member, committee member or employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment or removal from the School Board.

### 5. School's Compliance Officer

Role Title (TBD) will act as the School's Compliance Officer. The School's Compliance Officer is responsible for conducting or directing the investigation and resolution of allegations concerning violations of School policy, law or regulatory requirements. Reports of any

illegal or unethical conduct should be made directly to the School's Compliance Officer. The below table describes investigation responsibility and resolution reporting requirements for certain allegation sources and involved parties.

<b>Source of Reported Violation</b>	<b>Involved Parties</b>	<b>Investigation Point of Contact</b>	<b>Resolution Reporting</b>
Any	Faculty, Admin	School's Compliance Officer	Exec. Director, School Board Compliance Committee Chair
Any	Exec. Director, School Compliance Officer	School Board Compliance Committee Chair, External Counsel	School Board of Directors, DCSD Director of Choice Programming
Any	School Board of Directors	School's Compliance Officer or External Counsel	DCSD Director of Choice Programming
School's Compliance Officer or School Board Member or DCSD	Any	School Board Compliance Committee Chair or External Counsel	School Board of Directors, DCSD Director of Choice Programming

The School's Compliance Officer is responsible for reporting to the School Board of Directors the status of compliance matters on no less than a quarterly basis. This report will include the number of investigations currently open and number of investigations closed since prior report and other matters deemed appropriate.

## 6. Accounting and Auditing Matters

The School's Compliance Officer shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and shall immediately notify the School Board of Directors Compliance Committee Chair of any such complaint and work with the School Board Compliance Committee until the matter is resolved.

## 7. Requirement of Good Faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a suspected violation of School policy, law or regulatory requirements must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

## 8. Confidentiality and Anonymous Complaints

Formal complaints may be submitted on a confidential basis or may be submitted anonymously. Details of formal complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

## 9. Handling of Reported Violations

The School's Compliance Officer, or the person responsible for carrying out the Compliance Officer's role with respect to a reported violation, will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint in writing to the complainant within five business days (e-mail is acceptable). All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

The School shall keep the Douglas County School District ("District") apprised of interim and remedial measures taken in response to complaints forwarded to the School by the District by notification to the Choice Programming Office. The School shall notify the District of the resolution of the complaint within thirty (30) business days of resolution by notification to the District's Choice Programming Office.

## 10. Posting of Policy

This policy must be prominently displayed on the School's website and promoted to students and parents through email once per year.

## **Disciplinary Philosophy & Procedures**

### Philosophy of Discipline at STEM School Highlands Ranch

Schools belong to the parents, students, community, and teachers. The school community serves as a common ground allowing students and teachers to form partnerships, which will foster learning in a positive and caring environment. The teacher serves as a guide to the student traveling along the path to knowledge and learning.

A successful learning atmosphere is created when students and teachers are able to interact in a positive and safe environment. Discipline and self-discipline are important tools, which help students, and teachers create an optimum learning environment for STEM School Highlands Ranch.

The STEM School Highlands Ranch utilizes the principles of restorative practices to help students and teachers thrive in this optimum learning environment. Restorative practices focus on building strong positive relationships and repairing those relationships when they have been harmed. By creating strong positive relationships in the classroom and school

community, teachers are able to teach and students are able to learn in a safe and positive environment. More information about restorative practices is detailed below.

In addition, students are expected to be positive participants in relation to the school community. The same behavior that is expected of students at school is also expected of them both before and after school hours on school grounds and at all school-sponsored activities. The expectations that the school community has of students today teach them the same expectations the community will have of them as responsible citizens. Rules and guidelines for behavior are not designed to be traps to “catch” students doing something wrong so that a student can be punished. These rules and guidelines are established to provide structure to help students develop a sense of self-discipline.

A student’s actions should be directed to improving the school and the school’s learning environment. There may be times when a student has difficulty acting in a positive manner. When students create a problem for themselves or someone else, they will be guided with concern and respect through owning and solving the problem. The following “Principles of Discipline” are outlined below so students and parents know how the staff will relate with the students.

## Principles of Discipline

When students create a problem for themselves or others, the staff will intervene to stop or change that behavior. The staff recognizes that everyone makes mistakes. How the staff reacts to these mistakes and how the staff intervenes can help the students learn from their mistakes. The staff at STEM School Highlands Ranch believes in following these Principles of Discipline based off the restorative approach:

- The student and the situation will be handled on an individual basis. At STEM School Highlands Ranch we believe that every situation is unique. Different strategies work for different students and different situations. Teachers are also unique, so different teachers may use different strategies.
- The student will be encouraged to make decisions to solve problems and will live with the consequences of those decisions. School staff will always advise or guide students to do what they believe is best for the student and the school. Now is the time for students to learn effective decision-making. Consequences are not as great now as when the student becomes an adult.
- The student will solve the problem so it does not make a problem for others. The staff encourages problem solving in STEM School Highlands Ranch. The staff teaches and models respect for each other and responsibility for our actions. The student will be guided through a problem-solving process where they will learn to recognize the rights of others and acquire appropriate decision-making skills.
- The student will take ownership for actions and feelings, to help foster the feeling that he/she has some control. Students will determine their alternatives, or choices. With these choices, students will have control of their consequences.
- The student will be given the opportunity to learn from his/her problem. The student’s needs for guidance, for understanding the situation, and time for reflection, will be supported.

- Students will be given the opportunity to maintain their respect and self esteem. A student's self-concept can be enhanced even during situations in which students are being disciplined or required to meet firm expectations.
- A balance of consequences and concern replace punishment whenever possible. Students need to understand the relationship between their decisions and the resulting consequences. Consequences will be given that show genuine concern for the student's problem to help avoid power struggles and encourage self-reflection.

## Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices is a collaborative approach to building relationships and repairing relationships when they have been harmed. Based on the core belief that "we are all connected," the broad spectrum of Restorative Practices support:

- building healthy relationships
- repairing harm when it has impacted a community
- reintegrating those who need to be welcomed back into our school communities

When we feel connected, we are less likely to intentionally cause harm to one another and more likely to be kind, respectful, supportive, and collaborative. These conditions are essential for both belonging and learning. Restorative Practices are put in place in response to an incident of harm. When an incident occurs, we ask questions and seek resolution. We seek relationship repair and we consider how to reintegrate individuals back into our community.

At STEM School Highlands Ranch the dean of students will guide a face-to-face conversation between the parties involved in an incident. These meetings are usually referred to as a "circle" or a "conference".

## Restorative Discipline

At STEM School Highlands Ranch when we approach discipline restoratively, we can both hold students accountable with logical consequences and continue to strengthen our relationships with them. We believe that discipline needs to happen WITH the student. By doing discipline with the student, we maintain high expectations for how we treat one another while also providing a high level of support as they work to change their behavior.

This restorative approach to teaching and reteaching behavior also allows us to slow down and give each incident the individual attention it deserves. We can listen to our student's perspective and, as adults, model taking responsibility when we have messed up. In this "sweet spot" of discipline, we are far more likely to walk away from a disciplinary



conversation feeling like we know our students better and have a concrete action plan versus feeling frustrated.

## STEM School Highlands Ranch Student Honor Code

Students will:

- Be polite and attentive.
- Bear the responsibility for his or her personal conduct.
- Attend school consistently, be on time, and take responsibility for making up any work promptly when absent.
- Respect the school's atmosphere of learning by attending class and being prepared and
- Be punctual and adhere to the dress code.
- Follow all reasonable requests made by adults on the premises with a positive attitude, and show respect for self, others and property.
- Cooperate with and respect the faculty and staff, including administrators, teachers, administrative staff, custodians, and any other people working in the school.
- Communicate in an acceptable tone of voice using an acceptable choice of words.
- Follow all lunchroom, gym, field-trip, lab, and individual classroom rules.
- Respect others by not threatening or intimidating any other person.
- Respect the health and safety of others, safety rules, and not use tobacco, alcohol, or other illegal substances.
- Be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell or the clock.
- Not leave school without signing out in the main office prior to leaving school at the scheduled end of day.
- Not bring electronic devices other than cell phones, i.e. iPods, games, etc. unless permitted by the teacher as part of the academic environment of the classroom. (Such items will be confiscated until the end of the year. Acceptability of electronic devices, games or other toys is at the discretion of the teachers and administration.)

## Elementary Behavior Expectations

STEM School Highlands Ranch believes in high expectations for students of any age. At the elementary level we follow a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support system in which we place a large focus on the positive behaviors our students are doing. STEM School Highlands Ranch elementary staff will continuously, throughout the year, teach and model behavior expectations for our students. Our students will be rewarded for demonstrating Spartan Characteristics: honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility and empathy, that align to the behavior expectations. For more information on behavior expectations and the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support system [click here](#)

## Assembly Behavior

STEM School Highlands Ranch is a performance-oriented school. Students are expected to respond positively to all programs. There are a variety of acceptable audience responses

such as applause, laughter at humor that is presented, and responding vocally to direct questions that may be asked. Members of the audience are not to interfere with stage performances. Students are not allowed to insult or intimidate guests and/or performers by rude behaviors such as yelling, whistling, standing up, moving around, or calling out people's names. Students who insist on this type of behavior will be dismissed from the program and referred to an administrator for disciplinary action.

At all performances, Students MUST:

- Enter the program venue calmly and go directly to their seats;
- Remain seated throughout the entire program;
- Treat guests with respect.
- Presenting guests have worked hard to prepare and should be extended the same courtesy as anyone who has achieved an honor or is presenting information to a STEM School Highlands Ranch audience.

Performances and school-wide programs at STEM School Highlands Ranch are an integral part of the curriculum. Students learn to demonstrate an understanding and respect for all guests and program visitors through appropriate audience response.

## Appropriate Media Policy

Images, songs, language and content displayed openly on technology devices must be non-discriminatory, non-violent and not objectify any race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. The following are considered unacceptable: Video games rated M or higher and movies rated R or higher. Students who display or view any of the above media will be referred to the Dean and be entered into the referral/discipline system.

## Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

STEM School Highlands Ranch is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers and visitors free from bullying, harassment, or intimidation. "Bullying, harassment, or intimidation" means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, cyber-bullying within social media, texting, sexting, or sharing of pictures, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, and when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically or emotionally harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- Is severe, persistent, or pervasive such that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the bullying, harassment, or intimidation, "other distinguishing characteristics" can include but not limited to:

- Physical appearance, clothing or other apparel;
- Socioeconomic status;

- Race, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics; or
- Marital status.

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the actions(s). This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, parent, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel to harass, bully, or discriminate against any person based upon any of the differences listed above. It shall also be a violation of the policy for any teacher, administrator or other school personnel to tolerate such harassment, bullying, or discrimination of any person by a student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or by any third parties subject to supervision and control of STEM School Highlands Ranch.

This policy is a component of STEM School's responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and is to be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers, including the education of students in partnership with families and the community. The policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the Comprehensive Safe Schools Plan that includes prevention, intervention, crisis response, recovery, and annual review. Employees, in particular, are expected to support the dignity and safety of all members of the school community. Depending upon the frequency and severity of the conduct, counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact of the victim. This includes appropriate interventions(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitutes violations of this policy.

## Inappropriate Behaviors

At STEM Elementary/Middle/High School we are committed to optimizing learning for all students. STEM students are expected to be well behaved at all times, to respect themselves, others, and property. Unfortunately, sometimes students behave inappropriately. Our philosophy towards discipline is one that provides guidance and direction to acceptable behavior in order to develop a young person's own sense of self-discipline. Teachers, administrators, and parents will work together to remedy problematic behaviors once a student has exhibited them. In any case, when a student creates problems for him or herself, there will be consequences based on DCSD and STEM responsibility expectations.

## Roles in the Disciplinary Process

### **Dean of Students**

The goal of any meeting between a student and the Dean is that of a learning opportunity for the student in order to implement a positive change in behavior. The process will involve a discussion of honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility and empathy. In most instances parents may be notified of the student's visit to the Dean's office. The primary goal of the choice of consequences by the Dean is to require the student to take responsibility for the infraction.

The goals of a parent conference with the Dean include:

- To exchange accurate information about the student.
- To determine how the parent-school partnership can best work together to lead the student to reform his behavior.

The Dean will preserve the integrity of the disciplinary process at STEM School Highlands Ranch. By modeling the values of the STEM School Highlands Ranch honor code and consistently treating students and their families with respect and professionalism, the Dean is an extremely valuable and accessible part of a student's character development and education at STEM School Highlands Ranch. Our goal is to create a safe, respectful, and responsible environment, where learning takes place.

### **Counselor**

When necessary, students may be referred to the school counselor for problem solving, mediation, peer relationships, and social/emotional support.

### **Teachers**

Teachers will have the authority to implement discipline in their classrooms that is consistent with the Principles of Discipline. Teachers will utilize the Dean to implement discipline whenever appropriate and most especially when disciplinary action by the teacher would take away from maintaining an effective learning environment in the classroom. Disciplinary procedures may also involve the other designated STEM staff besides those mentioned.

### **Property Damage/Vandalism**

STEM School Highlands Ranch is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of items brought to school. Fines will be levied on parents for vandalism or theft of school property committed by their students. Fines will also be levied for lost or damaged school property. Students may also be required to be involved in the maintenance or repair of damaged property.

## Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

The activity of learning requires students to be attentive and polite. Students are expected to uphold the values of honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility and empathy as citizens in the STEM School Highlands Ranch community. If a student does misbehave, the consequences for the infraction will be immediate, relevant and effectual. In evaluating

consequences, teachers and Directors will determine if the act is a “first time,” a “repeated,” or a “habitual” offense.

Special note about dress code violations: Students must be strictly in code to attend class. Students in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office and must call a parent or guardian. Parents will either bring acceptable attire, or students will be sent home. These absences are NOT excused.

Students’ misbehavior will not be used to “teach” the class a lesson. At no time will a student’s disciplinary record be discussed with another student or parent. However, other students or parents may be consulted regarding an incident in an attempt to discern truth. STEM School desires to educate all students who enter our school, expecting nothing less than the best from each one.

Douglas County School District is the sole arbiter of expulsions. STEM School may only recommend expulsion of a student to DCSD. The expulsion process and proceedings will follow all DCSD policies that apply. When students are expelled, they are expelled from the Douglas County School District.

STEM School cannot and does not tolerate students who disrupt class. STEM School requires all students to be “polite and attentive.” Students who disrupt class may be sent to the office for a disciplinary meeting. In the past, a few students have not corrected their behavior even after the third or fourth disciplinary referral. The following action may be taken when students go beyond their fourth disciplinary referral:

“A minimum of a two-day suspension will be given for every Office Level Infraction over four. When a student is issued over four infractions he or she will be considered a habitually disruptive student. If a student is issued over four Office Level Infractions, STEM School may request the Douglas County School District Board of Education to expel that student from school. Any student expelled from STEM School would also be expelled from the Douglas County School District. Colorado State Law clearly states that a student can be expelled for “continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority.”

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

A Director or designee has the authority to suspend students as appropriate.

Suspensions last from one to ten days depending on the severity of the infraction. All suspensions will require a parent - administrator conference. The conference will occur before the student is readmitted to class. The Assistant Director may require the parent to attend a full day of class with the student upon return.

According to Colorado statute, a student may be declared habitually disruptive after being suspended three times in one year on the grounds set forth in CRS 11-33-106 for causing a material and substantial disruption in the class, on school grounds, on school vehicles, or at school activities or events because of behavior that was initiated, willful and overt on the part of the student, and the suspensions were made for:

- Continual, willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property
- Behavior on or off school property, which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel
- Serious violations in a school building or on school property

- Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other students
- And other grounds found in CRS 22-33-106(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), and (e).

**Expulsion from STEM School will be mandatory for the following violations:**

- The carrying, bringing, using, or possessing a dangerous weapon;
- The sale or distribution of a drug or controlled substance; or
- The commission of an act that, if committed by an adult, would be robbery or assault other than third-degree assault.

Expulsion is also mandatory if a student is declared habitually disruptive.

## Items Not Allowed at School

- Illegal Substances (example: drugs, alcohol, tobacco, pornography, etc.)
- Valuables/large amounts of money/expensive jewelry
- Scooters/skates/skateboards/Heelys cannot be ridden on property and should be kept in student lockers, or in racks provided by the school
- Laser pens/pointers
- Lighters/matches/fireworks
- Flammable liquids/sprays
- Any potentially dangerous item
- Toy guns
- Knives of any kind, baseball bats, throwing stars or any “look alikes”
- Cameras are not permitted in classrooms without permission of teachers for use as part of a lesson for a specific class. Cell phones with cameras are NOT to be used for taking photos without permission of the teacher.

### Search and Seizure

It is the policy of the STEM School to maintain school property to assure the safety and enjoyment of students, school employees, and the general public and to extend the useful life of the school facilities.

Students possess the right of privacy as well as freedom from unreasonable search and seizure as guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. This individual right, however, is balanced by the School's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all its students in order to ensure compliance with school rules. School authorities may conduct searches of property or persons when they have reasonable suspicion that the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff may be endangered. To maintain order and discipline in the School and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, School authorities may search a student, student lockers, desks, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. Searches of these kinds are normally conducted by two appropriate members of the staff. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

### Guidelines for Searches and Seizure

Desks, lockers, backpacks, textbooks, and other materials or supplies loaned by the school to students remain the property of the school, and may be opened by school employees for cleaning, maintenance or emergencies. When prohibited items are found in the course of routine cleaning or maintenance, or in the case of emergency, they will be confiscated and a report will be made to the Director who will determine whether further investigation is warranted. A school employee may search school property whenever a school authority has reasonable grounds to believe that a law or school policy is being violated.

Searches of students' persons, personal effects, or vehicles may be conducted if there is reasonable cause to believe that such search will produce evidence of a breach of school policy or law. Search of a student's person will be conducted in the presence of another school employee whenever possible. During a search, students will turn off their cell phone and place it on the desk or table in front of them. They will not have access to their phone until returned by an administrator or parent/guardian.

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not a right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on school property. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Searches of these kinds are normally conducted by two appropriate members of the staff.

## Emergency Protocol

Below you will find general information that you should be aware of in the event of an emergency. Please keep in mind that not all information is disclosed in order to protect the safety of staff and students.

- Staff members will not open doors during a lockdown.
- Visitors will be allowed access to students only if the Douglas County Sheriff's Department (DCSD) determines the site is secure.
- The school will adhere to all demands by the DCSD. Please watch this [video](#) by [iloveyouguys.org](#) about the Standard Response Protocol that our school follows.
- Information regarding a lockdown or other emergency at the school will be posted on the school's social media and website ([www.stemk12.org](http://www.stemk12.org)) as soon as possible. However, our main priority will be the safety of the student prior to parent communications. Therefore, we may not be able to answer the phones or return calls as quickly in the event of an emergency.
- Parents are asked not to contact the DCSD for information. This is a firm request of the DCSD.
- We will attempt to provide parents and guardians with accurate information as quickly as possible. However, please understand that events of this nature are very fluid and constantly changing. Also be aware that information from other sources, such as news media, Facebook or Twitter, may not be accurate. Should your child contact you during such an event, remind them it is important they follow the directions of school staff.





## Student and Family Acknowledgment Form

The mission of the STEM School is to provide an integrated educational system of high standards to engage all students in an academically rigorous core curriculum, promoting a strong foundation in the sciences, technologies, engineering and math, relevant to real-world contexts, and building respect and community assets to prepare students for successful post-secondary endeavors. By signing this document, students and families acknowledge that they have received and read the student/family handbook and commit to:

Acting with integrity in regard to school work, relationships and personal actions.  
Exhibiting honesty by taking pride in producing one's own thoughts, designs and ideas.  
Expressing respect for the people, resources and talents that make STEM School an inspiring place to learn.  
Demonstrating the personal responsibility necessary to contribute positively to the culture and atmosphere of the STEM school.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_