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## **SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Salem Academy Charter School began in 2002 as a collection of Salem residents—parents, teachers, business leaders, civic leaders, and educational experts—dedicated to solving the challenge of providing high quality educational options to Salem’s diverse middle and high school population. This volunteer founding group was drawn together by a shared commitment to education and a belief that students are best prepared for their futures—both academically and socially—through a rigorous educational program that stresses the importance of community and allows students to apply their learning in context. In February of 2003, the group was awarded a five-year charter by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and took the next eighteen months to plan and prepare for the opening of the school. Salem Academy opened its doors officially in September 2004 to its first group of 88 sixth- and seventh-grade students. In August 2008, Salem Academy completed its final stage of expansion to serve 300 students and their families in grades six through twelve. In February 2009, Salem Academy was re-chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for another five years.

## **SECTION TWO: PHILOSOPHY & MISSION**

### **1. School Mission**

The Salem Academy Charter School is a small sixth- to twelfth- grade public school designed to educate the city of Salem’s diverse student population. Through a unique integration of college preparatory classes with service to the community, we graduate informed, articulate and proactive individuals of strong character.

The Salem Academy Charter School’s mission is a promise to the public. From the mission, the school sets learning goals (below) that dictate what students need to know and be able to do in order to graduate.

## **2. Learning Goals**

Salem Academy Charter School promises an environment that will prepare students to succeed in college and in their personal and professional lives. Meeting the school's learning goals means that students must be:

### **Informed**

1. Students will be able to read a wide range of texts from various subject areas with accuracy, fluency, comprehension, and stamina.  
**READING**
2. Students will know the basic terms, symbols, concepts, and principles of mathematics, humanities, languages, and science.  
**CONTENT MASTERY**
3. Students will understand and be able to use independent learning strategies, tools, technologies, and equipment. **TOOLS FOR LEARNING**

### **Articulate**

1. Students will be able to write clearly and effectively across disciplines and genres. **WRITING**
2. Students will be able to discuss what they are learning by sharing their knowledge and perspective as well as responding to others.  
**ORAL LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION**
3. Students will be able to present to a variety of audiences, with the aid of various supportive media, and for different purposes.  
**PRESENTATION**

## Proactive

1. Students will be able to apply academic knowledge and skills in their daily lives. **APPLICATION**
2. Students will be able to pose questions or hypothesis and design and carry out research models in order to answer questions or solve problems. **INQUIRY**
3. Students will be able to analyze information, ideas and situations, questioning critically and then determining their perspective and reaction. **CRITICAL THINKING**

### 3. School Norms

A strong culture that promotes learning is essential in fulfilling the promises of the Salem Academy Charter School mission. The culture of Salem Academy is built on shared norms. All school community members are expected to **REACH** – act in a **R**esponsible, **E**mpathetic, **A**ssertive, **C**ooperative, and **H**onest manner. Norms are reinforced through academic classes, participation in service work and the school's Code of Conduct which outlines clear and consistent expectations for student behavior (outlined in Section IV of this handbook).

Salem Academy regularly recognizes students who conduct themselves in accordance with the school norms. For example, at weekly Community Meetings, the whole school congratulates and celebrates those students who demonstrate the REACH norms with a certificate and ceremony. Merits are awarded to individuals and groups as a way of recognizing and reinforcing the school norms. Teachers also make comments on grade reports regarding students' ability to act responsibly, empathetically, assertively, cooperatively and honestly. In this way, the school norms are regularly emphasized and made concrete to the Salem Academy community.

#### **4. Service Learning**

A central component of Salem Academy's mission is service learning. Our educational design is grounded in a research-based model that integrates rigorous academic learning with service work. Service learning, by definition, combines meaningful service in the community, a curriculum with high academic standards and structured reflection. At Salem Academy, service learning provides an opportunity for students to apply their academic learning to fieldwork and internships in service to the Salem community and beyond. The school collaborates with civic organizations in order to facilitate these experiences. Thus, students gain opportunities to apply their learning to real-life contexts and the community profits from increased services. The service learning component of our curriculum is guided by three general goals: to promote students' academic success by granting them opportunities to apply their learning to the real-life context of their community; to train students to serve as civic participants and community leaders both today and in the future; and to add resources and capacity to the betterment of Salem's historical, cultural, and natural resources.

#### **5. Contract of Shared Responsibilities**

The success of Salem Academy depends upon the commitment of all members of our community to work toward the school's mission – which includes learning goals, school norms, and service learning. As such, Salem Academy asks students, families and staff to sign a Contract of Shared Responsibilities. By signing this contract, each member of the Salem Academy community affirms their active support of the school's mission as well as the academic and social foundations on which it is built.

### Contract of Shared Responsibility

The success of Salem Academy depends upon the commitment of all members of our community to work toward the school’s mission. As such, students, families, and staff are asked to sign the Contract of Shared Responsibility. By signing this contract, each one of us recognizes the importance of our active support of the school’s mission as well as the academic and social foundations on which it is built.

*Mission: Through a unique integration of college-preparatory classes with service to the community, Salem Academy graduates informed, articulate and proactive individuals of strong character.*

<i>Academics</i>	<i>Service Learning</i>	<i>School Norms</i>
Salem Academy's curriculum prepares students to succeed in college and beyond. Upon graduation, students will have demonstrated their mastery of the school's learning goals. They will be <b>informed</b> - having mastered fundamental skills and information, <b>articulate</b> - able to conceptualize and communicate their understandings, and <b>proactive</b> - capable of forming their own ideas and taking the initiative to follow through on them.	At Salem Academy, students apply their learning to service projects throughout their middle and high school years. These hands-on projects in the community allow students to connect academics to their lives, bringing learning alive. Salem Academy partners with various community-based organizations in order to provide students with opportunities to access resources and productively engage in their community.	The culture of Salem Academy is built on shared norms. All school community members <b>REACH</b> – act in a <b>R</b> esponsible, <b>E</b> mpathetic, <b>A</b> ssertive, <b>C</b> ooperative, and <b>H</b> onest manner. Norms are reinforced through academic classes, participation in service work, and the school's code of conduct which outlines clear and consistent expectations for student behavior.

I, the undersigned, recognize the value of Salem Academy’s mission and approach to academic and social development. I commit to actively support this mission and the foundations upon which is built.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## SECTION THREE: PROGRAM

### 1. Introduction

The Salem Academy Charter School model is designed to ensure that all members of the student body achieve the school's learning goals. The various components of our program are described in this section.

### 2. Grade Groupings: Forms

Salem Academy will enroll sixth- through twelfth-grade students in four Forms, as shown in the chart below:

<i>First Form</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> grade
<i>Second Form</i>	7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grades
<i>Third Form</i>	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grades
<i>Final Form</i>	11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> grades

Multi-age groupings encourage teachers to more effectively meet the individual needs of all students. Because of the inherent age, ability, knowledge and maturity differences within classes, teachers are more likely to recognize and respond to students as individuals. In addition, teachers are more familiar with students' interests, backgrounds, levels of mastery and cognitive abilities because they spend extended time with students and can better tailor instruction to meet individual needs. When instruction matches students' developmental levels and interests, they are more likely to feel successful and motivated which bolsters their self-esteem.

### 3. Academic Year

Salem Academy has an extended-year schedule that includes 195 days beginning before Labor Day and finishing in July with vacation time allotted throughout the year. The first step to increasing student achievement is to increase the amount of time that students are focused on learning. The school uses an extended year to ensure that all students are able to meet the high standards set by Salem Academy. Our extended year adds 15 calendar days (or three weeks) to the traditional 180-day year, and also allows for significant professional development time for teachers throughout the year so that we can analyze student performance and respond to the needs of our learners on a continuous basis. In addition, Salem Academy's longer year reduces the tendency of students to become out of practice during long summer months with skills, information and the routines of the school.

Note that on the following days during the school year, students will be dismissed at 12:00 pm:

- Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009
- Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010
- Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010

Note that Salem Academy will not hold classes on the following days:

- Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup> – Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009
- Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 **THROUGH** Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> **THROUGH** Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> **THROUGH** Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010
- Monday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010

Other important dates to note:

- Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 – Back to School Night 6 – 8p.m.
- Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 – PTS Conferences 5 – 8 p.m.
- Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 – PTS Conferences 2:15 – 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – End of Trimester I
- Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> to Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Mid-term Exams
- Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – PTS Conferences 5 – 8 p.m.
- Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – End of Trimester II
- Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – PTS Conferences 5 – 8 p.m.
- Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Last Day for Grade 12
- Friday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Graduation
- Tuesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010 - Final Exams (HS)
- Thursday, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Moving Up/Recognition Ceremony
- Thursday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 – Last Day of School/Field Day

# Salem Academy Charter School 2009 - 2010 Calendar

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	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

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	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			

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	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					

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	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						

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	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		

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	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					

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	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	

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	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		

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	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					

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	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

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	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			

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	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					

The first day of school for new students is August 25, 2009. Returning students start classes on August 26, 2009.  
The last day of school for all students is July 1, 2009.

Half Day - 12 pm Dismissal  
No School

#### **4. Trimester Schedule**

Salem Academy uses a trimester system divided into different academic components: the Academic Core, Reading Periods and Service Projects. This schedule is designed to provide ample time for each of these components, as we believe that each is integral to the academic success of our students. In all of the components, teachers use the instructional strategies described above to promote student progress toward learning goals.

Students participate in new service learning projects each trimester. Service learning occurs during partial and full day “service labs” that are spaced over the course of the year. Each trimester culminates with a Reading Period of study, presentations, and formal assessments. Students in Second, Third and Final Forms have formal Reading Periods followed by exams at the mid-point of the school year and at the end of the school year.

#### **5. Academic Core**

Academic Core classes fall into five subject areas: English language arts, history and social studies, science, mathematics and language. All students take classes which will prepare them to enter and succeed in college.

All First Form students take classes in English, history/social studies, science, and mathematics. English and mathematics classes meet for 80 minute blocks each day (on Fridays for 50 minutes). Extended classes allow students time to master basic literacy and numeracy skills, prepare for MCAS assessments, and go in depth into topics of interests and need so that all students are challenged at their performance level. Students are placed in mathematics classes based on performance and grade level. English placement is determined by reading performance. Students who need structured reading support are placed in English language arts classes with support built in to them through the language program. History and science classes meet for approximately 50 minutes each day.

Students in First Form take introductory Spanish classes, English learning support classes, or structured academic support classes called Learning Center. Placement in Spanish classes is determined by student academic performance and language needs.

Students in Second Form, Third and Final Forms take classes in each of the five Academic Core subjects. They have the opportunity to enroll in honors and/or Advanced Placement courses through the school's Honors Program or to take college preparatory courses. All of the students are grouped by their performance levels for language (e.g., Spanish) courses. Some students take a Learning Center course or an English language support class instead of taking Spanish. This placement is based on a documented need. Students are placed in mathematics courses based on their performance and levels.

Detailed information on academic courses and graduation requirements is available in Salem Academy's *Program of Studies*.

## **6. Reading Period**

Reading Period is named for the tradition at rigorous universities of affording students time between classes and at the end of the term to "read" in preparation for their exams or final papers. At the university level, this time is used for independent work and reflection.

Students in Third and Final forms use this time for structured review of course material and demonstration of knowledge. Reading period falls directly prior to mid-term and final exams. In First Form, teachers use this period at the end of each trimester to review coursework, review student performance and determine individual and full-class needs.

## **7. Service Projects**

At Salem Academy, service learning provides an opportunity for students to apply their academic learning to fieldwork and internships in service to the Salem community. First Form students participate in trimester-long, intensive service projects. The primary purpose of these is to

introduce students to the concepts and skills related to service learning. While discovering what service learning is, students become familiar with issues in their community and learn how they can help address these issues using Salem Academy's Five Step Process: Identify, Research, Plan, Act and Reflect.

Second and Third Form students, who are familiar with the Five Step Process, engage in Academic Core service classes each trimester (e.g., environmental science, civics) which enable them to follow interests and deepen understandings in each of the disciplines. In these courses, they learn academic content and skills and apply their learning to projects in the community. The teacher guides students in identifying an issue in the community, researching the issue, planning their project, implementing it, and reflecting on their work. Their experiences in the community enhance students' understanding of academics and increase their awareness and appreciation of their surroundings.

## **8. Academic Day**

The school day starts at 8:30 a.m. to accommodate adolescents' need for additional hours of sleep, and lasts until 4:00 p.m. Salem Academy's school day is longer than the traditional seven-hour school day in order to allow for increased academic time for students. Salem Academy has a six-period day that begins with Connections block (described below) and includes a lunch break. First and Second Forms also end the day with Connections block and have a recess break. On Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays and Tuesdays/Thursdays, students take an elective, called Choice Block (described below) that meets during one of the six periods of the day. On Fridays, academic core classes are shortened and the school day ends at 2 p.m. Students may enroll in an Extensions class from 2 to 4 p.m. Once a week, all students attend Community Meeting where they come together with their peers and staff for recognitions, discussions, announcements, and presentations.

**Daily Schedule**  
**2009 - 2010**

<i>Middle School Sample Schedule</i>	
C	Connections (20 min)
1	Math (80 min)
2	Science (55 min)
L	Lunch (20 min)
3	English (80 min)
4	Choice Block (55 min)
5	Recess (25 min)
	Social Studies (55 min)
6	Spanish (55 min)
C	Connections (10 min)

<i>High School Sample Schedule</i>	
C	Connections (20 min)
1	Math (80 min)
2	Science (55 min)
L	Lunch (20 min)
3	English (80 min)
4	Choice Block (55 min)
5	Academic Prep (25 min)
	History (55 min)
6	Spanish (55 min)
C	Community Cleaning (10 min)

## **9. Connections**

Connections provides a daily opportunity for teachers and students to begin to establish trusting relationships while exploring issues related to social attitudes and behavior. Each day, students meet in groups with the same faculty member. This provides a daily structure for students' sense of belonging in the school. Salem Academy supports the belief that all students benefit from strong ties to their schools and positive, caring adult role models in addition to those provided in the family.

Connections Block includes structured activities to establish and explore school norms and to investigate themes related to civics within the school and outside of it. It also allows for time to discuss pertinent issues relating to individuals, the school, or the community. Connections is intended to be student-run, though in the Lower School teachers model facilitation skills so students learn how to take on increasing levels of responsibility over time. In addition, this time period is used for school-wide Community Meetings once each week.

## **10. Choice Block**

Choice Block is designed to broaden and develop student interests as well as to encourage them to begin making decisions about their learning. Students select Choice Block options each trimester in Physical Education and Health (e.g. basketball, soccer, nutrition), Fine Arts (e.g., print making, mixed-media) and Technical and Creative Arts (e.g. web design, technical theater). Salem Academy students are required to take six choice block classes throughout the year. First Form students take art, physical education, and typing. Second Form students must take the following number of classes in either Choice or Extensions Block classes in these areas each year:

**\*2 Physical Education**

**\*2 Fine Arts**

Students are also required to take a health class during each Form. For Third and Final Form distribution requirements, please see the Graduation Requirements attached. Many Choice Block options are off-

campus activities hosted at community-based organizations like the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club so that the school can capitalize on the resources of the city while exposing students to diverse learning environments and organizations.

## **11. Extensions Block**

The school is committed to providing opportunities for enrichment to students when classes are not in session in order to ensure the safety of our students and to offer additional learning experiences. To this end, the school offers activities for students both on and off-campus, run by outside organizations or contracted staff. Students are only required to participate in these programs when their parents/guardians sign them up for such activities.

*A. Friday Extensions:* On Friday afternoons, when teachers meet together for professional development, the school offers extended classes to students in each of our non-academic core areas (Physical Education, Health, Fine Arts and Technical and Creative Arts). These courses run from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. each Friday afternoon. Please note that due to reduced staff supervision on Friday afternoons, it is important that all students who participate in Extensions be on time for their classes because all students must be escorted by staff or taken by bus in order to participate in activities. Note also that families who choose not have their child participate in Friday afternoon Extensions are responsible for picking their child up from school or authorizing their child to walk home no later than 2:15 p.m.

*B. After-School Extensions:* School ends at 4:00 p.m. each day and Extensions activities are available until 5:30 pm. These activities may include clubs, sports, music programs, drama productions, art classes, or other offerings. Tutoring and quiet time for computer use or homework is available to students as Extensions activities. Note that families are required to pick their children up from school no later than 5:30 p.m. each day.

*C. Required After-School Extensions:* Salem Academy requires tutoring during after-school Extensions for students who are not meeting grade level performance standards. Parents will be notified at the beginning and mid-point of each trimester if/when their child is required to attend tutoring. Academic tutoring takes place once per week in each core academic class from 4:15 – 5:00.

Additionally, after-school Extensions includes Homework Center for students who have not completed all homework assignments each day and detention for students who have received a consequence for not following the behavioral expectations outlined by Salem Academy (see Section IV for further details). In both cases, parents will be notified by telephone that the student is required to attend Homework Center and/or detention. Homework Center and detention are held each day after school from 4:00 – 5:00.

Please note that the order of priority for each of these required after-school extensions activities is mandatory tutoring first, followed by Homework Center and detention. Should a student be asked to attend tutoring and Homework Center and/or detention, then the student should attend tutoring on that day and then serve, Homework Center and/or detention on the following day/s.

## **12. Academic Assessment (Grading)**

At Salem Academy, students are assessed on their academic achievement. This assessment or “grading” is not done in a traditional manner. Instead of assigning grades from “A” to “F” in a course, Salem Academy assesses students (on a scale of 1 to 4) based on their academic progress toward specific objectives within each course.

*How does it work?* In each course at Salem Academy, there are clearly articulated expectations (called benchmarks) which outline what students need to know and be able to do when they finish the course. We

recognize that all of our students have different experiences, styles and interests and that they do not all learn at the same pace. Therefore, teachers assess students when they begin a unit or course to determine how much students already know; they then continue to monitor student progress throughout the course. Teachers find out specifically what students have learned and on what they need to spend more time. With this information, they can support all students to work at their own pace and master all of the expectations (benchmarks) for a given course.

For each course, student progress toward benchmarks is shown through marks of 1, 2, 3 or 4. The students receive a mark every time they are assessed on a given benchmark. Their final mark (or grade) demonstrates their level of mastery at the end of a trimester or course. This mark is not an average, but rather an indication of student mastery at the end of a course. In order to graduate from a course, students must demonstrate that they are “knowledgeable” in at least 70 percent of the benchmarks.

#	Performance Level	Description
	N/A	No judgment can be made about students’ ability to understand topic or perform skill.
1	Performing as a Novice	Limited understanding of content; limited ability to perform skills.
2	Progressing	Beginning understanding of content; beginning ability to perform skills.
3	Knowledgeable	Basic understanding of content; demonstration of skill.
4	Accomplished	Nuanced understanding of content; high fluency in performing skills.

*Why this approach?* We believe that traditional grading approaches do not provide sufficiently accurate or detailed information to

parents/guardians, students, teachers and school administrators. Researchers have found that grades often assess not only academic achievement, but effort, behavior, attendance and other factors as well. Further, teachers weigh assignments differently, some factoring tests more heavily and others homework assignments, so that a student with the exact same scores in a class may be given different final grades by two different teachers. Perhaps the most critical reason for not using a traditional grading system is that we do not believe that it provides specific information about which areas students need more time with and which areas they have mastered. For example, a “C” in science does not show whether a student is having difficulty with the concepts behind photosynthesis, if he has not yet mastered the process of designing an experiment or if he has learned both well but has failed to turn in his homework. Detailed and accurate information about student performance allows Salem Academy teachers and staff to tailor instruction to the needs of its students.

*What about effort and behavior?* At Salem Academy, we put a tremendous emphasis on the importance of student effort and behavior. We believe that it is essential for students to be assessed in these areas and to receive consequences when they act in an inappropriate manner. However, we do not want to confuse these factors with academic achievement. We believe that it is unfair to students to “pass” them from one course to another because they have demonstrated high effort and responsibility if they have not yet learned the content and skills that they need. Likewise, it is unreasonable to insist that a student repeat academic material that s/he has already learned, simply because s/he has not yet learned to be responsible or cooperative. Our assessment system does not de-emphasize the importance of social behavior and development; rather, feedback on the social aspects of students’ experiences at Salem Academy is provided through our REACH system and by teachers who may assign behavior-related comments at the mid-point and end of every trimester on student grade reports.

In addition to these assessments, the school administers external, standardized assessments, including the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exams (MCAS) as well as the PSAT and SAT.

### **13. Standards for Promotion**

As our mission states, Salem Academy is committed to ensuring that all students graduate as informed, articulate and proactive individuals with strong character. Therefore, we insist that all students meet promotion standards in all classes – Academic Core, Service Learning and Choice Block classes – and that they meet the expectations outlined in the school’s Code of Conduct (REACH). The school’s promotion standards, procedures and support mechanisms in each of these areas are outlined in Salem Academy’s Program of Studies.

## SECTION FOUR: SCHOOL CULTURE

### 1. Guiding Principles

Salem Academy's mission is to graduate informed, articulate and proactive individuals of strong character. In order for our students to meet the school's high academic and behavior expectations, to be successful in college and to become responsible citizens, it is essential that all members of the community work together to create an environment focused on learning.

The following principles define our philosophy on school culture, and, coupled with our school norms (REACH), guide our policies and procedures.

#### HIGH EXPECTATIONS

*We believe that every student can and wants to succeed, and that they achieve their best when held to high expectations.*

It is our principal responsibility, regardless of who our students are, where they come from or what their gifts and challenges might be, to recognize that every one of them is capable of success. Our commitment to help all our students is unwavering.

Regardless of where our students are, be it in the cafeteria or the classroom, we expect the very best from them. Our school-wide policies, our classroom procedures, our academic expectations and our student interactions communicate our school's commitment to excellence. Our high expectations inspire students to exert their best efforts.

#### STRUCTURE & CONSISTENCY

*We believe that students succeed best in structured environments with clear expectations, where staff members are proactive, and all negative behavior is addressed with clarity and consistency.*

Students of all ages benefit from structures designed to support their learning. Although some expectations may vary by form, all students rely on the staff to articulate and maintain expectations on a regular basis. Our Connections curriculum, classroom procedures, Student Handbook and Code of Conduct define these with clarity and consistency.

Creating a culture of excellence requires proactively planning to inspire positive behavior and avoid negative behavior. The more we can prevent negative incidents from happening in the first place, the less we have to worry about addressing misbehavior later on. This is one of the operating principles that unify our academic planning, classroom routines, school-wide policies and professional development.

Students who do not meet our school's standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others. Our discipline policy is designed to support us in our efforts to achieve our school's mission. We hold students accountable for disrespect and have firm consequences for students who choose to disrespect themselves, their peers, the staff or the school.

### **COMMUNITY & CULTURE**

*We believe that a positive school culture, based on thoughtful relationships, is essential to the success of our mission. We value all members of the Salem Academy community as instrumental in supporting this culture.*

One of the greatest joys of working in a school is the promise of developing meaningful relationships with the students we serve. We recognize and honor the value of professional student-teacher relationships and we encourage all our staff to learn about our students' families, interests and aspirations. At the same time, we are conscious of the dangers involved in confusing personal and professional relationships, and we remain vigilant in maintaining clear student-teacher boundaries.

Our school culture is a reflection of the norms, expectations and routines established in each classroom. When every classroom maintains a culture of excellence, where school norms are consistently enforced, where students are engaged in meaningful learning, and where all are inspired to reach high expectations, our whole school will embody such a positive culture.

Positive recognition builds pride, confidence and self esteem. At Salem Academy we recognize the importance of acknowledging and celebrating positive behavior. Students who exemplify our school norms, who achieve academic success and who contribute to our community deserve to be applauded for their efforts. By having formal and informal recognitions, we believe that students can be encouraged and inspired to exemplify positive behavior.

We recognize and value the incredible set of skills and experiences that our staff brings to our school. All staff members are encouraged to make suggestions and design initiatives to further support our school's mission. At the same time, all staff members are individually responsible for embodying and enforcing our school norms. Shared values and consistency on the part of the staff ensures that our students will understand and abide by the school's expectations.

We consider our students' families one of our greatest resources. Through parent-teacher-student conferences, formal and informal phone conversations and various school events, we strive to involve our parent community as much as possible. We are committed to ensuring that every one of our families is informed of their child's successes and challenges, and we welcome parents' efforts to support our mission.

Clearly, we cannot achieve our school's mission without adequate support from our students. More importantly, we believe that student experiences, observations and insights can contribute significantly to our school. We are therefore committed to helping students become contributing members of our community, and we always look to create opportunities for them to assume leadership positions.

## 2. School Norms

A strong culture that promotes learning is essential in fulfilling the promise of the Salem Academy Charter School mission. The culture of Salem Academy is built on shared norms. All members of the Salem Academy Community —parents/guardians, students, and school employees—are expected to **REACH** – act in a **R**esponsible, **E**mpathetic, **A**ssertive, **C**ooperative, and **H**onest manner. Norms are reinforced through academic classes, participation in service work and the school's Code of Conduct which outlines clear and consistent expectations for student behavior. While the Code itself will not be amended without the approval of the Salem Academy Board of Trustees and the Massachusetts Board of Education, the expectations and consequences set from this Code are subject to change based on appeals made by students or staff to the Code of Conduct Panel.

### Responsible

1. Act in a professional manner.
2. Make mindful decisions that promote the well-being of themselves and their community.
3. Take responsibility for their choices.

### Empathetic

1. Demonstrate sensitivity towards others' situations, feelings, and perspectives.
2. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for others.
3. Recognize and value commonalities and differences in people.

### Assertive

1. Take an active and goal oriented approach to learning and achievement.
2. Advocate for themselves and others in a respectful manner.
3. Problem solve appropriately.

### Cooperative

1. Uphold school norms.

2. Collaborate effectively with others.
3. Provide and receive assistance and feedback appropriately.

#### Honest

1. Demonstrate integrity.
2. Communicate truthfully.
3. Reflect honestly.

### 3. REACHing for Success

#### Academic Recognition

Salem Academy students work hard for their academic achievement. Because we are a standards-based school, academic recognition is awarded based on performance in and across classes. Students are recognized for their accomplishments in the following manner:

##### *Recognition Brunch*

At the close of each academic year, Salem Academy recognizes students who have an average of 95% across all of their classes, with no single grade beneath a 90%. These students and their families are treated to a brunch celebration with the school faculty and staff. In addition, these students will receive a certificate honoring their academic accomplishments.

##### *Significant Academic Achievement*

Those students who achieve an average of 90% across classes, with no classes below an 80%, earn a Significant Academic Achievement Award at the end of the year.

##### *Academic Achievement*

Those students who earn a minimum of an 80% across classes, with no classes below a 70%, earn an Academic Achievement Award at the end of the year. These students will receive a certificate honoring their academic accomplishments.

### Community Meeting

Community Meeting, a weekly assembly, provides the opportunity to: (a) reinforce the school's mission, (b) recognize students or staff members (c) unite, celebrate, and promote the Salem Academy culture and community, and (d) make school announcements and alert students of upcoming events. Some examples of activities that take place during Community Meeting include:

- Navigator Challenge
- Academic Achievement and Attendance Awards
- Mini-MCAS awards/recognitions
- Teacher-led student recognitions
- Students, staff, or outside speakers presentations
- Students and staff sharing of appreciations
- Student-led Teach Reach Awards
- Sharing exemplary student work

### Connections Block

Connections Block is the first environment that students are in most days of the week. Connections has a two-fold purpose: to support students in achieving academic success, and to facilitate the building of relationships within each Connection group and the school as a whole. We support all of our students by making sure that students are prepared for the day, reflecting on students' academic progress, and helping students plan and prepare for college. We ensure that all of our students feel connected to their peers and school community by engaging them in team building activities and meaningful discussion.

### Dress Code

Salem Academy's dress code is designed to establish a professional atmosphere – one that encourages students to focus their attention on academic, civic, and social learning instead of on dress. It is not

intended to stifle the individuality of our students, but to establish a desirable learning environment, contribute to a sense of community, and to focus individuality in various academic arenas. Students are to be in dress code from the time they arrive at school until they leave the school grounds. At all times, students are expected to dress appropriately and within the guidelines of the Salem Academy dress code policy. All clothing must fit properly and be neat, clean, and in good repair.

## Academic Classes

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Salem Academy recommends that students purchase Salem Academy polo shirts (short and long sleeve), t-shirts, and sweatshirts as well as a few pairs of khaki pants to wear to school each day. Students and families looking for more variety should keep the following guidelines in mind when planning for the year:

### **Tops**

Tops may not expose the midriff, and clothing must cover undergarments at all times. Display of cleavage is not permitted.

*Students may wear:*

- Salem Academy t-shirts, polo shirts, fleece jackets and sweatshirts
- Short or long sleeve button-down shirts, blouses with collars, or polo shirts
- Sweaters
- Turtlenecks

*Students may not wear:*

- Outerwear inside the building: jackets or overcoats, including fleeces, or gloves
- Unbuttoned shirts or shirts turned inside-out
- Shirts worn underneath clothing with a logo design showing through the upper layer shirt
- Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, sheer shirts, or half shirts
- Shirts or sweaters with logos larger than 1 inch high or wide

## **Bottoms**

*Students may wear:*

- Cotton, khaki, or corduroy pants, trousers, shorts, skirts, and dresses

*Students may not wear:*

- Jeans or denim-blend pants, skirts, shorts, or dress in any color
- Athletic pants or shorts
- Pajamas
- Camouflage
- Shorts, skirts, or dresses shorter than within one inch of the knee

## **Footwear**

*Students may wear:*

- Dress shoes, flats, boots, clogs, sneakers, sandals

*Students may not wear:*

- Flip flops, athletic sandals, slippers, unlaced shoes
- Shoes must be worn at all times

## **Students are not permitted to wear the following:**

- Clothing with writing, images or logos larger than 1 inch high or wide, other than Salem Academy shirts.
- Head coverings (hats, caps, hoods, do-rags, bandanas) inside the school. Bandanas may not be worn anywhere on one's person.
- Sunglasses or permanently tinted glasses, inside the building.
- Leggings, spandex, or excessively tight fitting pants.
- Excessively baggy or sagging pants. Clothing must cover undergarments at all times.
- Excessively jewelry (including dog tags, chains, spike jewelry, multiple or large pieces).

## **Physical Education and Athletics**

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*Students may wear the following when participating in physical education classes:*

- Plain (logo-free) solid-colored short or long sleeve t-shirts and sweatshirts.
- Plain (logo-free) solid-colored athletic pants and shorts (not shorter than mid-thigh).
- Sports shoes are required for physical education/sports.

Please help ensure that your child is in dress code and clothed appropriately for the weather each day. Our students go outside for Choice Block, Extensions and Service-Learning projects in all but the coldest or wettest weather.

### Dress-Down Days

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Through adherence to the dress code and based on group merit, students have the opportunity to earn a “Dress-Down Day.” On dress down days, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines.

*Students may wear neat, clean clothing including, but not limited to:*

- Jeans
- Athletic clothing
- Clothing with logos, writing, or imagery
- Flip flops

*Students may not wear:*

- Clothing with offensive writing, imagery, or messaging
- Excessively tight, revealing, or baggy clothing
- Sleeveless tops
- Pajamas or slippers
- Head coverings (hats, caps, bandanas, do-rags, etc.)
- Clothing that is ripped or has holes

### Recognition Programs

Ultimately, Salem Academy’s goal is to help students develop intrinsic motivation to make good choices and strive for their personal best by

fulfilling all of our REACH expectations as well as all of the specific behavioral and dress code expectations outlined above. Along the way to helping students develop this intrinsic motivation, Salem Academy honors and rewards students for fulfilling its expectations. Our student recognition program includes the following components:

#### *REACH Tickets*

REACH Tickets are a way to officially recognize First Form students who demonstrate positive behavior. Any staff member may award a REACH ticket any time a student exemplifies one of our REACH norms by showing kindness, honesty, responsibility, courage, empathy, or cooperation. At the end of the day, students submit their REACH Tickets to their Connections teacher who keeps track of the daily and weekly totals. Students who receive REACH Tickets may earn individual rewards within their Connections groups. Every two weeks, each form will count their collective REACH Tickets. Forms that earn a sufficient number of REACH Tickets will be eligible for certain rewards.

#### *Classroom Merits*

Each academic core teacher also has a class-specific merits system. Although they vary by class, all merits systems are designed to formally recognize positive academic behavior and to encourage all students to strive for excellence. Classroom merits are given as a way to acknowledge student accomplishments, both big and small. Students who earn classroom merits may be eligible to earn special privileges.

#### *REACH Wall*

Students who consistently demonstrate the school's REACH norms are nominated by their peers and teachers to add their handprint to Salem Academy's REACH Wall.

### *Perfect Attendance Awards*

This recognition is given to students with perfect attendance during a trimester. Students must be present and on time each day during the trimester to receive this award. A special honor will be given to those students who maintain perfect attendance for all three trimesters.

### *Academic Awards*

At the end of each trimester, and at the end of the year, students who demonstrated exceptional academic success are officially recognized during our Community Meeting. Students who earn an average of 80% and above, and 90% and above, receive Salem Academy certificates. Students who finish the year with an average of 95% and above are invited to a special recognition brunch attended by their families and teachers.

## **4. Student Government**

Student Government provides students a unique opportunity to become involved in the day-to-day life of their school and to develop leadership skills. The Student Government exists to promote student interest, responsibility and involvement in Salem Academy. The functions of the Student Government are to serve as the representatives of the student body and to act as a liaison between students, faculty and administration. The Student Government has the power to initiate and develop programs and activities beneficial to Salem Academy and assists the administration in the operation of school functions.

Salem Academy's Student Government is composed of the student body president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, and up to two representatives elected from each Connections group. To be eligible as a candidate, and to remain a member of the Student Government, a student must exemplify the school's REACH norms, have earned a minimum of proficient in all academic areas of study, and may not have committed any major infractions, as defined in the Code of Conduct.

## 5. Attendance Policy

Attendance is vital for student learning. For this reason, Salem Academy encourages families to ensure that students are in school every day unless an illness, emergency or religious observation interferes. Students may miss no more than 15 days each year. Parents will be notified in writing if a student misses more than an average of 5 days each term. A student may not receive credit for courses if s/he misses more than 15 days in one year. Students are also expected to arrive to school on time every day. Three tardies will be recorded as the equivalent of one day of absence from school.

### A. Early Dismissal

If a student needs to be dismissed before the end of the school day, s/he must have a signed note from his/her guardian and s/he must sign out with the Administrative Coordinator.

### B. Excused Absences and Tardies

On days when a student is absent due to illness, emergency, or religious observance, parents and guardians are asked to notify the school's Administrative Coordinator by 7:30 a.m. *and* must send a note to school the next day. In such cases, the student's absence or tardiness will be defined as "excused". If a student is out for multiple days due to illness, parents should send a note from the child's doctor to school. Teachers will work with students on any make-up work that is required when the absence is due to an unforeseen event (such as an illness or emergency). When the absence is due to a planned event, it is incumbent upon students to request permission in advance and complete any work they may miss.

### C. Unexcused Absences and Tardies

In the event that a student who has not been excused by his/her parent does not arrive at school on time, the family will be contacted. In such cases, the student will be responsible for after-school time and making up any missed assignments. Salem

Academy requests that there be no unnecessary absences of any kind from any part of the school program, especially just before or just after a regularly scheduled vacation. Parents are urged to coordinate trips with school vacations to avoid placing an unfair burden on their children and on the teachers; such absences are considered unexcused.

## **6. Discipline Policy and Procedures**

While Salem Academy prefers to motivate students toward positive behavior through the establishment of a strong school culture and a positive reward system, it must also maintain a clear set of consequences for students who choose not to meet the school's expectations. Because we value each student, and because we seek to provide all our students with the opportunity to learn and fulfill their individual potential, Salem Academy does not tolerate behaviors that inhibit learning—either one's own or the learning of others.

Examples of possible consequences for breaches of expectations include, but are not limited to, the following: demerit, detention, loss of privileges, in-school suspension, modified in-school suspension/separation, out-of-school suspension and expulsion. Below are descriptions of various consequences.

### **A. Demerit**

Any time a student does not follow the school's policies or procedures, s/he may earn a demerit. For example, if a student comes to class late, is not prepared, or is disruptive, the student will be given a demerit. Demerits are not meant to be punitive or threatening. They are simple reminders that a student is not meeting some of the expectations outlined above. A student who earns three demerits in a class period or common space area on a given day will receive detention.

## **B. Removal from Class**

Any student whose behavior consistently disrupts the learning of other student's academic achievement will be subject to an immediate suspension from class. The student will report to the Dean of Students, a call will be made home, and the student will complete a reflective activity prior to returning to class. Only when the student demonstrates the appropriate behavior will that student be allowed to return to class. If a student is sent to the Dean of Students more than once in the same day, the student will be sent home. Additional consequences may follow at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

## **C. Detention**

When a student accrues three demerits or chooses to breach more considerable behavioral expectations, the student will be assigned detention. For example, if one student is disrespectful to another or a student chooses to skip academic tutoring, then s/he is required to attend detention where s/he will complete a reflection assignment given to them. The student's family will be contacted every time s/he earns an after-school detention. **First/Second Form** students will serve detention during recess. **Third/Final Form** students will serve detention after school from 4:00 – 5:00.

## **D. Friday Detention**

When a student chooses to breach even more considerable behavioral expectations, the student will be required to attend Friday detention from 2:00 – 4:00. For example, if a student earns more detentions that s/he can serve in a given week, then s/he is required to attend Friday detention where s/he will complete a reflection activity and then engage in service to the school and/or complete homework.

## **E. Behavior Contracts and Remedial Discipline Plans**

To assist students for whom standard interventions are determined to be unsuccessful, the administration will hold a

meeting with the parents/guardians, student, teachers and counselor to develop a behavior contract. All reasonable effort shall be made to include the parents in the development of the contract, which will address the student's specific behavioral challenges as well as academic needs. Parents/guardians, students, teachers and other involved parties will be asked to sign the contract.

The implementation of a student behavioral contract at Salem Academy does not take the place of or waive further disciplinary consequences, including detentions, suspensions or possible expulsions, except as dictated by local, state or federal laws.

#### **F. Loss of Privileges**

If a student abuses common space privileges, those privileges may be revoked. For example, if a student is repeatedly late to class because s/he is stopping at his/her locker, a student may not be allowed to visit his/her locker between classes.

#### **G. Modified In-School Suspension/Separation**

A student may be given a modified form of in-school suspension in order to provide said student with direct access to the curriculum and classroom teacher. In such cases, the school will report the suspension and the reasons for it to the student's parent or guardian. In this modified version of an in-school suspension, the student attends all Academic Core classes during the day but sits apart from fellow classmates. During Connections and Choice and Extensions activities, the student will be separated and may also be asked to perform a natural consequence related to the breach, such as cleaning graffiti, writing an apology or writing a reflection piece. Clear expectations regarding the conduct of students on modified in-school suspensions are given. **Please note that school administrators may choose to consult with the Board of Trustees concerning further disciplinary action for students**

**who receive five combined in-school and out-of-school suspensions in an academic year.**

#### **H. In-School Suspension**

A student who receives an in-school suspension will remain in the building and will continue to have access to the curriculum, but will be isolated from classmates and peers. An in-school suspension may also result in natural consequences, such as cleaning graffiti, writing an apology or re-taking a test. A parent or guardian will be required to discuss the situation with an administrator before the student's re-admittance to class. A student will remain in in-school suspension until s/he shows that s/he can follow Salem Academy behavioral expectations. **Please note that school administrators may choose to consult with the Board of Trustees concerning further disciplinary action for students who receive five combined in-school and out-of-school suspensions in an academic year.**

#### **I. Out-of-School Suspension**

A student may be removed immediately from the school if her or his continued presence poses either a danger to persons or property, or significantly disrupts the educational practices of the school. Students may be suspended as long as necessary to ensure that the conditions justifying the removal have been resolved. If a student is suspended, s/he must leave the building immediately with a parent or guardian and may not be permitted to return to school until a parent/guardian, school staff and the student have met together to discuss the issue which led to suspension. Students are expected to continue to engage in school work to the extent possible. The student's parents can come to the school to pick up work for their child. **Please note that school administrators may choose to consult with the Board of Trustees concerning further disciplinary action for students who receive five combined in-school and out-of-school suspensions in an academic year.**

## **J. Expulsion**

A student may be removed immediately from the school if her or his continued presence poses either a danger to persons or property, or significantly disrupts the educational practices of the school. MA law (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H1/2) states that the Executive Director, Head of School or her/his designee has the authority to expel students without Board involvement for the following behavioral infractions:

- Possessing a dangerous weapon including but not limited to a knife or a gun
- Possessing a controlled substance as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C including but not limited to illegal drugs (e.g. marijuana) and prescription medication
- Assaulting educational personnel
- Being convicted of a felony

In addition, the Executive Director, Head of School or her/his designee has the authority to recommend the expulsion of students to the Board of Trustees for behavioral infractions including the following:

- Repeated and fundamental disregard of school policies and procedures
- Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol
- Assault (i.e. threatening assault, hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing) against fellow students or other non-educational personnel
- Theft or destruction (or attempted theft or destruction) of personal or school property including arson
- Harassment and violations of civil rights

## **7. Due Process**

All students are entitled to due process as discussed below.

### **A. Short-Term Suspensions - Process**

Unless a student presents a danger or risk of substantial disruption to the educational process, the student shall receive the following prior to suspension of one to ten days:

- i. Oral or written notice of the charges
- ii. If the student denies the charges, an oral or written explanation of the evidence against him/her
- iii. An opportunity to present her/his version of the relevant facts

In the case of danger or a risk of substantial disruption, this process will occur immediately after rather than before the suspension.

**B. Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion - Process**  
For expulsion or suspension longer than ten days, the following procedures will apply:

- i. The student shall receive written notice of the following:
  - a. Charges and a statement of the evidence;
  - b. Date, time and place of a hearing;
  - c. Notice of the right at the hearing to:
    - c1. Be represented by their parents, legal or other representative (at the student's parent's own expense)
    - c2. Present evidence
    - c3. Confront and cross-examine witnesses
- ii. The school will record (by tape or other appropriate means) the hearing and a copy of such will be made available to the student upon request.

iii. Notices and proceedings will be translated into the student's/parent's primary language if necessary for their understanding of the proceedings.

iv. A student and/or parent, upon request, will have the right to review the student's records in accordance with the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations or other applicable law.

Decisions by the Head of School regarding suspension and expulsion of a student for any of the four reasons cited in M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H1/2 are subject to review by the Executive Director. Expulsion for all offenses except for the four listed in M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H and 37H1/2, must involve the Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of the recommendation of the Executive Director or Head of School, the Board of Trustees will consider the expulsion of a student as provided for in M.G. L. c. 76, §16 and § 17. In addition to the procedures above, the following applies to expulsion hearings before the Board of Trustees:

- i. The Executive Director or Head of School may commence an expulsion proceeding before the Trustees by providing them with notice of the reasons for the proposed expulsion.
- ii. Hearings to consider the expulsion of a student will be held in executive session unless the student or parent requests an open hearing.
- iii. The decision by the Trustees will be in writing and the controlling facts upon which the decision is made will be stated in sufficient detail to inform the parties of the reasons for the decision.

## **8. Felony Offenses**

In addition to any of the infractions list in Section IV, any breaches of Federal law, Massachusetts State law, or bylaws of the city in which the school is located, may be handled in cooperation with the local police department and may result in expulsion. Massachusetts law (Chapter 71, Section 37H - Expulsion for possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance or assault of educational personnel) states:

- i. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principle.
- ii. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- iii. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (i) or (ii) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (i) or (ii).

iv. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

v. When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Students should note that the definition of "assault" includes not only harmful or offensive contact, but also threatening such contact. Massachusetts law (Chapter 71, Section 37H ½ - Delinquency complaint against student; suspension; hearing; expulsion upon conviction; appeal) states:

i. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a

substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

ii. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the

general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

iii. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

In regard to language used in M.G.L. c.71, §37H or M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2 students and families should note that Salem Academy Charter School should be considered both the school and the school district. The Executive Director should be considered the Superintendent and the Head of School should be considered the Principal.

## **9. Long-Term Consequences for Students with Special Needs**

All students are expected to follow Salem Academy's Code of Conduct unless otherwise determined by the Team and written in the student's Individual Education Plan. With respect to removal of students on an I.E.P. from a public school, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B, section 3 dictates:

“No school committee shall refuse a school age child with a disability admission to or continued attendance in public school without the prior written approval of the department, and without complying with state and federal requirements for disciplining students with disabilities, where applicable. During the pendency of administrative or judicial proceedings, a court of competent jurisdiction shall have the authority to change a child's educational placement, including removing the child from school, in any circumstances when the school committee shows that the child's behavior poses a substantial likelihood of injury to himself or others; provided, however, that the foregoing shall not be construed to abrogate any authority concerning discipline for such a child which is available to a school committee under said regulations and procedures or any other law. No child who is so refused or removed shall be denied an alternative form of education approved by the department, as provided for in section 10, through a tutoring program at home, through enrollment in an institution operated by a state agency, or through any other program which is approved for the child by the department.”

## **10. Civil Rights and Harassment**

### **A. Harassment**

It is expected that no forms of mental, physical, sexual and/or verbal abuse and harassment toward another person will take place. If a student observes an incident involving harassment, it is his/her responsibility to report the incident to a Salem Academy staff member. Anyone reporting an incident has the right to have his/her identity remain anonymous. Students may

also report an incident of harassment by writing an anonymous letter to the staff.

**B. Threats**

It is expected that no student would make threats against individuals, groups or the school. Threats of any nature will be taken seriously and may be reported to the proper authorities, as required by law. In addition, Salem Academy reserves the right to impose a consequence up to and including expulsion from the school.

Please contact the Dean of Students with any questions or concerns regarding the discipline policy of Salem Academy.

**SECTION FIVE: OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

**1. Advertising on School Grounds**

All materials posted or distributed on school grounds must be submitted to the front office for formal approval by the Executive Director or Head of School before posting or distributing. This policy applies to students, staff, parents and community members. Any unapproved materials will be removed or confiscated. Only materials pertaining to student activities or the school will be considered for approval.

**2. Bus Transportation**

Transportation to Salem Academy is provided by the Salem Public Schools, subject to eligibility and fee guidelines. Any student in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade who lives at least 2 miles from the school is eligible for free transportation. The school bus will pick students up Monday through Friday in time to arrive at school by 8:30 a.m. At the end of the day, the bus will pick up students at the school at 4:00 p.m.

### **3. Child Abuse Reporting**

Massachusetts law specifically requires school officials and employees to report known or suspected cases of child abuse (including emotional, physical or sexual abuse) or neglect and circumstances which might reasonably result in abuse or neglect. As a mandated reporting agency, it is our obligation to report any reasonable suspicions. It is not the responsibility of school employees or officials to contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect. Nor is it the responsibility of school officials or employees to prove that the child has been abused or neglected. Failure to report promptly may result in civil and/or criminal liability. A person who reports child abuse or neglect in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability.

### **4. Closures and Delays**

Salem Academy will follow all school closures and delays made by Salem Public Schools. Broadcasts are usually made by 6:00 a.m. on the three major news networks and periodically thereafter until 9:00 a.m. Salem Academy will also call all families and school personnel with an automated voice recording indicating school closure. When Salem Academy is closed, all school-sponsored activities, including the before and after school program, are canceled.

If it becomes necessary for the welfare of our students to close school during the day or to delay a school dismissal, an automated voice recording will be sent to all families. We ask families to prepare for this possibility in advance by keeping all contact information accurate and up-to-date throughout the school year.

### **5. Communication between Home & School**

#### *Information Management System – Veracross*

Salem Academy has invested time and resources to develop a customized information management system that is coherent with our philosophy.

We believe that our system, Veracross – which was developed specifically for our school with an established database development company– enhances our school’s drive to success by allowing us to record, maintain, analyze and report student, teacher and school data across many axes and in real-time.

Salem Academy’s information management system addresses the most important record management functions needed by administrators, teachers, parents and students to track and assess student performance. Families can readily access information regarding:

- Student and family information
- Student schedule
- Class standards and benchmarks
- Student academic progress
- Class assignments
- Homework assignments
- School attendance records
- Discipline records
- School calendar
- School announcements

Sign in and password information will be sent to families during the first weeks of school. Thereafter, please contact the school at [info@salemacademycs.org](mailto:info@salemacademycs.org), with questions. Families can use home computers and/or computers in the school computer lab in order to access the system. Having access to daily updates on their student empowers families to be proactively involved in their child’s education; the system gives families the information they need to support long-range educational planning as well as daily homework completion. Through on-going virtual communication with parents and guardians, the school hopes to mediate the traditional frustration parents feel when they have to wait to view assessments of their child’s progress until report cards or parent-teacher conferences when it may be, in fact, past the point of effective intervention.

### *Family Coffees*

The first Tuesday morning of each month, Salem Academy administrators host an informal coffee with parents. On these Tuesdays, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. is an ideal time to drop in to ask questions, raise concerns, or express appreciations. As this is not a confidential meeting,

this is not the appropriate format for discussing specific student issues, but rather for raising school-wide or classroom-wide issues.

### *Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences*

Parent-teacher conferences provide needed opportunities for parents/guardians, students and teachers to exchange useful information about the educational and social progress of students. At conferences, Connections teachers will review student progress and note any areas of special concern. By attending conferences, parents/guardians and students have the opportunity to assist in catching and correcting any academic or behavioral problems early in the school year so that they do not accumulate to have a negative impact on a student's overall performance. By attending conferences, parents/guardians send a clear signal to their students that school is important and that they are willing to partner with the school to further their child's education.

Conferences are held at the mid-point of each trimester. The dates for these conferences are:

**Trimester I Conferences:** Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 (5-8 p.m.) and Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 (2:15 – 4:00 p.m.)

**Trimester II Conferences:** Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (5-8 p.m.)

**Trimester III Conferences:** Wednesday, May 26, 2010 (5-8 p.m.)

### *Individual Meetings with Faculty Members*

Outside of the regularly-scheduled Parent-Teacher-Student conferences, faculty would be happy to schedule a meeting with you for a designated day and time. Please email or call in advance to arrange such a meeting. Please note that, due to the number of students each teacher works with each day, teachers may not be available for unscheduled conversations with parents/ guardians.

### *Individual Meetings with Administrators*

If you wish to contact an administrator or set up a meeting, email is recommended. Salem Academy's administrative team is available between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The

administrative staff is happy to meet with parents/guardians, but please call ahead to make an appointment. Please also understand that while you may find faculty and administrators in the building in the early mornings, later afternoons/evenings or even on the weekends, their presence does not indicate their availability to parents/guardians or students without an appointment. Faculty and administrators often utilize these non-administrative hours to catch up on focused work and are often not available for impromptu meetings during these hours.

### *Telephone Use and Messages*

To facilitate home/school communication, phones are located in every classroom. All staff members have voicemail accounts that can be accessed by calling the school's main number at 978.744.2105. Should a parent/guardian request a message be delivered to a student, they must be aware that this should only be for emergencies.

### *Cell Phones*

Salem Academy recognizes that students may need to carry cell phones for use after school. For this reason, cell phones are permitted in the building, but *may not be used at any time*. Should a parent/guardian and student need to communicate, they should use the school phone. If a student is found using a cell phone in school, the student will be assigned a detention and the phone will be confiscated in accordance with our "electronic device use" policy.

### *Student Planners*

Student planners are issued free of charge to all Salem Academy students and are used to record homework assignments and to serve as a vehicle for daily home-school communication. Students are expected to have their planners with them each day and in every class except Choice Block.

This planner is provided to teach students valuable lifelong organizational skills. The planners also provide parents with information about class assignments. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher if

there is a question about the use of the planner. Students will be charged a \$5 replacement fee for a lost planner.

### *Friday “Blue Folders”*

Salem Academy has provided each First Form student with a designated Friday “Blue Folder” to use as a primary home/school communication vehicle. Each Friday, this folder is sent home containing the school newsletter, announcements, permission slips and sign-up sheets.

Friday folders have two clearly labeled sides. Each week, parents/guardians should empty and read the contents from the “Stay at Home” side of the folder. Parents/guardians should read, sign, and return any documents on the “Return to School” side with the folder on the following school day.

It is incumbent upon students to bring the information home each week and it is incumbent upon parents/guardians to expect and ask for the folders each week. If a student does not bring the folder home, it is up to the student and his/her family to acquire the information from the Connections teacher the following week. By not reviewing in detail the updates contained in each Friday folder, parents/guardians may miss valuable information, such as school trips and upcoming events. Salem Academy cannot take responsibility for information missed due to lost, misplaced or forgotten folders.

### *“One Call Now” System and Email*

Salem Academy also sends home an automated voice message and/or email to families to relay important information or provide reminders of upcoming deadlines. These messages are sent to parents/ guardians via the primary telephone and email contact information they have provided at the beginning of each year. Should this information change, please update it on the Veracross system or alert the front office to make the appropriate changes to your record.

## **6. Electronic Device Use**

Salem Academy has found that electronic devices pose a major distraction for students during the academic day. Families and their students are strongly discouraged from sending any electronic device, including cellular phones, pagers, headphones, Game Boys or other non-academic devices. If a student should bring an electronic device to school, the device must be turned off upon entering the building and placed in the student's locker. If the student chooses to keep such a device on his/her person and it becomes a distraction (i.e., noises sound, student uses it, it is seen in plain view), Salem Academy faculty and staff will confiscate the device until the end of the day. Should the student choose to violate this expectation for a second time, the device will be confiscated and a parent conference will be called before the item is returned to the student.

## **7. Enrollment Policy**

Salem Academy admits students on a space-available basis in the following order, as required by law:

1. Siblings of currently attending students who reside in Salem.
2. Siblings of currently attending students who reside in other Massachusetts cities or towns.
3. Students who currently reside in Salem.
4. Students who currently reside in another Massachusetts city or town.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available slots, a lottery is held at the school to determine enrollment and waiting lists for each grade.

Salem Academy Charter School is a free, public school open to all residents of Massachusetts. Applications must be received prior to March 10<sup>th</sup>. Charter school law mandates that this lottery be random, giving preference only to those students who are residents of Salem or who have siblings attending the school (as stated above). To be eligible for admission to the school, applicants must fill out a lottery enrollment form. The school accepts enrollment forms for one year preceding the intended annual enrollment lottery.

## **8. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act**

Student education records are official and confidential documents protected by one of the nation's strongest privacy protection laws, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). FERPA applies to all schools that receive federal education funds, including Salem Academy. Non-compliance can result in the loss of those funds.

Confidential education records include student registration forms, contact information, graded papers, academic records (including report cards), discipline files, social security numbers linked to names and student information displayed on a computer screen. All school employees and school volunteers are required to keep student information secure and confidential, and to protect the rights of students.

The essence of this act is that:

- Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review their own child's educational records (any records from which the student can be individually identified), to the exclusion of third parties. Students also have this right when they reach age 18. Salem Academy has committed to responding to parental requests for student information only when they have been put in writing, and then within 72 hours.
- When copies of student records are requested, Salem Academy retains the right to charge families an administrative fee of \$0.50 per photocopied page to cover the expense of time and resources involved in providing such records.

- Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading.
- Parents/guardians have the right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by Salem Academy to comply with the requirements of the act.

Institutions and their employees may not disclose information about students, nor permit inspection of student records without the parent or student’s written permission unless such action is covered by certain exceptions as stipulated in the Act.

Practically speaking, FERPA prohibits all employees from discussing confidential student information with third parties, including parents and guardians. For instance, should two students engage in a disciplinary act together, the school is prohibited from naming or discussing the other involved student in conversations with parents/guardians. Similarly, should a parent request an explanation of a discipline or academic event that did not involve his/her child, but which transpired in his/her child’s classroom, the school is not permitted to disclose any names or details of events, nor disclose the resultant consequences.

Please understand that school officials—teachers, administrators, staff, Board members, and volunteers—must all comply with the expectations of FERPA and therefore may not discuss any student other than your own with you at any time or for any reason.

One exception the law allows is “directory information,” which includes such things as name, address and telephone number. This information is provided in the Salem Academy Student Directory for all families who state in writing that they wanted to be included in the directory.

## **9. Field Trips**

Salem Academy makes use of community and regional resources to enhance its curriculum. Classroom teachers plan field trips that support

students' understanding of key academic and cultural concepts and to fulfill our mission of providing service to the community.

Students are expected to attend field trips as they are expected to participate in all other academic activities. Field trips are not optional attendance activities, and Salem Academy is not responsible for providing individualized instruction to students who are unable to attend. Instead, such students will be supervised in another classroom while doing independent work. Parents/guardians must sign a permission slip and submit fees prior to a student's participation in a field trip. Salem Academy will never deny participation to a student based on funding. Families for whom the field trip fee is prohibitive should speak directly with their child's Connections teacher.

Students must be in school dress code and uphold all school-wide behavioral expectations while on Salem Academy sponsored field trips, including while being transported to these activities. The school will apply its discipline policy consistently while students are on the field trip (including during bus transportation).

## **10. Food Services**

Salem Academy offers an optional hot lunch program for students. Students also have the option of bringing a cold lunch from home. Salem Academy participates in the free and reduced lunch program. All parents are asked to complete a free and reduced lunch application at the beginning of the year. Eligible students will receive a free hot lunch or a reduced price hot lunch.

Parents who send their student with a lunch from home are asked to pack healthy foods. Good nutrition will help your children benefit the most from their afternoon classes. Students are discouraged from sharing/swapping food items from home. Parents are also asked to refrain from bringing fast food to their child during lunch.

When you send your child to school with the monthly check and Meal Order form for lunch services, please put his or her money in an envelope and write the student's name on the outside of the envelope. All checks should be written to Salem Academy.

Students will not be able to accumulate a negative balance on their lunch money account. In other words, Salem Academy will not serve lunches to students who have not paid for the lunch. (This, of course, does not apply to students who qualify for a free lunch).

## **11. Grievance Policy and Procedures**

Salem Academy values open and proactive communication amongst and between the members of the school community, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration and the Board. Issues that are not dealt with directly can become destructive to the school community and, therefore, detrimental to the learning process of our students. As adults we must model for our students a willingness to address conflict directly. As such, Salem Academy's procedures (outlined below) for settling differences are designed to support prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level.

These procedures pertain to grievances of varied natures; they regulate how parents and students are expected to express grievances about faculty, staff or administrators, and they regulate how faculty and staff are expected to express grievances about other members of the professional community, including peers, supervisors or the administration.

All members of the school community have a right to be heard and assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns without fear of reprisal. The administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed and proactively dealt with following the fewest steps of the procedures below. However, should resolution not be obtained at the lowest faculty or administrative

level, each member of the school community is guaranteed both substantive and procedural due process.

Explicit and direct grievance procedures are necessary to uphold the integrity of the organization. Streamlined procedures with the fewest possible points of contact enhance positive conflict resolution. Salem Academy is committed to ensuring that the following procedures are followed:

*1. Address Issue With Those Directly Involved*

The grievant brings the situation or concern to the attention of those directly involved. If a parent or student has a concern, this dictates that they must begin a dialogue with the classroom teacher or administrator with whom the conflict exists. Likewise, if a faculty member has a conflict with another faculty member or with a member of the administrative team, s/he must bring the concern to the attention of those involved.

Should a parent, student, or faculty member fail to begin the process at the lowest possible level, and instead come directly to the Executive Director or Head of School, s/he will re-direct the grievant to address the issue directly with those involved. Should a faculty member fail to begin the process at the lowest possible level, and instead go directly to a Board member or to the Board Chair with a concern about the Head of School, the Board member will re-direct the grievant to the Head of School.

*2. Address Issue With Appropriate Administrator*

If satisfactory resolution is not realized after a direct conversation between the conflicted parties, the situation must be brought to the attention of the supervising administrator. The supervising administrator and the conflicted parties will address the situation and develop

goals for conflict resolution. The administrator will monitor this process until resolution is realized.

*3. Address Issue with the Head of School*

If the complaint remains unresolved after step two, a second mediation meeting can be arranged with the Executive Director present.

*4. Submit Written Grievance to Appropriate Administrator*

If the grievant is not satisfied with the response received via steps two or three, the grievant should submit a formal written grievance to the Head of School. This written grievance should: 1) describe the incident, decision or practice that gave rise to the complaint; 2) cite the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale for concern; 3) describe what conflict resolution strategies were attempted via steps 1 and 2; and 4) explain what corrective action is being requested.

All grievances, including those about the Executive Director, must follow step four.

It is the Executive Director's responsibility to manage the ultimate resolution of conflicts between and amongst parents, students, faculty, staff, and administrators, excepting those that pertain to Executive Director him/herself or to the Head of School's execution of a school-wide policy or procedure. Should a grievant feel that s/he was not treated equitably, or that his/her concern did not receive the attention it deserved throughout the grievance process, s/he is free to submit a new grievance about the Executive Director's dealings with the grievance procedure. Such a grievance would need to follow these procedures sequentially, beginning again with step one.

*5. Provide Written Grievance to the Board*

After the administrator has been given one week to respond to this formal grievance, the grievant should bring the matter to the attention of the Board, only if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved or only if it pertains to the Head of School, Executive Director, or to the execution of school-wide policy or procedure. The written grievance should be delivered to the Board Chair at least one week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting. The Board Chair will review with the individual the above process and ensure that the proper steps were taken before adding the issue to a meeting agenda. Grievances should not be brought to the Board as a matter of public comment as this does not give the Board sufficient time to consider the issue(s) and address them through the collective governance process. The Board will not hear matters that do not follow this grievance process.

It is important to the integrity of our school that grievances be handled in an informed, direct, fair and equitable manner. The administration and board share responsibility in ensuring the integrity of the vision and its implementation through the system of due process described in this grievance policy. Any concern or grievance must be examined through the lens of the mission of the school. The final forum for conflict resolution, after a grievant has followed the steps outlined above, will be at the level of the Board of Trustees.

## **12. Homework Center**

Salem Academy students are expected to complete and return all assigned homework on time and to the specified quality standards. It is a student's responsibility to manage all procedures related to homework (keeping weekly plans, writing assignments in student planner and turning homework in).

Homework Center is a quiet, supervised classroom provided after-school for Third Form students (during recess for First/Second Form students) who have not finished their homework for the previous day.

### **13. Internet Use**

Salem Academy is fortunate to have a connection to the Internet to supplement other educational resources already available to staff and students. This resource brings with it additional responsibility, however. As Internet users, we must be aware of the many issues involved with the Internet. For one, many valuable resources available on the Internet are not found elsewhere. And yet, many sites are also inappropriate for students and serve no educational value. *All* users, staff and students alike, are responsible for ensuring that the Internet is – at all times – being used only for educational purposes.

Salem Academy uses a filtering system to track and monitor all computer use on the network. The filtering system is designed to prevent access to educationally-inappropriate sites. However, it is important to understand that no solution is perfect. Due to the nature of the Internet and evolving technology, even with supervision we cannot guarantee that students will not find their way to an inappropriate site. It is the student's responsibility to report the opening of any inappropriate site to the teacher and return to the educational topic assigned. The Acceptable Use Policy (sent home with the School Handbook and on file in the main office) was developed to ensure the safety of all users. All Internet users should read it carefully and understand it. It is important that students and families understand that any violation of the AUP may result in the loss of Internet privileges as well as other disciplinary action.

### **14. Locker Policy**

Each student who attends Salem Academy will be issued a locker for his/her use in storing hats, coats, books, and other academic-related material. Students are strongly encouraged to use the school-issued locks and not to share their combination with anyone. All students and parents/guardians must understand that lockers are the property of the school, made available for the use and convenience of students. School administrators and teachers have authority to search student lockers, any personal effects found within lockers, and places of concealment within

those personal effects. Students will be held accountable for the contents of their lockers and the contents of their personal effects. Any contraband or evidence of a crime found as a result of a locker search will be turned over to the appropriate authorities. Students and parents/guardians are hereby informed as prior and ample notice of the Salem Academy's student locker policy.

Students are to adhere to the following guidelines:

- i. Only school issued locks are to be used. All unauthorized locks will be removed immediately upon detection, and the locker and its' contents immediately searched by the Head of School or the Executive Director.
- ii. Students who forget their locker assignments or combination must request the information personally from the Administrative Coordinator.
- iii. Students are not to share lockers, unless authorized by the Head of School or another administrator.
- iv. The Head of School may require periodic inspection of lockers by school personnel. Contraband and evidence of a crime is to be inventoried and turned over to the appropriate public safety agency.
- v. The Head of School or Executive Director will conduct inspections of student lockers when it has been reasonably determined that a safety or security problem exists, or that there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has in his or her locker evidence tending to show either a violation of the law or a violation of school rules. Personal effects are to be inventoried and reasonable efforts made to return property to its owner. Contraband and evidence of a crime is to be inventoried and turned over to the appropriate public safety agency.
- vi. Students whose lockers contain contraband or evidence of a crime will be subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct and to the applicable criminal statutes.

## **15. Lost and Found**

Lost clothing, notebooks, and other items will be gathered in a lost and found cabinet, in the back entry way. Textbooks will be returned to the classroom teacher. Valuable items will be kept in the front office and identification will be required for their return. Unclaimed lost and found items are given to charity each trimester. The Executive Director or Head of School will dispose of unclaimed items at their sole discretion, typically at the end of the trimester and before each vacation. Students will typically be notified of the upcoming disposal of lost and found items prior to disposal.

## **16. Missed Work and Assessments**

Students are granted one class day per day of absence to make up missed work. Families taking extended absences, although discouraged, may request work in advance but it is up to the teacher's discretion if they will be able to meet this request.

Upon return from an absence, it is the student or parent/guardian's responsibility to collect assignments from the appropriate academic teachers. The student should request all missed assignments, class work and assessments.

If a student misses an assessment during his/her absence, it is the student's responsibility to schedule a day and a time to make up these missed tests and quizzes.

## **17. Money Collection**

Parents may be turning money in to the school for a variety of reasons and it is important to understand to whom money should be turned in so that it gets credited to the appropriate student.

- Field trip money should be put in an envelope with the student's name and turned into the Connections teacher.

- Lunch money should be put in an envelope with the Meal Order form and the student's name, and then turned into the child's Connections teacher. All lunch money envelopes will then be turned into the administrative staff person who is responsible for maintaining the lunch records.
- All other money—for school clothing, school events—should be turned in to the front office staff. Please do not leave money sitting on the front desk. Instead, turn the money in to a staff person and always get a receipt for payment.

## **18. Nurse's Office**

During the school day Salem Academy offers limited nursing services to its students. Parents are notified, by telephone or note, if a student requires pick up or more extensive medical attention. It is imperative that the health and safety of all Salem Academy students be protected at all times. Students who become ill or injured during the day will remain in the Nurse's care until parents arrive. This may be necessary when a student:

- Has an elevated temperature.
- Has visited the office for illness more than once in a day.
- Is injured and needs medical attention.
- Receives non-routine treatment (routine treatment includes administration of a band-aid, distribution of water, rest, etc.).
- Has a condition which the office and/or nursing staff feels warrants notification.

Parents/guardians are asked to help keep Salem Academy informed by providing the school office with updated contact information and an emergency phone number for your family. Your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of your receiving a call from the nurse's office, as there is no place at school to isolate ill students.

Parents/guardians are asked not to send medications, including over the counter drugs such as Tylenol, herbal remedies, vitamins or prescription

medication with students to school. School personnel – other than the school nurse – may not dispense medication. Therefore, parents must deliver all medications to the nurse personally with the following:

- All medication must be in its original bottle, properly labeled with a physician’s instructions and a student’s name.
- Written authorization and directions from the doctor who prescribed the medication.

There can be no exceptions made to this request; therefore, prescription medications sent in any other form must be picked up by an adult or Salem Academy will dispose of them. If you make a request, Salem Academy will provide your doctor with a fax number to receive the information from the doctor.

If your child has been absent from school due to illness, s/he must be fever-free and exhibiting no symptoms of illness before returning to school.

If you have been treating head lice at home please notify the school so that other children in the classroom can be monitored.

## **19. Office Notification**

Please notify the office of any and all changes of information regarding your child's address, phone number, emergency number and parent work numbers as soon as possible. It is vital that the office keeps this information up to date and your prompt notification regarding any changes is sincerely appreciated.

## **20. Personal Property**

The school attempts to create an environment that prevents personal items from being lost or stolen. Students bring personal belongings at their own risk. The best protection against loss or theft is to clearly mark all clothing and equipment with the student’s name.

In order to maintain the security of all its students, Salem Academy Charter School administrators reserve the right to conduct searches of students and their property. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible, and that students and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search. School lockers, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of Salem Academy Charter School, and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time (see Locker Policy).

## **21. Pick-Up/Drop-Off Policies & Procedures**

Students are transported to and from Salem Academy in a variety of ways, including family cars, city buses, public school buses, bicycles, and walking. Transportation to and from Salem Academy is neither the responsibility of the school nor Salem Public Schools; instead, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

Due to limited parking in front of the building as well as the need to ensure the safe supervision of all Salem Academy students, the following drop-off and pick-up plan has been developed:

### *Drop-Off*

In order to drop students off each morning, parents are asked to drive down Lynch Street at the back of the building, loop around at the very end of the street near the parking garage, enter the narrow parking lot that runs parallel with the school's back door and arrive to school so that the passenger door is nearest to the back door. Parents may not leave students unattended before staff supervision arrives, generally no later than 8:00 a.m., nor may parents drop students in the front of the building.

Due to safety issues and traffic concerns, students are asked to come inside the building upon arrival to school and to stay inside

the building until the student's ride has arrived during after-school hours. The only exception is for those students who walk home after school each day. In these cases, it is expected that the student not loiter in or around school property after school.

### *Pick-Up*

Pick-up begins through the back of the building at 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and at 2:00 p.m. on Friday for early-release students. Rather than entering the narrow parking lot at this time, parents are asked to leave their cars in the Lynch Street parking lot across the street from the school. During peak pick-up time (3:50 – 4:10 p.m.) cars should follow the traffic pattern indicated. Please do not drive down Lynch Street toward the school during pick-up time. Instead, from Congress Street, turn onto Palmer Avenue and then take a left onto Pingree Street (below the Lynch Street parking lot). Please park in the visitor lot on Lynch St. rather than idling in front of the school. When leaving the school, please exit down Lynch Street to Congress Street. Students may walk out to meet families at this time. A staff member will be present to assist students in crossing. All students should cross Lynch Street in the cross walk. At 4:10 p.m., any student who is still waiting for his/her ride will be asked to come back into the cafeteria and wait until his/her ride arrives. Once the ride has been spotted, the student notifies the administrator on duty and is granted permission to leave. Under no circumstance should students be in the parking lot or on Lynch Street past 4:10 p.m.

### *Early Dismissal*

If you must pick up your child before the 4:00 p.m. dismissal time, you are required to sign him/her out in the front office. Office staff will call to the classroom and request your child to be sent to the office. Salem Academy urges that your child participates in the full day of classes, as last minute directions and review of the day's assignments are often given during the classroom's preparation for dismissal. All attempts should be

made to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours. Regular early dismissals are not allowed.

### *First Student Bus Passes*

Salem Public Schools offer fee-based bus services to most Salem residents. Information concerning the bus pass system is available through our front office. Please inquire with the front office should your student need bus services.

### *Parking*

Parents and visitors who are visiting the school briefly may park in front of the main entrance or in the visitors spaces reserved against the Lynch Street side of the building. For lengthy visits, parents are encouraged to park directly behind the school in the Lynch Street parking lot and then walk around the building to the front entrance.

## **22. Restricted Areas & School Boundaries**

The staff kitchen, copy room, teachers' room, and adult restrooms are considered "restricted areas" in that they are for the sole use of Salem Academy faculty and staff. Students are asked to refrain from entering these areas. Additionally, students should enter classrooms that are being directly supervised by a staff member, unless previous arrangements have been made. Should a student arrive to a classroom and not find the teacher at the door, the student is asked to wait outside the classroom until the teacher arrives.

To promote a safe school environment, students should remain in the building during school unless they are dismissed by a Salem Academy administrator. Students on their way to Choice Block activities or service-learning projects that require them to leave the building should meet the Salem Academy staff member in charge of supervision in the designated classroom. Students should also generally remain in the section of the building in which their Form has classes unless they have a class outside of their area or they are given permission by a staff or faculty member.

## 23. Safety Procedures

### A. Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather can disrupt school operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the facility. In the event that such an emergency occurs during nonworking hours, we will conform to the emergency closing schedule posted by the Salem Public Schools over local radio and/or television stations. Salem Academy does not make up snow days/emergency closings unless the number of those days exceeds five.

### B. Fire Drills

Instructions for Fire Drills are posted in each classroom. All students are to move quietly and in a single file line to their assigned outside area. Lines are to remain straight while students are outside and students are to wait to reenter the building until properly notified by their teacher.

### C. False Alarms

A student who deliberately initiates a false alarm will be referred to the proper authorities for prosecution under the law. In addition, school administrators will impose a penalty of suspension and take other action deemed necessary to prevent a reoccurrence of false alarms.

### D. Building Security

The school day officially begins at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving to school after 8:00 a.m. will be greeted by Salem Academy staff members outside the building. There is also a security guard for all of Shetland Park who is on duty each day to provide additional supervision. Students should enter through the side (Lynch Street) door of the school. **Supervision is not provided for students prior to 8:00 a.m.** Parents/guardians are asked to make every effort to have their children arrive after this time.

Students are dismissed each day at 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 2:00 p.m. on Fridays, except for those students who attend after-school activities until 5:30 p.m. All students should leave the school and the surrounding premises as soon as they are dismissed from school. Supervision is not provided for students after they are dismissed each day, so parents of students who do not ride the bus are asked to make every effort to pick up their children on time.

E. Minor Accidents

Any accident requiring a visit to the nurse is recorded on an Accident Report Form in the nurse's office. Copies of this report go to the Head of School, the nurse's office and the parent or guardian of the student. Parents/guardians are notified when first aid measures have been carried out.

F. Major Accidents

In the case of an emergency, the following procedures are followed:

- i. The school nurse or a staff member carries out immediate first aid and sends a second staff member to call 911 if it is deemed necessary. A third staff member takes care of any other students or persons by safely moving them away from the scene of the incident and patient.
- ii. In cases when a second staff member calls 911, he or she returns to and stays with the first staff member who is administering care.
- iii. A staff member (the second, third, or another) contacts the parents/guardians to inform them of their child's condition.

iv. If 911 has not been contacted, but the student needs further medical attention, then the parents/guardians will be called immediately and they should pick up the student for further medical care.

v. In cases where the parents/guardians or the designated emergency persons cannot be reached, or where immediate medical attention is needed, the school will contact a local emergency unit to treat and transport the student to the hospital. In such cases, a staff member will accompany the student and stay until a parent/guardian or designated person arrives.

#### G. Emergency Evacuations

If an emergency is not immediately time sensitive, parents or guardians are called to retrieve their children. If students need to be removed from the property for safety reasons, they will be accompanied by teachers to the Salem Common. Should these plans not be feasible, the Executive Director will request the local fire station to assist the school in sheltering the students and in reaching parents or guardians to make arrangements for them to retrieve their children.

## **24. Special Education**

Like all public schools, Salem Academy provides services to students who are on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). If a student is having persistent difficulty with school work, parents may wish to consider making a referral for an evaluation. The first step is a Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) meeting, described below. If after a minimum of 30 days these general education interventions do not support the student in making adequate progress, the TAT team may refer the student for Special Education testing.

Such testing cannot be conducted without prior written consent from a parent/guardian. A Special Education evaluation might result in the

creation and implementation of an IEP. This document outlines strategies and services for meeting the student's academic needs and provides legal support to ensure that they receive such assistance.

## **25. Teacher Assistance Teams/ Student Interventions**

Staff and faculty are not permitted to diagnosis students with specific behavioral or academic concerns, including for instance ADHD, nor are they permitted to make diagnostic suggestions to parents. Should an employee or a parent have concern about a specific student, this student will be referred to Salem Academy's Teacher Assistance Team (TAT). Salem Academy's TAT system promotes early identification and intervention for students experiencing behavioral and/or academic struggles at school. If necessary, this team also serves as the referral source to the Special Education Team.

Children arrive at Salem Academy with widely divergent skills, abilities, values, experiences, maturational levels, aspirations, interests and learning styles. Many will find school an overwhelming experience from which they will withdraw if they do not receive more individualized attention than is typically received in the traditional classroom. Each such withdrawal represents the loss of human potential. The TAT's purpose is to prevent failure and ensure that all students experience success in our school in the least restrictive manner possible.

Should a teacher, parent/guardian, or administrator have concern about a specific student, the student will be referred to the TAT. The TAT will investigate the student's situation, drawing from samples of academic work, report cards, standardized test scores, discipline reports, documentation of initial interventions tried by teacher, communication logs of communications with parents/guardians and other relevant materials. Based on their investigation, the TAT will develop an action plan to support the student. In order to comply with federal law that mandates that students' needs be serviced in the least restrictive educational setting possible, the action plan must be implemented for a minimum of 30 days within the general education environment.

Following the implementation of the plan, the TAT will determine if the interventions have been successful. It will then decide to continue the interventions, try other general education interventions, or make a referral for special education testing.

## **26. Technology Use**

Use of the Salem Academy computer network and other resources is a privilege that will be extended to individuals who observe the expectations of acceptable use as outlined below. Failure to follow these rules may result in loss of computer network privileges, detention or other such consequences.

- i. Use the network only for activities that support education and research.
- ii. Use the network in a considerate and polite way at all times, particularly when communicating on the Internet.
- iii. Use the network for legal purposes only. Illegal activities include tampering with the computer hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, or vandalism or destruction of computer files. Such activity is considered a crime under state and federal law.
- iv. Respect the copyright laws and rules regarding software, information, and attribution of authorship.
- v. Keep your passwords and accounts private and respect the privacy of those of others.

## **27. Telephone Use**

Except in the event of an urgent situation, students are not permitted to use Salem Academy phones. The school requires that all students and their families make all after-school arrangements prior to school each

day. We ask this in order to protect instructional time from disruptions, and to minimize the work load for our front office. Should a student need to make a call home for an extenuating circumstance, s/he must ask permission to use the front office phone.

## **28. Textbooks, Classroom Library Books and School Supplies**

All basic texts are on loan to students for their use during their unit of study or during the school year. Students are reminded that all textbooks have a written number in them and students must turn in the book with the corresponding number at the end of the school year. Fines will be levied against students who either lose textbooks or return textbooks that show excessive damage as a result of use from that school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. All texts should be covered to protect them. Classroom library books and other instructional materials will be handled in the same manner. Salem Academy will make every reasonable effort to obtain the book or payment.

Each summer, Salem Academy produces a school supply list that details needed supplies for the upcoming school year. Should a family need assistance in procuring school supplies, please contact the front office for assistance.

## **29. Visitors**

Salem Academy invites families and the public to visit our school. In order to ensure the safety of the learning environment, we ask that all visitors request appointments when appropriate; we also require that all visitors report to the main office. Salem Academy reserves the right to deny entry to anyone whose presence might endanger the safety of our students and staff or disrupt the learning environment. Finally, we ask that student visitors come to school and remain in dress code for the duration of their visit. Parameters for students who would like to shadow Salem Academy students include:

- Family should be considering enrollment at Salem Academy

- Family should provide one week notice
- Visits should not take place during the last week of classes
- Visitors should adhere to Salem Academy's dress code
- Visitors should bring a permission note from their parents on the day of the visit

### **30. Volunteering at Salem Academy**

By enrolling a child at Salem Academy, parents/guardians have chosen to participate in a unique education experience that actively involves both parents and students. Our school was established based on the belief that parents/guardians are an important element in a child's education and that parental/guardian involvement is necessary for the success of the school.

Parents or guardians of Salem Academy students are asked to volunteer their time and/or effort each year. Opportunities exist to fulfill volunteer hours either at school, on field trips, during service learning weeks and at home. Please contact the school at [info@salemacademycs.org](mailto:info@salemacademycs.org) to express your general interest. Volunteers who have not undergone a CORI background check will not be left alone with students. In addition, non-parent/guardian volunteers must undergo a CORI background check prior to volunteering in the building. These forms are available in our front office.

### **31. Withdrawals/Transfers**

Should a student desire to withdraw from Salem Academy, withdrawal forms must be completed and filed with the school office in order for the school to release academic records. In addition, the school will not release academic records until all fines have been paid and all school books and property checked out to the student have been returned.

Please note, after withdrawing your child from Salem Academy, re-admittance is possible only by re-enrolling him/her in the next year's lottery. Once a student's seat has been forfeited, there is no guarantee

that the student and/or any siblings not already enrolled at Salem Academy will be re-admitted.

## **SECTION SIX: COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

### **1. School Personnel**

A complete list of Salem Academy Trustees, faculty, and other personnel is made available to families at the beginning of the school year and is found on our web site ([www.salemacademycs.org](http://www.salemacademycs.org)).

### **2. Board of Trustees**

The Salem Academy Board of Trustees is the legal governing body of the school. The Board is held accountable to the public and ensures that the school's academic program is successful, that the school is faithful to the terms of its charter, and that it is organizationally viable. With these ends in mind, the Board is responsible for determining the school's mission and vision; managing its property and assets; recruiting, supporting, and evaluating the Executive Director; continually developing the Board; setting effective policies; and, ensuring the school's legal compliance and fiscal health.

### **3. The School, Family and Community Team**

The mission of the School, Family and Community (SFC) Team is to “foster and establish true and active partnerships between school personnel, families and community organizations to help ensure the success of Salem Academy in educating all of its students. It seeks to apply the energies, talents and resources of all partners to the challenges of Salem Academy. The SFC undertakes the continuous planning and support of school personnel, families and community members to meet these goals.”

As members of the Salem Academy community, all families are members of the SFC Team; the organization is open to every parent, foster parent or legal guardian of any currently enrolled or accepted

student at Salem Academy Charter School. Faculty and staff members currently employed by Salem Academy Charter School are considered members of the SFC as well. Every meeting of the SFC is open to its members, as well as general public attendance. However, only members are eligible for voting on SFC issues and concerns.

Functionally, the SFC team seeks input from families, school personnel and community members. The greater Salem Academy community elects SFC officers each year who, in turn, hold monthly meetings and are responsible for organizing events concerned with:

- Family Workshops - Providing information and discussion opportunities for families with regard to supporting the academic and social development of students. In the past, the SFC has sponsored seminars on grading at Salem Academy, an adolescent body image workshop and an internet safety seminar in cooperation with the Salem police department.
- Communication - Facilitating communication between the school, families, and community members. Previously, the SFC has raised issues of concern with school administrators, published the school newsletter and hosted community forums.
- Volunteerism - Providing information and opportunities for families and community members to volunteer at the school or assist in other ways. The SFC has created and maintained the school volunteer database and identified opportunities for families to participate at school in meaningful ways.
- Academic Enrichment and Support - Providing information to families with regard to assisting the academic development of students. The SFC has promoted various means for enriching and supporting

students academically, including sponsorship of after-school enrichment classes and running the school's Title 1 and Parent Advisory Committees.

- Fundraising - Creating and maintaining opportunities for families and community members to participate in fundraising for the school and making recommendations for how to best allocate those resources. The SFC has held several fundraisers (e.g. silent auctions, pizza card and calendar fundraisers) in order to support events at Salem Academy, such as the annual Recognition Ceremony and Field Day.
- Community Involvement - Supporting the involvement of the community of Salem in the education of Salem Academy students. SFC members have assisted with service-learning projects, sponsored the school's participation in the annual Haunted Happenings parade, lobbied the city for school crosswalks and safety signs and advocated on the school's behalf with city government officials.

## Appendix A

### Glossary of Terms

<b>Assessment</b>	At Salem Academy, students are assessed on their academic achievement. This assessment or “grading” is not done in a traditional manner. Instead of assigning grades from “A” to “F” in a course, Salem Academy assesses students (on a scale of 1 to 4) based on their academic progress toward specific objectives within each course.
<b>Choice/ Choice Block</b>	Students select extra-curricular classes each trimester in Health, Physical Education (e.g., basketball, swimming), Fine Arts (e.g., painting, ensemble), and Technical and Creative Arts (e.g. web design, architecture).
<b>Connections</b>	Salem Academy’s version of homeroom, Connections includes structured activities to establish and explore school norms and to investigate themes related to civics within the school and outside of it.
<b>Extensions/ Extensions Block</b>	Extensions is the term used at Salem Academy to denote enrichment activities that take place when classes are not in session. These times include the time periods before school, after school, and on Friday afternoons after 2:00 p.m. Students are not required to participate in these programs.
<b>Form</b>	Rather than organizing students by traditional grades, Salem Academy groups students into four Forms. First Form is sixth grade students; students; Second Form is comprised of seventh and eighth grade students; Third Form has ninth and tenth grade students; and Final Form has eleventh and twelfth grade students.
<b>Mission</b>	Salem Academy’s mission - or promise to the public – is: Through a unique integration of college preparatory classes with service to the community, we graduate informed, articulate, and proactive

	individuals of strong character.
<b>REACH</b>	The culture of Salem Academy is built on shared norms. All school community members are expected to <b>REACH</b> – act in a <b>R</b> esponsible, <b>E</b> mpathetic, <b>A</b> ssertive, <b>C</b> ooperative, and <b>H</b> onest manner.
<b>Service Learning</b>	Service Learning combines meaningful service in the community, a curriculum with high academic standards and structured reflection. At Salem Academy, Service Learning provides an opportunity for students to apply their academic learning to fieldwork and internships in service to the Salem community.
<b>SFC</b>	Salem Academy’s version of a PTA/PTO, the SFC – or School, Family, and Community – Team is charged with fostering and establishing true and active partnerships between school personnel, families, and community organizations to help assure the success of Salem Academy in educating all of its students.