



**THE STEAD SCHOOL
STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK
Updated: March 2025**

This Handbook replaces any prior issued handbooks, policies or guidelines.

About The STEAD School	4
History	4
Mission Statement	4
Vision Statement	5
6 Core Values	5
3 Guiding Principles	5
Inclusivity Statement	6
General School Information	6
STEAD Enrollment Policy	6
School Closures and Emergencies	6
Communication about School Closures and Emergencies	6
Communication at The STEAD School	7
Campus Communication (Constant Contact)	7
Student Records and Fees	8
Academic Program	8
Exhibitions and Exhibition Nights	8
Student-Led Conferences	8
Curriculum and Credits	9
Graduation Requirements	9
Elective Registration Priority	12
Grading Scale	12
Remediating Credits	13
Elective Grading	13
Online Classes	13
Enrollment at Post-secondary Institution or Program	14
Early Graduation	14
Community Service and Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE)	14
School Culture	14
Discipline	15
Advisors and Hives	15
Project Based Learning (PBL) and Career and Technical Education (CTE)	15
Accelerator Weeks	15
Self Expressions	15
Guidelines Regarding the Support of Students who are Transgender and Gender Nonconforming	14
Field Trips	16
Trip Rationale	16
Exhibitions and Exhibition Nights	17
Student-Led Conferences	18
Community Meetings and Traditions	18

Community Meetings	18
Community Traditions	18
Community Service and Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE)	18
Portfolios	19
Norms, Community Expectations, and Discipline	19
Norms	19
Lunch Norms	19
Animal Care Norms	19
Community Expectations and Discipline	19
Community Expectations	19
Expectations: Respect for Self, Others and the School Community	20
When Cultural Expectations are Not Met	21
Discipline	21
27J Code of Conduct	21
Student Privacy	22
Disciplinary Action	22
Public Displays of Affection	23
Sexual Harassment	23
Vandalism or Theft	23
Freedom of Speech	24
Self-Reporting and Safe 2 Tell	24
Open Campus	24
Attendance and Participation	25
Excused Absences	25
Tardiness	25
Consequences for Unexcused Absences	26
When a student is missing from class during attendance	26
Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	26
Weapons	27
Search of Student Possessions	27
Bullying, Threat Assessments, Violence Plans	27
Suspension, Expulsion or Dismissal Procedures	27
Parent's Right to Know and Records	29
Grievance Policy and Conflict Resolution	39
Plagiarism and Cheating	41
Visitors, Guests, and Volunteers	42
STEAD Volunteer Packet	43
Dress Code and Personal Appearance: Adults and Students	43
Technology	44
STEAD Technology Agreement	44
Health Policies	45

Required Immunizations	45
Student Drivers	45
Students Driving Students	45
School Meetings	46

About The STEAD School

History

Located in the master-planned development and community of Reunion, in Commerce City, CO, The STEAD School (STEAD) opened the fall of 2021 to offer a dynamic, science-based personalized learning experience for students to explore a range of career pathways through an active, hands-on project-based learning environment based on the design principles of the nationally acclaimed High Tech High (HTH) model. STEAD stands for science, technology, environment, agriculture, and design (systems thinking). At full growth, STEAD will serve 650 students in grades 9-12. STEAD is chartered through School District 27J (the “District”) and will graduate its first class of seniors in 2025. STEAD’s board of directors (“Board”) is composed of local Commerce City parents, community members and partners, and industry professionals who have partnered with Oakwood Homes (a Colorado-based residential developer) and BuildStrong Education (an educational foundation established by Oakwood Homes) to plan this innovative school model.

The unique features of STEAD’s educational plan and model include:

- A student-driven curriculum where students have the freedom to choose areas of interest and exploration.
- An “open campus” where students have freedom of movement within and outside of the campus to collaborate, experience internships, study college coursework, and work with outside experts.
- Optional postsecondary concurrent courses, a local community college, or a certificate of training in a STEAD field of study.
- Student choice in their internships in the STEAD field of study.
- Active learning experiences, such as the annual National Western Stock Show (NWSS), the National Western Center, Denver Botanic Gardens, and the Reunion community’s Harvest Festival, or the school’s food symposium.
- Choice of four career pathway options that fully integrate entrepreneurship and technology: 1) plant science, 2) animal science, 3) food science, and 4) environmental science. Students also have the option to design their own course of independent study, or participate in the AP capstone program.

Mission Statement

STEAD’s mission is to empower students to design and lead their own postsecondary and career pathways within the context of an exciting Science, Technology, Environmental, Agricultural and System Design thinking learning environment. Heads, hearts and hands are engaged in project-based learning as students develop their individual passions to become lifelong learners, thinkers, creators and activists. All students graduate with a professional portfolio, post-secondary plans, a robust set of work and community service experiences and can graduate with college credit.

Vision Statement

The STEAD School provides pathways and an educational and career pipeline for the next generation of passionate and visionary Colorado leaders across business, civic, science, health, energy and natural resource industries and across rural, urban and suburban divides. Deeply connected to their respective communities, STEAD students are stewards of their environment and address increasingly complex food, health, environmental and energy challenges that face the state, the nation and the planet.

6 Core Values

STEAD's values are the solid foundation of its principles and practice. STEAD emphasizes six core values that drive school culture and our educational program. These six core values promote a positive and inclusive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social/emotional development.

1. *Citizenship*. Students are aware and reflective of, and are connected to, their local, regional, national, and global community.
2. *Respect*. Students have respectful relationships with their peers, Guides, communities and environment.
3. *Head, Heart and Hand*. Students are active learners each day using their head, heart and hands.
4. *Risk taking*. Students take risks and learn from mistakes through real life experiences inside and outside of the classroom.
5. *Sense of Purpose*. Students have a sense of purpose and understand their value and impact in the community.
6. *Deep Learning*. Students engage in deep learning across all academic experiences, internships and community activities.

3 Guiding Principles

1. Stewardship is our true north. It calls us to honor a rich Western heritage while embracing a bright future. It requires us to nurture relationships between self, one another, place and planet. And it encourages us to leave the world a better place than we found it as we conquer new frontiers in learning.
2. Exploration calls us to pursue new and better horizons. Like the pioneering generations that went before, students participate in exciting adventures of learning. Rich experiences and deep engagement in entrepreneurial, STEM-centered learning support students in their quest for knowledge and discovery.
3. Collaboration brings us together in the pursuit of common goals. Across disciplines and organizational types (i.e. public, private and nonprofit) students work with mentors and partners to address complex issues in biomedicine, food and water security, agricultural sciences, renewable energies and more. Collaboration, both within and outside the campus will be critical to our success. Utilizing authentic STEAD methods, the STEAD community aims to nurture the whole child and enrich the lives of each student from preschool to twelfth grade.

Inclusivity Statement

The STEAD School welcomes anyone into its community of inspired people – be they students, educators or partners – working together to address some of the world’s largest challenges. People from many different backgrounds, fully sharing their perspectives and experiences, interdependent on one another make this community whole and healthy. They make this community home for learners, leaders, visionaries, collaborators and environmental stewards.

General School Information

Hours of Operation

During the school year, the school is open from 7:30am to 3:30pm Monday-Friday.

Student contact hours (time on campus) are 8:00 to 3:00.

Contact Information

The STEAD School
18251 Homestead Trail
Commerce City, CO 80022
Phone: 720-835-2995

Website: <https://www.thesteadschool.org>

[STEAD Calendar](#)

STEAD Enrollment Policy

[Enrollment Process and Policy](#)

School Closures and Emergencies

Communication about School Closures and Emergencies will be sent out via our LMS system, Jupiter.

Communication about School Closures and Emergencies

The STEAD School will communicate with students/parents regarding weather closures, emergencies, or other important time sensitive information in the following ways:

- Messaging to Families: By 5:00 am STEAD will send a message to families via our communication system.

Contacting Students during School Hours

If parents need to contact their student(s) during school hours, the STEAD School asks that they call the front desk and the admin team will get a message to the student. Parents, please do not contact your student directly via their cell phone during school hours--this can be extremely disrupting to the learning of your student and the others around them. Thank you for your support in this effort to maintain an engaging learning environment.

Communication at The STEAD School

At STEAD, we value open, direct and honest communication and we encourage students and families to reach out to us when questions, concerns and ideas arise.

- Communicating as a Family--We encourage families to discuss the STEAD experience daily and feel that this is probably the most important part of the whole process!
- Communicating with the Hive Guide--The Hive Guide is a faculty or staff member who is responsible for working closely with the 10-15 students in his or her advisory group. Students are encouraged to turn to their advisors for support, advice and mentoring and the Hive Guide is the parent/guardian's first point of contact with the school when issues arise.
- Communicating with STEAD Faculty--We encourage students to speak directly with teachers when they have questions, issues or ideas. The most effective way for parents/guardians to communicate with faculty is email; contact information for all STEAD staff and faculty is on our website. Please direct all student concerns through the Hive Guide and teacher prior to reaching out to the principal or other administration. Please allow staff 2 business days to reply, as their first priority is spending time with students and they may not have checked their email.
- Communicating with STEAD Administrators--Students are welcome to meet with administrators when they would like to discuss concerns or ideas about the school. Parents/guardians can email administrators or call the main office to arrange an appointment.
- Jupiter--The STEAD School uses an online system called Jupiter that allows students and parents/guardians to keep track of classes, behaviors, and attendance. It is also a space to see and pay fees.
- STEAD Main Office--The STEAD School front desk is staffed from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm each school day. You can call the main office at 720-835-2995 at any time with any sort of question. The front office can assist with basic information or provide guidance on contacting the correct person for more in depth conversations.

Campus Communication

For the most comprehensive school news, families should read all campus communication updates sent out via jupiter and the bi-weekly buzz. The staff of The STEAD School relies on families to read these emails for up-to-date information regarding school events and news.

Student Records and Fees

It is vital that The STEAD School has the most current contact information for you and your student. If you move or change your contact information you must provide the main office with the updated information within one week of the change. If you would like a copy of your student's educational records

you can access records on Infinite Campus, For other educational records contact the main office.

The STEAD School academic and activity fees are posted on the website and are updated each academic year: General and field trip fees are waived for students that receive FRL status. Parents/guardians may also sign up for a payment plan by contacting the business specialist at the school or selecting a payment plan in jupiter.

[FRL Form for Families](#)

Academic Program

Exhibitions and Exhibition Nights

Students have opportunities to present their work to the school, local, and larger community including Exhibition Nights. All of these are mandatory for students. Students who miss one of these events will have an incomplete in their classes, at teacher discretion, until the experience is remediated. These events typically occur outside of normal school hours; and parents and students understand the expectation of participation, and commit to attending these required events.

These unique learning measures and alternative assessment opportunities augment state content and performance requirements. They offer ways for educators to gauge and demonstrate the levels of attainment in vital aspects of our design principles that are not readily or adequately measured by standardized tests or traditional assessments.

Projects are presented publicly by students to the community consisting of their peers, teachers, parents and/or community members. Showing students' work is important because it's motivating; exhibitions increase students' effort and improve the quality of the final product. The STEAD School sponsors multiple exhibitions each year, some on campus and others offsite to encourage community attendance and promote public access to students' work. Exhibition is an essential experience for all STEAD students. Participation is mandatory.

Student-Led Conferences

Student-Led Conferences are similar to traditional Parent/guardian-Teacher Conferences but conferences are facilitated by the student. Students lead a focused dialogue with their parents/guardians concerning their performance and growth at The STEAD School. Student-Led Conferences are an integral part of the reflective process and result in a clear understanding and agreement of "where students are at." Student-Led Conferences occur once a semester. The beginning of the year Student-Led Conference is mandatory for students and at least one parent or guardian. A second annual Student-Led Conference during the year is at the discretion of the student, Advisor, and/or parent.

Curriculum and Credits

The STEAD School is characterized by innovative, Nextgen science, technology, environmental, and design (systems) areas of study. Post-secondary educational options are available to juniors and seniors. Students participate in SAE's (Supervised Agricultural Experience) as defined by their chosen CTE Pathway and supported by their CTE teacher. Students are also able to pursue enrollment at local community colleges and professional training in agriculture, science, and business programs for certification.

Graduation Requirements

All STEAD students will meet the Colorado Department of Education ("CDE") high school graduation credit and course requirements (set forth below). Additionally, STEAD requires that each student achieve the following additional items:

- Successful Completion of at least **one of the following Pathway Options (students may choose both):**
 - Complete a CTE agricultural pathway (Food Science, Animal Science, Plant Science, or Natural Resources)
 - Complete the AP Seminar & Research Certificate pathway:
 - This pathway is for students who intend to attend university and want to pursue an original academic research opportunity in high school. This pathway does not excuse students from their cohort-based core courses.
 - Optionally, Students who complete this program **as well as** 4 additional AP courses (with a score of 3 or higher on all AP exams) will receive the AP Capstone Diploma.
- Complete a post-secondary education plan
- Complete a minimum of one internship
- Follow the Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education
- Meet SD27J current High School Graduation requirements set forth below
- Meet STEAD Curriculum and Credit Requirements set forth below
- Optional, but recommended for students considering pursuing college:
 - Take one college level course on a college campus

Graduation Requirements: STEAD versus 27J and HEAR

Subject Area	HEAR <small>(Higher Education Admissions Recommendations) (Years)</small>	27J Semester Credits (Years)	STEAD Semester Credits (Years)
English	4 years	8 (4 years)	8 (4 years)
Mathematics (Must include Algebra I,	4 years	6 (3 years)	8 (4 years)

Geometry, Algebra II or equivalents)			
Natural/Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-based)	3 Years	6 (3 years)	6 (3 years)
Social Science	3 Years	6 (3 years) 4 (2 years of History) 1 (.5 year of Economics) 1 (.5 year of Political Science/Civics)	6 (3 years) 4 (2 years of History) 1 (.5 year of Economics) 1 (.5 year of Political Science/Civics)
World/Foreign Language	1 Year	0	2 (1 year)
Academic Electives	2 Years	13	13
CTE		2 (1 year)	6 (3 years)
PE		2 (1 year)	2 (1 year)
Health		1 (.5 year)	1 (.5 year)
Humanities		2 (1 year)	2 (1 year)
Total Credits		46	56
Additional Requirements		<i>Demonstrate competency of career and college readiness in Math</i> (Must meet 1 of the following): 1. SAT Math 460+ 2. Successful Completion MAT 103 Math for Clinical Calculations or higher 3. Any AP Math Course Test Score of 2+ or 4. Mathematics Capstone	Complete a CTE agricultural pathway or an approved independent study towards industry certification <i>Demonstrate competency of career and college readiness in Math</i> (Must meet 1 of the following): 1. SAT Math 460+ 2. Any AP Math Course Test Score of 2+
		<i>Demonstrate Competency of career and college readiness in ELA</i> (Must meet 1 of the following): 1. SAT 430+ 2. Successful Completion ENG 121 Eng. Comp. I or LIT 115 Intro. to Lit. or COM 115 Public Speaking or higher 3. Any AP English Course Test Score of 2+ or 4. English/Language Arts Capstone	Complete a minimum of one Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) internship (required as part of the CTE Work-based Learning component) <i>Demonstrate Competency of career and college readiness in ELA</i> (Must meet 1 of the following): 1. SAT 430+ 2. Any AP English Course Test Score of 2+
		<i>Community Service</i> : 5 hours per year (20 hours total)	Strongly Recommended: Take one college level course on a college campus or trade school
		<i>Post Secondary Plan Portfolio/ Individualized Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)</i>	Complete a post-secondary education plan (part of CTE requirements) and incorporate into portfolio

The annual STEAD calendar consists of 4 CTE project class blocks, that are each 6-8 weeks in length, with a weeklong accelerator week in between. Accelerator weeks are for a focused curriculum that is different from CTE project block classes, and are centered around guide and student interest but may be totally different from the normal subject a guide may teach. We currently utilize a schedule with 4 blocks (A/B) a day so students have a balance of core courses and electives.

Elective Registration Priority

Because STEAD is committed to keeping class sizes small, some elective classes may fill and some students may not receive their 1st choice. We give priority in the following ways:

1. Graduation and CTE Pathway requirements get first priority based on year of study.
2. Foreign Language requirements take second priority
3. A balance of creative (art, music, theater) and physical electives takes third priority (unless for sports teams)
4. Seniors get 1st priority Juniors get 2nd priority
5. Sophomores get 3rd priority
6. Freshmen get 4th priority

Remediating Credits

The STEAD School requires that students receive a C- (70%) or higher in all core academic courses and electives in order to receive credit. There are two options for remediating a credit when a student does not pass a class with at least a grade of C-.

- Students can remediate credits through an accredited online program.
- Students can remediate credits through an elective in the same discipline as the course they did not pass, or by repeating the same course if they are repeating a grade level. The elective option would not count toward the total number of elective credits needed for graduation, as it would be fulfilling a core class credit requirement.

Online Classes

STEAD may accept online classes in place of core classes or elective credits. Students interested in pursuing online instruction must first meet with the Guidance Counselor. In order for STEAD to grant credit for an online course, it must be offered through an accredited program that has been pre-approved before the course begins. There are many accredited online schools and programs. Please consult with the school to select the best one, based on cost and post-secondary goals. Families are responsible for the cost of online classes. Students must ensure their grade/transcript from their online course is submitted to STEAD in order to receive credit. Online classes can not exceed one class per semester unless the student is on a formal leave from school for reasons allowed by law or otherwise predetermined and agreed upon by the principal, advisor, and student's family, with a waiver of the Enrollment Policy, having been approved by the Board.

Enrollment at Post-secondary Institution or Program

STEAD students are encouraged to pursue college credit at local colleges to further their studies in conjunction with with the STEAD curriculum. All students may pursue this option with prior approval from the guidance counselor. Please note that college coursework can be used to replace core

classes with the approval of the principal. College coursework will receive the same credit per semester as a course at STEAD class. Please note that not all college coursework will transfer to a future institution of higher learning. It will be up to the student's future college to make this determination.

Early Graduation

STEAD's philosophy is that most students benefit from four years of high school experience. Students are encouraged to pursue postsecondary education or other opportunities while in attendance at STEAD. However, the graduation requirements at STEAD call for 4 full years of English, Math, and CTE; and therefore, it is important for families and students to understand that early graduation is not a part of the culture or academic fabric of our school.

Community Service and Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE)

At The STEAD School, learning is connected to the world beyond our classrooms, most notably through SAEs and the AP Capstone projects. All STEAD students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade are required to participate in an SAE that aligns with their chosen curricular pathway, or complete research projects in 11th and 12th grade as part of the AP Capstone pathway. Schedules can be arranged to allow students time to attend internships or post-secondary course offerings. However, STEAD will not offer transportation directly to students. Regardless of location, it is a goal of STEAD's to pair students with community service/internship opportunities that align with each student's chosen CTE agricultural pathway or personal research project. We anticipate opportunities for STEAD students that could include the local community of Reunion, the greater metropolitan area of Denver, and even working with students from rural communities on projects via distance learning. The team works closely with students to coordinate SAE internships and community service activities.

School Culture

Advisors and Hives

STEAD guides each serve as an advisor to a small group of approximately 15 students that they will meet with each day. STEAD students will be part of a "hive" with the same advisor for the entire time they are a student at STEAD. Hives meet every day and hive time is meant to be a "home base" community of academic and social/emotional support. In the beginning of the school year, hives participate in team building including trips in order to build community and strengthen bonds. Mixed age groups allow for mentorship and leadership opportunities. Consistency of advisors allows students to deeply connect with an additional adult in the environment. Hive trips provide opportunities for bonding and leadership. Hives are intended to be a space that promotes inclusion of all students in a safe, open, and accepting environment. Overall, hive time provides students with a small, manageable sense of familiarity from which to branch out into the larger STEAD community. Hive is a place where

students can be themselves, can share their personal and academic selves, have fun, and receive support. Building a positive and inclusive school culture for academics and the community requires a strong hive operation.

Guidelines Regarding the Support of Students who are Transgender and Gender Nonconforming

The CDE recommends that local education agencies honor the wishes of the student's own self-identification in terms of gender of record", and that a change on record can be made without legal documentation of an official name change. As Student safety is STEAD's utmost importance, creating a safe and secure learning environment is a priority. This safety extends to our transgender and gender nonconforming students' well-being and health at the school. For this reason STEAD, alongside the 27J school district, abide by the following guidelines:

- Transgender and non-binary students have the right to be addressed by their preferred name and pronoun while at school.
- The student has the right to be called by their preferred name and pronouns while at school regardless of being "out" at home.
- Transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming students may change their name or add a pronoun flag in infinite campus and/or Jupiter without parent permission or legal name change documentation (STEAD strongly encourages involvement of family for name change purposes)

STEAD is monitoring and will update with local, state and federal policies as needed

Project Based Learning (PBL) and Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The STEAD School curriculum and instruction is unwaveringly grounded in the application of PBL through the lens of the CTE pathways in plant science, food science, environmental science, and animal science while integrating technology, agriculture, and systems design principles.

Accelerator Weeks

Accelerator Weeks are 4 day-long educational experiences that allow students and staff to learn new content, develop or remediate their skills while participating in enriching hands-on activities. STEAD's culture is strengthened through shared experiences which build stronger relationships between students, staff and community members. For Accelerator Weeks, our classroom is the world beyond our school walls. Accelerator Weeks take place 3-4 times throughout the year, are led by guides, and are **required for all students.**

Field Trips

Trips are an integral part of The STEAD School culture and curriculum and SIGNIFICANTLY influence the community in the days before, during, and after the trip. It is our goal that all students do not feel left out or disconnected with the planning, execution, and reflection of a trip. **Please support your student in successfully embracing this part of our curriculum.** The STEAD School team will do their best to ensure that trips are minimal in cost. **It is the intention that EVERY STUDENT attend trips,** as trips are part of the STEAD curriculum and are crucial for the formation of our community and the student experience. Please note that if you are in need of financial support for a trip, please contact the front office.

Trips can be as small as a day trip with 2 students or as large as a week-long overnight trip with the entire STEAD School. Trips are an opportunity for students to experience some of the freedoms and responsibilities of adulthood and be a part of a greater community. Guides spend days and weeks building curriculum around potential experiences and learning in preparation for trips. It is when the community is on trip that students can take on different roles within the community--roles that are not part of our daily time together at school. In addition, trips provide an opportunity for students to make new connections and build new relationships--we work together to prepare meals, learn about our environment, interact with our outside community, and support each other in being away from home. When we return from our trips we spend time reflecting on our experiences and time together.

Community Meetings and Traditions

Community Meetings

Students will have a Community Meeting occasionally. Community Meeting will be both a time for students to self-govern their community and a time to share celebrations, concerns, projects they are working on, and showcase mini performances or artwork they are working on. **It is a mandatory part of the STEAD School's model and curriculum.**

Community Traditions

Traditions are an integral part of building a loving, supportive, and socially healthy academic community. STEAD will have several academic and social traditions that will be celebrated. Traditions include student, faculty and staff, parent/guardian, and community members. Traditions include:

- Community Meetings
- Annual Harvest Festival
- Annual participation in National Western Center programming and the National Western Stock Show
- Exhibition experiences
- Annual new students orientation

The students of The STEAD School, united in a spirit of mutual trust and fellowship, mindful of the values of a true education and the challenges posed by the world, agree to accept the responsibilities for honorable behavior in all academic activities, to assist one another in maintaining and promoting personal integrity.

Portfolios

STEAD students will create a portfolio of diverse work and competencies over the course of their time at The STEAD School. Portfolios will be shared publicly and with industry experts and partners. **This is a graduation requirement.**

Fees

The Fees policy at STEAD closely follows the rationale and amounts assessed by all 27J high schools. The following linked documents give more detail about the policy and schedule of fees.

[STEAD Fees Policy & Schedule](#)

Norms, Community Expectations, and Discipline

Lunch Norms

There is no formal cafeteria space at the STEAD School; students may eat lunch in a variety of spaces and are expected to take the same level of care with their food and waste as they would in any other public space. Food is not to be wasted, and waste is to be handled responsibly by each and every student so that the space looks just as it did before the time designated for lunch.

Lunch time also allows for students to exercise, socialize and relax in a variety of spaces. Students must be supervised at all times during lunch and are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior as per the other policies of the school.

Off-campus Lunch Policy

Juniors and Seniors are allowed to leave campus during the lunch period. All students must abide by 27J Code of Conduct during this lunch period. Students who are violating code of conduct will be subject to consequences based on infraction. Freshmen and sophomores are not allowed to leave campus for lunch. If they are found to be in violation of that rule, they will be subject to detention and/or other disciplinary action.

Lunch time also allows for students to exercise, socialize and relax in a variety of spaces. Students must be supervised at all times during lunch and are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior as per the other policies of the school.

Animal Care Norms

The STEAD campus, at full growth, will host a variety of animals to include bees, chickens, and other animals as determined by the community. All animals will be treated with respect and care.

Community Expectations and Discipline

Community Expectations

The STEAD School, we deeply value our close community and culture, both of which depend upon all of us agreeing to collectively uphold a shared set of expectations for engagement, communication and actions. All students, parents/guardians and staff are rigorously responsible for and actively participating in shaping our school culture and therefore must fulfill the school's expectations for conduct. Any student who fails to meet The STEAD School conduct expectations or [27J code of conduct](#) may be subject to discipline including the possibility of suspension or expulsion proceedings.

Students at The STEAD School have the right to expect:

- education in a positive, supportive learning environment where you can express your opinions and ideas
- a safe school
- that you will be treated fairly and will not be subjected to discrimination
- clear communication about school rules and policies
- that faculty, staff and administrators will respectfully listen to you when you come to them with your concerns, questions and issues
- faculty, staff and administrators who are committed to open, solution-oriented dialogue

Expectations: Respect for Self, Others and the School Community

The STEAD School exists to create the opportunity for sharing, learning, innovation and personal development. To this end, it is critical that all members of this community respect each others' rights, values, opinions and individuality. Each community member is expected to practice this respect with regard to how we talk/interact with one another and how we treat each other's and the school's property and space. Willfully causing physical or emotional harm, fighting, bullying, threatening violence or subjecting another member of The STEAD School community to verbal threats, harassing language, violent, sexual and/or inappropriate messages is a violation of this code. Further, it is the policy of The STEAD School to prohibit harassment of any kind, including harassment based on gender, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, age, marital status, genetic information, disability, sexual orientation or anything of a sexual nature.

In order to support our unique school culture, students act in a manner that shows respect for themselves, others and our campus. They:

- respect each other's rights, individuality and differences: STEAD policy prohibits harassment of any kind, including harassment based on gender, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or of a sexual nature, and use appropriate and respectful language.
- communicate directly with fellow students, teachers, advisors and staff when challenges or conflicts arise at school, knowing that they will be respected, heard and taken seriously because they are advocating for positive change
- respect for others' time and work; all STEAD community members are expected to be respectful of the time and work of others, which includes giving people your full attention during lessons and presentation.
- respect others' property and are responsible for their own property: Students bringing computers, electronic devices or other valuables to school do so at their own risk. The school will not accept the responsibility for any loss, theft, or damage of any personal electronic device brought to school by any student. It is our students' responsibility to keep track of their personal belongings. The school will work to help retrieve any lost or stolen personal belongings but ultimately students and families take on full responsibility for any personal property brought to school.
- treat school buildings and property with care and respect: a clean environment is important to all; vandalism will be dealt with severely. Parents/guardians will be responsible for paying for any damage done to school property by their child.
- refrain from inappropriate public displays of affection: this is a professional learning environment and therefore public displays of affection are not appropriate.

Discipline

Discipline at The STEAD School starts with the restorative practice model and cultural expectations and will be supported by the 27J Code of Conduct should a discipline issue escalate to a point where action is required on behalf of the administration.

27J Code of Conduct

STEAD students are required to comply with the 27J Code of Conduct. <https://www.sd27j.org/about-us/district-policies/code-of-conduct>. Students will annually at registration be required to acknowledge this.

However, any place which refers to the superintendent or administrator is replaced by the Executive Director, and references to the Board shall mean the STEAD Board. By way of example (not limitation), grievance policy, and

electronics and cell phone policy contained in this Handbook supersede the policies in the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Student Privacy

Student privacy is always paramount. Private information regarding students should be shared only in a professional context and with adults that need to know for the purpose of their work. Do not share student information with parents (other than the students'), other students, or staff that do not need to know.

Disciplinary Action

STEAD believes students should be accountable to themselves, their peers, their guides, their school, and their community. Students are expected to be stewards of the community, and are given significant freedom at STEAD. However, with that freedom comes responsibility. Throughout the educational process STEAD integrates restorative practices into our approach to empower students while holding them accountable in a safe way where they are able to self-examine their behaviors and take ownership of their state of being.

The STEAD school believes that documentation and communication is essential to an involved, integrated learning environment. We will use the Jupiter behavior tracking system to keep parents informed on “successes” and “challenges” the staff sees throughout the school day. We intend this system to function for communication, not punishment. However, when students are not holding themselves to the standard we would expect, we have thresholds for “challenges”.

Each school year, students will sign an acknowledgement that they have read, understand, and agree to the expectations set out in the Student and Family Handbook to build the STEAD community and hold each other accountable, and thus we create shared expectations for the community. If 27J Code of Conduct is disregarded, it weakens our community and diminishes our educational experience.

When students do not meet our cultural expectations, unless there are clear mitigating circumstances, STEAD holds that students are responsible and accountable for their actions. Accordingly, guides, staff and administrators will work with students to determine appropriate next steps. In all cases, it is important to us at STEAD to treat individual students with respect, compassion and understanding, to consider the safety and wellbeing of our community and to find ways to address issues that are just, fair and equitable.

STEAD views behavior and discipline through the lens of skill building. STEAD believes that students do not commit infractions at school because they are bad or because they are problems. STEAD believes students commit infractions when they are lacking the skills to manage their emotions and behaviors.

STEAD implements restorative justice principles instead of punishment in the school community, that first to build classroom communities that are supported by clear agreements, authentic communication, and specific tools to bring issues and conflicts forward in a helpful way. Discipline will not function to punish, marginalize, or harm students. Rather, all policies and practices related to discipline will function to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support their own learning, contribute to the STEAD community, and thrive in the world beyond school.

If violations of behavioral expectations occur by a student, teachers, and other STEAD staff, through restorative practices, STEAD will provide specific pathways to repair harms by bringing together those who are affected by misbehavior in a dialogue to address concerns, achieve understanding, and come to an agreement about setting things right (with the exception of incidents that may jeopardize safety).

Forms for self-evaluation of behavior and student developed plans for restoration may be utilized. Additionally, behavioral contracts may be created by a student in collaboration with faculty and staff.

Public Displays of Affection

The STEAD School is a professional environment. As such, excessive public displays of affection are not tolerated. Although the boundaries of this may be difficult for teenagers to understand, school staff will enforce this expectation through this lens: if it is inappropriate for a professional workplace, it is inappropriate for The STEAD School.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to behavior that, among other things, is not welcome, is personally offensive, or undermines or weakens morale. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome verbal, physical, visual or electronic conduct that has the purpose and/or effect of creating or contributing to an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment or that unreasonably interferes with the recipient's educational progress or personal security. It includes, but is not limited to, pressure for sexual activity, demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or actual promises of favors, unwanted physical contact such as constant brushing against another's body, hugging, patting, stroking, and other touching as well as jokes and comments that are sexual in nature.

Vandalism or Theft

No one is to injure, destroy, deface, trespass on or steal school property. A well-maintained, functional learning environment is important to all, vandalism and theft will be dealt with severely. Parents/guardians will be responsible for paying for any damage or theft done to the building or school equipment by their student. Those with any information about damage or theft done to the building or its contents should report it to the principal. Vandalism, the defacement/damage to or theft of another member of The

STEAD School community's personal possessions is also a violation of this code.

Students (and in lieu of the student, that student's parent/guardian) are responsible for repairing and/or replacing any school resources they damage, break or lose. This includes but is not limited to technology, books, furniture and building fixtures. The STEAD School is not responsible for damaged, stolen or misplaced personal property. It is our students' responsibility to keep track of their personal belongings. The school will work to help retrieve any lost or stolen personal belongings but ultimately students and families take on full responsibility for any personal property brought to school.

Freedom of Speech

The US Supreme Court has called public schools a "marketplace of ideas" where the protections of the First Amendment are particularly important. "The vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools." *Shelton v Tucker*, 364 U.S. 479, 487 (1960)

At the same time, the law is clear that a student's right to free speech is not unfettered and that the free speech/press protection does not prevent a school from imposing certain restrictions and/or imparting discipline for certain forms of speech that may be considered disruptive to the community, in violation of school policies and/or considered harassment, bullying, threats and/or intimidation or incite violence. In short, The STEAD School reserves the right to place reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on speech where the faculty and/or administration determine that such a restriction is appropriate.

Examples of student speech that may be restricted include:

- Speech which creates or threatens violence, danger and/or unlawful acts
- Speech which threatens or presents a violation of STEAD rules and standards of conduct
- Speech which creates or threatens a substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school
- Speech which impinges on the rights of others
- Vulgar, lewd, obscene, and plainly offensive speech or conduct

Self-Reporting and Safe 2 Tell

We value integrity, honesty and responsibility in our community. Students are strongly encouraged to self-report to STEAD administration any significant issues that occur outside of school time, especially those that involve drug, alcohol or tobacco use or run-ins with the law, possession of weapons, or threats of violence against others or self-harm. This allows us to provide informed support for our students as necessary. In addition, students are always encouraged to call SAFE 2 TELL at 1-877-542-7233 with any concerns regarding safety for themselves or others.

Campus

STEAD is a campus that promotes freedom within a safe environment. Students can move between buildings as they work on projects and collaborate and even leave campus for internships, college coursework, and work with outside experts with guide permission and a pass. Open spaces, physically and intellectually, are an important part of STEAD's culture and foster collaboration and interdisciplinary exploration. At STEAD "*freedom with responsibility*" means making responsible choices even when no one is looking. In addition, very little at STEAD will be compartmentalized so students make connections between their work, the traditional subjects of education, and the interdependent systems of our planet (systems thinking).

Attendance and Participation

The project-based nature of The STEAD School makes daily attendance extremely important. Students must be on time and present for classes. The academic day starts at 8:00am and ends at 3:00pm. Significant absences, repeated unexcused absences or tardiness can lead to academic and/or disciplinary consequences. STEAD requests that families schedule appointments, vacations or special programs so as not to conflict with school. Additionally, in accordance with Colorado law, if a student misses 10 days of school in a given school year, a doctor's note will be required for missing any further school, and the student and their parent/guardian may be subject to legal enforcement action for truancy.

Excused Absences

In the event of an unplanned absence (i.e., illness or emergency), a parent/guardian must call the main office to inform the staff. If the school does not receive a call from a parent/guardian, the absence will be marked as unexcused. For any planned absence that is known ahead of time, have it signed by a parent/guardian and turn it in to the main office prior to the absence. These forms are available at the front desk. School staff will keep these forms on file for the duration of the school year to track excused absences for the student. Written permission or a phone call from a parent/guardian is required for students to leave school before the end of the day or during the school day.

Tardiness

Tardiness can be very disruptive for all involved. In addition, all important announcements for the day are made at the very start of school. Missing, or being tardy can have a significant effect on a student's success at school. We ask that parents and students do all they can to avoid arriving late for the school day or late to a class. If a student will be late for school, a call or note from a parent/guardian is required for the tardy to be excused. Unexcused tardies are recorded in our data management system. Students who arrive late to school or who are returning from a midday appointment must check in at the main office before they go to class.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

Any student who has an excessive amount of absences in a semester will receive consequences as determined by the administration.

Passes

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Students are required to comply with the 27J Code of Conduct. Students will annually be required to acknowledge this.

Students may not possess, use or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on campus or at school-related functions off campus. Smoking and smoking materials--including but not limited to cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizer pens, e-hook, etc.--are not allowed on campus or during any off campus activity that is affiliated with the STEAD school, including internships and college class attendance. The STEAD School students represent themselves and The STEAD School community at all times and should always keep this in mind when making choices or choosing behaviors outside of school hours. Issues related to student use, possession, and/or sale of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco occurring outside of school hours and school-sponsored functions must be reported to The STEAD School Principal. If the school learns of an infraction by means other than a student's own self report, The STEAD School reserves the right to take further disciplinary action. If the student does self-report, The STEAD School will work with that student to get whatever support, counseling, and/or treatment he/she needs. The STEAD School will also work with the student and his/her family to address the impact his/her behavior has had on The STEAD School community. The STEAD School reserves the right to impose disciplinary action on students for behaviors/infractions occurring outside school time.

Search of Student Possessions

The STEAD School reserves the right to examine and/or search all student possessions that are with them at school or school related activities, when, in the judgment of school administrators and officials, there is cause to believe that the student may be in possession of alcohol, drugs, weapons, stolen goods or any other materials that may be illegal, harmful or disruptive to the school community.

Bullying, Threat Assessments, Violence Plans

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD students are required to comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Suspension, Expulsion or Dismissal Procedures

Pursuant to CRS 22-33-106, the Administration has the authority and option to suspend or recommend expulsion of a student according to grounds outlined in the 27J Code of Conduct. To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD students are required to comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Suspension

Though suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique in both general and special education, research has raised serious questions about its effects. Frequent use of suspension has many undesirable and unintended outcomes, including a less healthy school environment, lower academic achievement, higher levels of disruptive or antisocial behavior, and higher school dropout rates.

There are offenses that may require a different consequence, such as out of school suspension (OSS). A suspendable offense can result in up to 10 days away from school; however, in that time, STEAD will work to ensure that students at least have assignments and access to support, if needed, to process through the work. Before returning to school, the student, with at least one family member or community support partner, will engage in a re-entry process to determine the best next steps for returning to the classroom, or other restorative efforts. We have set a maximum of 10 days suspension for each student for the year, so as to ensure the loss of in-class instruction is limited. Our expectation is that it would be extremely rare for any student to reach this maximum given the other preventative and restorative practices in place at STEAD.

Additionally, a student suspended for a period of ten days or less shall receive an informal hearing by the Principal or the Principal's designee prior to the pupil's removal from school (or the classroom for ISS). If a suspension is for more than ten days, a student may seek an appeal of such suspension. The Board shall review the appeal.

Parent/Guardian Notification

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Expulsion

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Appeal Process

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Discipline and Special Education Students

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Grounds for Suspension or Expulsion

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Implementation, Documentation, and Accountability

To the extent not waived or replaced by the policies contained in this Parent and Student Handbook, STEAD will comply with the District 27J Code of Conduct.

Immigration Information

We have the following policies in place to support our students.

[KFA](#) - Public Conduct on School Property and Visitors to School AND [KI](#) - to ensure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings with wrongful intent, all school visitors shall report to the school office when entering and receive authorization before visiting elsewhere in the building. All individuals visiting our schools must have a legitimate business or educational purpose.

Interrogations & Searches [JIH](#) (Student Interviews, Interrogations, Searches and Arrest), federal immigration law enforcement activities would not be permitted at our schools, on transportation routes, on 27J property or during school activities.

Privacy and Protection of Confidential Information - [JRFB](#) (FERPA) AND Public's Right to Know - Freedom Information Public Records - [KDB](#) - Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we are required to limit who has access to student documents. 27J does not collect the immigration status of our families. Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and harassment of students on the basis of protected classes, which includes national origin, race and color. You can find these prohibitions in the federal [Title IV and Title VI](#) statutes and in Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act, § 24-34-601, C.R.S.

Response to unauthorized visitors entering or already in the building - We would enact Standard Response Protocols - [HERE](#) just like we train, implement and practice currently.

Parent's Right to Know and Records

As a parent of a student at STEAD, parents have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher who instructs your child. This is a requirement for all districts that receive Title I funds. Federal law allows you to request certain information about your student's classroom teacher. The law also requires the district to give you this information in a timely manner upon request. Listed below is the information about which you have the right to ask for regarding each of your student's classroom teachers:

- whether the Colorado Department of Education has licensed or endorsed your student's teacher for the grades and subjects taught.
- whether CDE has decided that your student's teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- the teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- whether any teachers' aides or similar paraeducators provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

Please contact info@thesteadschool.org if you would like to receive any of this information.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and those students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights include:

1. *The right to inspect and review the student's "education records."*
Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect to the Principal.
2. *The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.* Parents or eligible students who wish to ask to amend their child's or their education record should write to the principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.
3. *The right not to have records disclosed without consent if the record includes personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except in those cases in which FERPA permits disclosure without consent.* School officials with legitimate educational interests may access the records as needed, without consent. Such officials include school employees, board members, volunteers, contractors or consultants and, certain officials of the school's authorizer, District 27J. In the case of volunteers, contractors, or consultants this must be a person who performs a service or function for which the school could use its own employees and who is under control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records. This may include a professional employed by STEAD (such as an attorney or therapist) or a person who is assisting a school employee in fulfilling their responsibilities. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her assigned responsibility.

The School may also disclose educational records without consent in over a dozen other specific circumstances identified in the regulations implementing FERPA. These include, with certain requirements, such cases as health and safety emergencies and responding to judicial subpoenas.

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and Colorado law afford parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility, or social security number.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of such surveys and:

1. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
2. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

Inspect, upon request and in a timely manner:

1. Surveys of students covered by the PPRA;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

Should the School undertake a survey or activity covered by PPRA, it will provide appropriate advance notice and opportunity to opt out, as required by law, at that time. The School may unilaterally undertake formal threat assessments or suicide assessments, report suspected child abuse or neglect, perform routine health screening required by law, administer educational exams, and allow journalism students to conduct surveys under teacher supervision.

Violations of FERPA or PPRA

If you believe FERPA or PPRA have been violated you are, of course, welcome to bring this to the School's attention. You also have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA and PPRA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA Notice and Consent for Directory Information

FERPA also permits the School to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" unless a parent objects to just disclosure. Colorado law, however, requires consent to disclosure of "directory information." Your information will be included in the school directory, if and only if you sign this form giving your permission. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications available to the public. Examples include:

- a playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production
- an annual yearbook
- honor roll or other recognition lists
- graduation programs
- sports activity sheets, such as those showing weight and height of team members

Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released and can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, for students who are in seventh or higher grades the School can be required to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the School that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Safe School Plan

This policy is incorporated into The STEAD School's Safe School Plan.

CORA Requests Policy

This policy applies to all requests submitted pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-72-201 *et seq.*, the Colorado Open Record Act ("CORA"), to inspect or obtain copies of public records in the custody or control of The STEAD School. The STEAD School is committed to the guiding principles of openness, transparency, accountability and responsiveness.

This policy is intended to balance the demands of CORA and The STEAD School's obligations as a public school within the State of Colorado.

Protocols for Requests

Before making a request for records pursuant to this policy, requesters should refer to the school's website, thesteadschool.org to see if the information sought is posted and already publicly available. If there are any questions regarding what type of information is posted on The STEAD School's website, please contact the front office.

Requests for records

The STEAD School is required to produce records in response to qualifying requests made pursuant to CORA. The STEAD School strives to be as transparent as possible; however, not all documents maintained by the school are available for public inspection. Some documents must be kept confidential to respect the privacy of students and families, employees, or to otherwise comply with relevant laws.

For the fastest and best response, requesters should avoid vaguely worded inquiries. Each request must be as specific, clear, and narrow as possible. Requests should include:

- Subject matter, in the most descriptive terms possible;
- Date range for search;
- Types of documents to be searched (emails, written documents, reports, etc.);
- Names of persons who you believe created the records, are in possession of the records, are the subject of the records, or transmitted the records;
- Other information that will help the school provide the correct records; and
- Contact information of the requester.

A statement explaining the requester's reason for making the request is helpful for The STEAD School to fulfill the request, but not required.

If a request fails to meet these guidelines, the school may be unable to fulfill the request. If more information is needed to process the request, The STEAD School will make reasonable efforts to contact the requester at the contact information provided within the timeframe for responding to the request.

Requests to inspect public records must be in writing to the Custodian of Records, whose contact information will be made available on the school's website.

**As a general matter, STEAD will neither accept nor respond to requests for public records that are submitted via email. The reason for this rule is that, due to the school's spam filters and staff turnover resulting in inactive or incorrect email information, the school cannot guarantee that such requests will be received. Requests to inspect public records may not be made by phone.

Public records not subject to disclosure

The school is prohibited by law from disclosing certain confidential records. Additionally, some records are not subject to disclosure because they are privileged under the law.

Below are examples of records generally not subject to disclosure. For a full list of records not public, please see C.R.S. 24-72-202 – 204.

Records generally not subject to disclosure include, but are not limited to:

- Addresses and telephone numbers of students
 - Pursuant to FERPA, the school may not be permitted to release directory information
- Personnel files which includes home addresses, telephone numbers, financial information, and other information maintained because of the employer-employee relationship
 - Personnel files may not include applications of past or current employees, employment agreements, any amount paid or benefit provided incident to termination of employment, performance ratings , or any compensation, including expense allowances and benefits, paid to employees by the state, its agencies, institutions, or political subdivisions.
 - NOTE: While some personnel files may be disclosed, the school must still redact personally identifying information like home addresses or social security numbers that may be included.
- Proprietary information including trade secrets and privileged information.
- Specialized details of security procedures/arrangements or investigatory files compiled for any law enforcement purpose
- Certain medical, mental health, sociological, and scholastic achievement data, and electronic health records on individual persons
- Attorney-client privileged information
- Other records required by federal or state law and/or regulations or judicial decisions to remain confidential and/or not subject to disclosure

Sometimes the records requested do not exist. CORA is not a record retention statute and the school is not obligated to create records that do not exist or

maintain records outside of relevant legal guidelines or school's policy on records retention.

General questions and requests for information

As described above, not all information constitutes a public record for purposes of a CORA request. General questions and requests for information that are not submitted in writing pursuant to this policy are not requests for "public records" as defined by the law. Therefore, the school is not required to respond to them according to CORA's specifications. Although it is not required, the school may respond to all such questions and requests for information.

Responses to Requests

Time for response to records requests shall be as follows:

- The normal time for production shall be three (3) working days, beginning on the first business day after the request is received.
- Such a period may be extended upon determination by STEAD that extenuating circumstances exist. Such period of extension shall not normally exceed seven (7) working days. The requestor shall be notified of the extension within the three-day period.

Requests to inspect records will not take priority over the regular work activities of school's employees.

Charges for copies of requested records shall be as follows:

1. The normal cost for requested documents shall be \$.25 per page or, for documents in non-standard formats, the actual duplication costs.
2. The STEAD School may charge a research and retrieval fee based on the actual cost of responding to the request; provided, however, that the hourly rate for employee time is \$40 per hour, and there shall be no charge for the first hour of employee time. If the custodian charges research and retrieval fees under this paragraph, copying shall be charged at a rate of \$.15 per page.
3. Payment must be received prior to the requestor receiving copies.

If charges are expected to exceed \$25, The STEAD School will provide the requestor with an estimate of the cost of responding prior to responding and may require estimated payment before making copies. If the requestor wishes to proceed once receiving an estimate, he or she must respond in writing. By responding in writing, the requestor agrees to pay all fees associated with responding to the request. The time between the date of the custodian's estimate and the receipt by the custodian of a written response to proceed will not be counted against the time period set forth above for responding to the CORA request.

If a requester wishes to inspect available records in advance of receiving copies, such inspection shall be by appointment only during normal working hours. Such inspection must be supervised by a school representative and the

requestor may be charged for any employee time exceeding one hour associated with such inspection.

Manipulation of Records

The STEAD School may manipulate existing records to redact or exclude information not subject to disclosure or, at its sole discretion, create a new record in order to respond to a request. If the school is required to manipulate data to generate the record, the school may charge an hourly fee that applies in the same manner as the research or retrieval of records.

Generally, if a public record is stored in a digital format, it should be provided in that format to the requester, including any searchable or sortable functions unless doing so would violate a copyright or licensing agreement, result in the release of a third party's proprietary information, or if it is not feasible to permanently remove any information that is excluded from the request without need for additional software or programming. The actual costs of manipulating such data and generating such records will be assessed. This may include the hourly fee that applies to research and retrieval as well as any additional actual costs, such as a fee equal to the incremental costs of maintaining a computer database or running a computer program used to analyze or compile data into a single report.

For questions related to CORA requests please contact the front office for the process.

Grievance Policy and Conflict Resolution

The STEAD School values open and proactive communication among 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. So conflict resolution is critical to any successful community. Accordingly, the Board has adopted this Grievance Policy for Conflict Resolution:

The STEAD School recognizes that even in an organization with excellent communication processes that grievances may arise. As such, STEAD has created a process designed to support prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level in a spirit of cooperation. These procedures guide how faculty, staff, parents and students are expected to resolve grievances about other members of the school community. Therefore, in the event that these issues arise, parents, students and staff are expected to use the following process to address a grievance. Throughout this process, STEAD expects all adults to be models of good character, through a willingness to address conflict directly, respectfully, and in a civil manner, and to demonstrate that effective resolution depends on direct, prompt and constructive dialogue.

As used in this policy, a “grievance” shall mean a complaint by any parent, student, or employee alleging a violation or inequitable treatment by reason of any act or condition, which is contrary to established STEAD policy or culture, or a conflict among any of such STEAD community members. Ideally the grievance process will resolve issues in partnership with the Principal (see Levels One and Two).

Any parties initiating a grievance must provide clear, concise and objective written documentation through each level of the process, as outlined below that describes the incident, decision or practice that gave rise to the complaint; cites the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale/reason for the concern or disagreement; describes what conflict resolution strategies have been attempted; and explain what action is being requested to resolve the issue.

If any step of this policy would require you to report a concern with discrimination or harassment to the person you believe is engaged in such behavior, you can skip this process and make a report to a staff member or the Principal to file a harassment claim.

Level 1: Any grievance first will be discussed with the person(s) the grievance involves (administrator, parent, peer, student, or subordinate), with the objective of working together to develop a solution for the issue and resolving the matter informally within one week of it being raised.

Level 2: If action at Level 1 does not bring satisfactory resolution within the time frame described, the aggrieved party must submit in writing to the Principal (or a Dean or Assistant Principal, if delegated) the nature of the grievance, and the result of actions taken at Level One. The Principal may then request a joint meeting with the persons in dispute. The Principal may also ask that an impartial representative be present as a witness. The Principal will work toward finding a solution for all parties involved and will document this meeting with the following information: date of meeting, persons present, concern, points of agreement/disagreement, resolution/impasse. If a decision or action is requested to be made by one or more of the parties to the grievance, the Principal may defer a decision at the meeting. The Principal shall make his/her decision in writing within two weeks following the meeting. Note: If the grievance is with the Principal, Level Two should be bypassed and the aggrieved person proceeds to Level 3.

Level 3: If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the decision at Level 2 or if no decision has been rendered within the two week time period after the presentation of the grievance to the Principal, the grievance may be presented in writing to the Board President within 10 school days after the time period above has expired. The President will meet individually with the aggrieved person and person(s) involved in an effort to resolve the grievance. This meeting will take place within seven school days after receipt of the written grievance. The Board will then discuss said grievance in an executive session, if

the matter meets the parameters of the same, and respond to the complaint via a written letter. This will occur within 30 days of receiving said grievance, and such decision shall be final.

The Board, in general, will not address complaints regarding disciplinary action or consequences related to The STEAD School and/or 27J Code of Conduct.

The Board, in general, will not address a complaint based on hearsay or made on behalf of another staff member, parent, or family; nor will they address a complaint if resolution with the appropriate individuals Levels 1 and 2 has not yet been attempted in good faith. The Board reserves the right not to address a complaint that is made anonymously. The Board reserves the right to notify individual school employees about complaints brought against them, and to request further investigation or investigate the same itself, or by a designated Board member or administrator.

Decisions of the Board are final and not subject to further appeal, except in the following instances: (a) facts asserting an alleged violation of a contractual right; or (b) facts asserting an alleged violation by an employee or the school of state or federal law.

Neither the Board of Directors, nor any member of the administration of STEAD shall take retaliatory measures affecting any aggrieved person or any other participant in the grievance procedure by reason of such complaint or participation. A participant, however, is not exempt from the policies of The STEAD School, or applicable law. Accordingly, the following actions shall not be deemed a violation of this prohibition:

- (1) An employee's performance evaluation or employee file may include information regarding a complaint that involves the employee; provided, That an employee may write comments on the evaluation, and signature does not constitute agreement.
- (2) Termination of employment may be based on a complaint. The Principal will decide based on the recommendation of the Board President.

Notwithstanding anything above, this Grievance Policy is not designed or intended to supersede or supplant federal law and parent rights under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as amended, 1996.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating are two examples of violations of academic integrity. What is Plagiarism? Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and

"borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. But can words and ideas really be stolen? According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.¹

Cheating results in a loss of integrity on the part of the individual committing the act and on the educational process that is undermined by the act of cheating. It is a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity for any student to gain or attempt to gain an unfair advantage over another student or to undermine the learning goals of an assignment by unfair or dishonest means. If you are unclear about an assignment, the methodology for the assignment, or the permissible bounds of assistance for completing your work, please speak to your teacher and ask for clarification.

Violations of academic integrity may include receiving a zero on the assignment, failing the course, suspension, and/or expulsion from school.

Visitors, Guests, and Volunteers

All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must check in at the school office upon entering the campus.

1

Please speak directly with our staff and administrative team to set up appointments with individuals directly. When you do come for a visit, please check in at the cultivate center where you will be asked to verify your visit. Visitors must remember to check out before leaving the school.

In general, The STEAD School does not permit student visitors on campus unless they have set up a shadow day as part of considering enrollment or have been invited to participate in a specific class or activity. Any student visitor must check-in at the Cultivate Center.

Dress Code and Personal Appearance: Adults and Students

STEAD honors students both in empowering personal choice/expression and also in the preparation of young adults for healthy and successful post-secondary futures. As such, the STEAD Dress Code aims to ensure that students dress appropriately based on the general standards of professional life. Dress norms are common for most employment and it is this general standard we will use to define “appropriate.” Unique to STEAD is an environment where students and adults co-create the experience and as such, the dress code for staff and students is similar. Any question about proper attire for students would be addressed by asking the question: *Is this clothing appropriate for school staff?* Any question about proper attire for staff would be addressed by asking the question: *Is my attire in line with what we expect of students?* Adults in the building are asked to model what a professional work and learning environment looks like for students, and students are asked to adhere to the guidelines.

Students may choose clothing they are both comfortable in AND which allows them and others to conduct the activities of work and learning in a professional and focused manner. **The following include things that would be considered inappropriate for the work and learning environment STEAD aims to create:**

- Clothing that depicts violence, bad language or drug/alcohol content
- Attire not appropriate or safe for the specific work to be done (ie. work on the farm, in the greenhouse, in a workshop with tools, etc.) Examples may include open-toed shoes while in a workshop, loose clothing near machinery, etc.
- Hoods and any clothing that makes it difficult for staff to identify students as it relates to school safety.

We hope that by maintaining these norms as a whole school, we can honor the sum of all of our values within a common agreement that we want our students to be successful and prepared adults. Administration reserves the right to ask any student or staff member to change attire to be appropriate for the work and learning environment and any dispute about what is deemed “appropriate or inappropriate” will be at the sole discretion of the school principal.

**If a student has a financial barrier to meeting the dress code, they are encouraged to speak with their Advisor or the Principal for a problem-solving conversation.*

Technology

Phones, headphones, and other personal technology:

Adolescents are at a sensitive period in their development for socialization– meaning learning to communicate with others. As such, The STEAD School aims to support students in their development by creating a space for practicing face-to-face communication and collaboration with peers, guides, and industry experts. In an effort to support this growth, students **may not use cell phones or wear headphones during the school day.**

The STEAD School provides technology for the educational benefit of members of the community, and as such **students may not use cell phones during the day.** Only devices authorized by the school, such as school-issued chromebooks or approved personal laptops, may be used during the day (**Note, starting in the 2024-25 school year chromebooks will no longer be issued to all students as in the past**). Non-approved headphone use will be treated as a violation of the Personal Electronics Policy regardless of if they are connected to a device that is on or not. **The wearing of headphones is not allowed when not in use.** Parents and students will be asked to sign an agreement at the beginning of the school year that outlines the policies around technology and use of personal electronics. *In signing this agreement, parents and students are agreeing that STEAD staff can take a student’s personal electronic device and hold that device until a parent is available to retrieve it. In addition, a student may lose the privilege of having personal electronic devices at STEAD if they are in violation of these policies.*

As a high school, we put a strong emphasis on preparing our students to work effectively with a wide range of technology, especially personal computers. *Using a phone or tablet to complete schoolwork is not an acceptable alternative to using a laptop computer if the task requires it.* We will provide chromebooks for in-class use, which will be managed by the teacher and returned at the conclusions of the class period. Students will not be issued, and otherwise should not be using, computing devices when not specifically instructed to do so by the teacher.

Critically, **we need the support of families to make this policy successful. Please help us by NOT texting/calling your child during the school day.** We understand things come up, but please call the front office and the child will be notified through our systems. It is very difficult to enforce these rules when students typically respond that they are talking to their parents. We need your help by ensuring that excuse is never the case.

Students who do not own a laptop can rent one that will be specifically assigned to them for the school year from the counselor. Families are required to pay the \$250 replacement fee should the technology not be returned or be returned in unsatisfactory conditions. We will work hard to ensure that this policy will not preclude anyone from attending or finding success at STEAD. Families for whom this creates an economic hardship should speak with the STEAD administration as early as possible.

STEAD Backpack

School Policy:

The STEAD School does not have lockers on campus due to the open learning environment. **Students will store backpacks with personal belongings at the back of classroom spaces upon entering the classroom.** Students will take out class items and be seated in their seat when the bell rings. **If students are not seated with items for the specific class and backpacks in the back of the room, they will be marked tardy for the class.** A jupiter challenge will also be recorded for the student not being prepared for the class.

Health Policies

Required Immunizations

Colorado law requires students who attend a public, private or parochial kindergarten - 12th grade school to be vaccinated against many of the diseases vaccines can prevent. Please review information from the Colorado Department of Public Health [here](#) to learn more. If your student cannot get vaccines because of medical reasons, you must submit an official *Immunization Medical Exemption Form* to STEAD, signed by a health care provider licensed to give vaccines. If you choose not to have your student vaccinated for personal belief or religious reasons, you must submit a non-medical exemption to STEAD every year.

Forms and procedures are available at <https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/vaccine-exemptions>.

Student Drivers

Driving to school is considered a privilege. Students who drive their own vehicles to and from school must comply with the following rules. Failure to follow these rules may result in an immediate disciplinary meeting and/or action. Vehicles parked on campus are subject to search based on applicable

school law.

Students Driving Students

Rules For Field Trips, Events, and Internships

As a general rule, students who drive to and from school may not drive other STEAD students in their vehicle during the school day, for school related activities.

If parents desire to have their students carpool with student drivers to and from school, this is a personal matter and the school is not liable.

Driving onto and near Campus, Parking Lot Conduct and Expectations.

The following rules apply to all drivers who come onto or near our campuses including staff, students, parents/guardians, family members, caregivers, and visitors.

- All drivers coming onto and near our campuses must observe all traffic rules, parking lot rules, and speed limits. There are many people who walk around campus. Traveling at greater speeds than allowed endangers others.
- All drivers coming onto and near our campuses must observe parking lot rules, and park solely within parking spaces that are designated for visitors. Drivers may not park in areas that are designated as no parking zones by either signage, red curbs, or staff members on drop off/pick up duty.
- Students may only be dropped off and picked up at designated drop off/pick up zones.
- Drivers may not obstruct the flow of traffic at any time.
- Drivers must enter parking lots through entrances, and may not enter through areas designated as exits.
- Drivers dropping off and picking up students must be civil, courteous and respectful of others.
- While driving on campus, drivers may not play music in their cars at high volume.
- Students may not sit in vehicles or gather in the parking areas before school, during school hours, or after school.
- When students enter and start their vehicles at the end of the school day, they must depart immediately. Students may not drive around the campus vicinity.
- Student and school community safety is a priority for STEAD. Drivers who do not observe rules and/or other standards of conduct, may have their parking privileges and/or campus access privileges limited or revoked.
- The STEAD parking lot is only to be used during permitted hours.

It should also be noted that the parking lot will be under 24 hour camera surveillance.

School Meetings

The Board of Directors, PAC and SAC meetings each serve a critical function and role within the school. We encourage families to participate in these activities.

Board of Directors Meetings

Board meetings are posted on the [STEAD Calendar](#) and take place once each month from 6-8pm via Zoom or in person. Community members and families are encouraged to attend and serve on the board.

PAC Meetings (Parent action crew)

Once the PAC is established all community members are welcome and encouraged to attend.PAC meetings.

School Accountability Committee (SAC) Meetings

Once the SAC is established as a sub-committee of the board, all community members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

General Handbook Acknowledgment

This Student and Family Handbook is an important document intended to help Students and Families become acquainted with the School. This document is intended to provide guidelines and general descriptions only; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate receipt and acknowledgment of this Student and Family Handbook.

I have received and read a copy of The STEAD School Student and Family Handbook. I understand that the policies and rules described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the School at any time.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and that I have received a copy of The STEAD School Student and Family Handbook.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

Parent's Signature

Date

Parent's Printed Name