

Expectation of Excellence in Achievement, Attitude, Actions



Virtual Scholar/Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Welcome

On behalf of the administration, teachers, and staff of Phalen Leadership Academy (“PLA Network”), we welcome you to our network of schools. At the PLA Network, we believe that education is a partnership that thrives best with the support of every staff member, the involvement of every parent, and the commitment of every scholar.

We also understand that communication is of utmost importance in establishing a successful home-school partnership. In an effort to inform and educate our school community, we have created this handbook to inform you on important policies and practices of our schools. Please take time to review and familiarize yourself with the information contained within the handbook, as it will serve as a valuable reference in seeking answers to commonly asked questions. Should you have a question or concern that is not addressed in this handbook, please contact the school’s Principal.

As the school year progresses, additional or updated information about school policies and procedures will be provided through e-newsletters and posted on the school’s website. Each family will be provided with a hard copy version of this handbook upon enrollment and an updated version each fall semester. Additional copies may be downloaded and printed from the Phalen Leadership Academies website. We look forward to a very rewarding and engaging school year.

Mission of The PLA Network

The mission of the PLA Network is to ensure that each of our scholars meet high academic and social standards, and thrive as leaders at home, in their communities, and in the world.

Guiding Principles of The PLA Network

- PLA has adopted a scholar-focused, learning-oriented environment.
- PLA will focus on the academic education of scholars within a safe environment.
- Our learning environment will be relevant and engaging.
- PLA will focus on assisting scholars in developing the following skills: cooperation, teamwork, research, problem solving, ability to work independently, and communication using technology effectively.
- PLA is committed to accountability and having meaningful metrics of success that demonstrate continuous improvement.
- PLA will provide scholars with differentiated, personalized, rigorous opportunities for learning with an emphasis on developing 21st Century skills.
- PLA will empower scholars to shape and manage their future by encouraging prudent and intellectual risk-taking.
- PLA will work to develop processes to become knowledgeable of stakeholders' needs and expectations.
- PLA will support parents and the community in their roles in the character education, moral education, and social education of all scholars.
- PLA will provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of a total person, including physical, recreational, civic, and social activities.

The PLA Network Schools

School	Address	Contact Information	School Leader	Grade Level
George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy	2323 N. Illinois Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208	317-333-6980	Lawrence Courtney	K-6
James and Rosemary Phalen Leadership Academy MS & HS	4352 N. Mitthoeffer Road, Indianapolis, IN 46235	317-552-1600	Nicole Fama	7-11
PLA@93	7151 E 35th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46222	317-226-4293	Jeff Hendricks	K-6
PLA@103	3920 Baker Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46235	317-226-4103	Matt Rimer	K-6
PLA@48	3445 Central Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46205	317-226-4248	Lawrence Courtney	K-6

PLA Virtual	4352 N. Mitthoeffer Road, Indianapolis, IN 46235	888-655-0777	Dr. Tora Townsend	K-12
Thea Bowman	3401 W 5th Avenue, Gary, IN 46402	219-944-3100	Marisa Simmons	K-12
Timothy L. Johnson ELE & MS	4625 Werling Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46806	260-441-8727	Dawn Starks Dr. Brad Yoder	K-8
HIAT	5861 Harrison St. Merrillville, IN 46410	219-359-1522	Jillian Kemp	K-8

Phalen Virtual Leadership Academy Staff List

Administrative Staff

Dr. Tora Townsend, Principal

Deanna Maxwell, Assistant Principal

Kelly Hershey, Data Coach

Ann Semon, Instructional Coach

Erin Simpson, Instructional Specialist

Teacher	Grade Level (s)	Course (s)
Jacquelyn Anders	K-8	Reading Interventionist
Toni Beriault	Elementary	ELA
Megan Brady	Elementary	ELA
Aimee Campbell	K-8	Reading Interventionist
Candace Davis	K-8	Reading Interventionist
Stephanie Donley	K-12	ELL
Cheyenne Dunbar	Secondary	Math
Stacy Embry	High School	ELA
Megan Engle	K-8	Reading Interventionist
Marcy Groulik	Middle School	Social Studies

Casey Hawks Molly Kelly	Elementary Elementary	Social Studies Math
Deborah Lakin	Elementary	Math and ELA
Robin Kovacs	Elementary	Math
Lynn McCoy	Elementary	Science and Social Studies
Michelle Myers	Middle School	ELA
Arlette Parker-Houghton	High School	Social Studies
Jesika Pease	Middle School	Student Services
Kelsey Peterson	K-6	Student Services
Norman Jason Poe	High School	Science
Emily Putt	Middle School	Science
Amanda Scherger	High School	ELA
Benjamin Stettler	High School	Science
Betsy Strader	12	Econ, Gov't
Staci Strand	Secondary	Math
Kristen Surface	Elementary	Math
Adrienne Taylor	High School	Math
Cassidy Thomas	Elementary	ELA
Laurie Thompson	High School	Student Services
Berry Wells	K-12	PE, Heath, Science
Ryan White	Elementary	Math

Additional Staff

Shalena Allen-Thomas, Teacher Assistant

Destyni Anderson, Social Worker

Angie Baker, Scholar Enrollment Coordinator

Carol Sepaniak, Testing Coordinator

Lori Perry, Administrative Assistant

General Network School Policies and Information

Enrollment

Phalen Leadership Academy welcomes scholars entering grades K-12. All interested scholars must complete an application. An adult who is a non-custodial parent or does not have a legal guardianship and wishes to enroll a scholar must contact the School Enrollment Coordinator or

designee for assistance to complete the enrollment process.

Parents/Guardians must provide the following documents to the school during the enrollment process:

- Proof of Indiana residency
- Birth certificate
- Court documents specifying parental rights, responsibilities or custody (if appropriate)
- Immunization Records

A scholar's enrollment may be revoked if proper documentation and residency cannot be established by the 45th calendar day. PLA will communicate with the Parent/Guardian about missing records and what records are needed to make the enrollment complete. **A copy of the School Enrollment Policy can be found in the Appendix.**

EEO Statement

The PLA Network does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability or national origin in any employment and/or educational opportunity. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to unlawful discrimination in any program or activity for which the PLA Network Board is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. The PLA Network values diversity and the benefits of different perspectives and backgrounds.

Complaints of Discrimination should be directed to humanresources@phalenacademies.org.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA prohibits the PLA Network from disclosing personally identifiable information ("PII") from scholars' education records without the consent of a parent or eligible scholar. An eligible scholar is a scholar who has reached the age of eighteen (18).

The Parent/Guardian or eligible scholars have the right to inspect and review the scholar's records and request that PLA correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If PLA refuses to amend the record as requested by the Parent/Guardian or eligible scholar, PLA will notify the Parent/Guardian or eligible scholar of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. PLA must obtain written permission from the Parent/Guardian or eligible scholar in order to release any information from the scholar's record. PLA may disclose records without consent under the following conditions.

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

PLA may also disclose, without consent, information designated as "directory information", which includes a scholar's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors,

awards, dates of attendance, scholar photos, and scholar work displayed at the discretion of the teacher. **Please read and sign the Notification of Rights under FERPA found in the Appendix and return to the Principal.**

You have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School Corporation to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Grievance Policy

PLA has adopted specific policies and procedures to address harassment (Title IX), discrimination and bullying concerns in its school environment. The specific grievance procedures for these issues can be found in the school handbook. If a complaint of this nature is made to a staff member, the staff member must follow the guidelines and procedures set forth in the aforementioned policies.

In regards to all other issues of concern, PLA's faculty and administration make every effort to work with Parents/Guardians and scholars in regards to discipline, grades, school operations or procedures. PLA believes in open door communication within its school community as this facilitates problem solving and conflict resolution. If a scholar, parent, or other member of the school community wishes to raise a concern regarding a school policy, practice, or alleged misconduct by a scholar or staff member, or any other concern they should follow the process noted below.

- In most cases, issues can be resolved when Parents/Guardians or scholars speak to the person who is directly responsible for decisions that have been made concerning a scholar. Generally, this is the scholar's teacher. If the teacher cannot resolve the issue, he or she will direct you to the appropriate contact for assistance.
- If there is no resolution after the discussion or meeting with the teacher, the matter should be taken to the School Leader/Principal. If the issue or concern is about a teacher or staff member, the initial contact should be with the School Leader/Principal or the Director of Academics.
- If the matter is not resolved by the teacher, School Leader or the Director of Academics, the scholar or responsible adult may contact the PLA Human Resources Department to initiate a formal investigation of the matter. If the complaint or grievance is against the School Leader/Principal or Director of Academics, the matter should be initiated with the Human Resources Department.

A. Formal Investigations

1. Any scholar, Parent/Guardian or school community member may contact the PLA Network Human Resources Department (humanresources@phalenacademies.org) to lodge a formal complaint or grievance. The complaint should include contact information and as much detail about the issue as possible.
2. A member of the HR Department will be assigned to investigate the matter. The HR representative may interview witnesses, obtain written statements, and/or request the interested parties to present evidence. The investigator may provide the

Parents/Guardians of the scholar who are parties to an investigation with information about the investigation to the extent permitted by law.

3. Investigations will be completed with written findings submitted to the Regional Director within 30 school days after receipt of the formal complaint.
4. A complaint may be made anonymously; however, disciplinary action will not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
5. The investigative report should include the findings of the investigator and should include recommended resolution options. The Decision Maker should affirm or reject the findings and recommendations of the investigator. If additional action is deemed necessary, the Decision Maker will notify Legal, the CEO or the Board of Directors.
6. If circumstances prevent the investigation from being completed within 30 days, the investigator must notify the Chief HR and present the reason(s) for the delay. The investigator must also notify the interested parties of the delay and set a new date for completion of the investigation.

B. Resolution

The resolution or remedy will depend on the nature of the particular situation and may include positive behavioral interventions; a public statement by an administrator regarding applicable school policies; or opportunities for a complainant to explain, in writing or face to face, to an alleged perpetrator that certain conduct is unwelcome or inappropriate. Disciplinary measures may also be taken where applicable.

C. Board of Directors

The Legal Department will maintain a record of reports received under this policy and shall provide a report to the Board of Directors on an annual basis summarizing the issues addressed and actions taken in response. If a matter is reported to the Department of Child Services or the local law enforcement agency, the Board President will be notified immediately of the report. An individual who (i) submits a report in accordance with this policy or (ii) is otherwise affected by the resolution of an issue, and is not satisfied with the resolution provided, may make a written request to the Board of Directors for reconsideration of the matter. The request should identify the specific reasons why reconsideration is sought. The Board of Directors (or at the discretion of the Board president, a committee of the board) may, in its sole discretion, hold a meeting to gather and consider such information as it deems appropriate to determine whether to grant the request for reconsideration. If appropriate under the Indiana Open Door Law, the Board or committee may elect to hold any such meeting in executive session.

The McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Act protects scholars from discrimination based on their lack of a permanent residence. Homeless scholars are eligible to receive a variety of services including: transportation services, free meals under the school nutrition programs, limited English proficiency class, gifted and talented programs, and special education services based on a scholar's eligibility. **Homeless Scholars will not be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency. Please consult the McKinney-Vento Act Liaison if you need assistance.**

The McKinney-Vento Act Liaisons for the PLA Network are the Principals.

Neglect/Child Abuse

The PLA Network school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately when

they have reasonable cause to believe that a child who is 17 years of age or younger and known to them in a professional or official capacity has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed (physically, sexually, or through neglect) and that a caregiver either committed the harm or should have taken steps to prevent the child from harm.

Board Meetings

A Board of Directors governs PLA charter schools. All Board of Directors meetings are subject to Indiana's Open Door Law. Information regarding upcoming Board meetings is posted in the school's website to be shared with the community. To maintain transparency and keep our families and the community informed, Board of Director meeting minutes are also posted on the school's website within 48 hours of the meeting. The Board of Directors approves and authorizes all items in the school handbook.

PLA Retention and Promotion Policy

Grades and Grading

Grades are an evaluation of what a scholar has learned. Letter grades are given in the core courses. A grade of 'I' (Incomplete) may be assigned for a scholar who has not completed required work for a subject and has been given a time extension by a teacher. A grade of 'I' will be changed to a letter grade at the next grading period depending on the scholar's completion of the required work. Any modification in grades will be noted.

Grade Promotion and Retention

Scholars are provided with the necessary course content and instruction required for grade promotion. All scholars must receive a passing grade in their core subjects. If a scholar receives an "F" in a core subject, the scholar will be retained. If the scholar receives a "D" in a core subject, the school will meet with the Parent/Guardian, to determine whether the scholar should be retained or promoted. An exception is granted to special education scholars or scholars with a waiver.

Retention

If a decision is made to retain a scholar, the school will review the scholar's standardized test scores, grades and school assessments to determine the scholar's academic weaknesses. This will assist the school in developing the appropriate academic support for the scholar. The school will allocate resources for scholars who fail to progress, prioritizing scholars who will be retained if progress is not achieved. Scholars who are retained will be provided with intensive interventions to ameliorate the scholar's specific deficiency and prepare the scholar for promotion to the next grade.

Communication

To avoid any misconceptions regarding a scholar's academic performance, throughout the school year, teachers, Parents/Guardians should communicate about a scholar's grades, homework, class work, and assessments. Parents/Guardians should feel free to contact the teacher or School Leader to set up an appointment to discuss their child's academic progress.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

All PLA scholars have an option to complete Vision and Hearing screenings by a healthcare provider or by a PLA nurse at a local PLA campus, at no cost to the family. Health screenings should be completed up to 4 months before the first day of school.

PLA conducts an annual vision acuity screening of the following:

- Scholars in grade 1, grade 3, grade 5 and grade 8; and of any scholar who is suspected of having vision defects.

PLA also conducts an annual audiometer test or a similar test to determine the hearing efficacy of the following:

- Scholars in grade 1, grade 4, grade 7 and grade 10
- Scholars who have transferred into the school and are new enrollees as of the date of the annual hearing screening and
- A scholar who is suspected of having hearing defects.

The Parent/Guardian will be notified if results of the screening test(s) indicate need for medical follow-up. **A copy of the School Health Policy can be found in the Appendix.**

Title IX Policy

Policy Statement

The PLA Network strives to ensure that all PLA scholars and employees are educated and work in a positive and productive environment free from discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

This policy statement is codified in Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in any federally funded educational program. This prohibition applies to all institutions receiving certain federal funds, including public school districts and publicly funded charter schools, and includes all educational experiences the network offers, including academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities.

Title IX is most often associated with inequity in athletics; however more recently, the law has been applied to sex discrimination, which includes sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment that is so severe or pervasive it prevents a scholar from fully participating in an educational program or activity. Harassment includes unwanted verbal or written sexual statements, graffiti, name-calling, and sexual advances in person, via cell phones or online. There does not need to be an intent to harm. The activity or behavior does not need to be directed at a specific person. Male and female scholars may be subject to sexual harassment. In addition, harassment based on gender stereotypes is sexual harassment.

- Sexual Harassment also includes sexual violence, which is defined as physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol. An individual may also be unable to consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

PLA Network Title IX Obligations

Any Network school that **knows or reasonably should have known** about sexual harassment or sexual violence that creates a hostile environment, must take immediate action to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remediate its effects, regardless of whether a scholar complains.

- A school is considered to have actual knowledge of sexual harassment or the allegations of

sexual harassment when reported to the Title IX Coordinator, any official with authority to act on behalf of the school, or a teacher when the allegations involve scholar on scholar harassment.

How the Network Meets Its Obligations

Title IX Coordinator

The Network has appointed Michelle Reeves, Esq. as the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the Network's Title IX compliance. The Coordinator is trained in Title IX compliance requirements and other applicable federal and state laws.

Deputy Title IX Coordinator

Every school in the network must identify a Deputy Title IX Coordinator for their campus. The Deputy Title IX Coordinator is responsible for tracking and reporting to the Title IX Coordinator all incidents of sexual misconduct on their respective campus, and works with the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that the appropriate designated school officials are involved in investigating and resolving complaints according to the Network's applicable policies and procedures.

Responsible Employee

The Network has also designated every employee and staff member in every Network school a "Responsible Employee". A responsible employee is an employee who has the authority to redress, or a duty to report harassment, incidents of sexual violence, or one who scholars reasonably believe have the authority or duty.

The Title IX Coordinator works with the Deputy Title IX Coordinator and the Responsible Employee to create a structure of documentation and reporting by these designated individuals to ensure that all Title IX issues in the Network are addressed and resolved.

Title IX Grievance/Reporting Procedures

A complaint/grievance may be filed by a scholar, their parent/guardian or an employee via email, regular mail, or handed in person. Once filed, the matter will be assigned to the Title IX Coordinator for investigation (and/or a subsequent hearing).

Retaliation

Title IX also prohibits retaliation against scholars or employees who report sexual harassment. The retaliation prohibition includes not only the school and Network but also any scholars or employees accused of harassment. Further, a scholar can prevail on a claim, or OCR may find Title IX violations, if the Network did not prevent retaliation even if there was no finding of harassment in the initial reported incident.

PLA Virtual School Specific Policies

Bullying

PLA Virtual has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for scholars to learn and to achieve high academic standards. To protect the rights of all scholars and groups, PLA Virtual prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors,

interferes with both a school's ability to educate its scholars and a scholar's ability to learn. School administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers shouldn't tolerate bullying and harassment and must demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil, even when disciplining, in order to provide positive examples for scholar behavior.

PLA Virtual defines bullying as aggressive behaviors that involve unwanted negative actions that are repeated over time and involve an imbalance of power. Specifically, it is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., cyberbullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed) and used by scholars that is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress and may be motivated either by bias or prejudice based upon any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based upon association with another person who has or is perceived to have any distinguishing characteristic.

Bullying and harassment also include forms of retaliation against individuals who report or cooperate in an investigation under this policy. Such behaviors are considered to be bullying or harassment whether they take place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle or at any time or place where a child's imminent safety or overall well-being may be at issue.

Bullying or harassment from an off-campus location that results in a potentially material or substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more scholars and/or the day-to-day operations of any school or school program are covered by the Bullying policy.

Discipline for Bullying

The PLA Virtual School Leader shall utilize disciplinary procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for scholars or staff who commit one or more acts of bullying, and are consistent with Scholar and staff disciplinary policies. Appropriate scholar consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offenses and consider the developmental ages of the scholars, offenders and scholars' histories of inappropriate behaviors, per the scholar discipline policy, relationship between the parties involved, and context in which the alleged incident occurred.

- **Consequences** and appropriate remedial actions for a scholar or staff member who engages in one or more acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of a scholar, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee, as set forth in the code of scholar conduct or employee handbook. School employees will also be held accountable for bullying or harassing behavior directed toward school employees, volunteers, parents, learning coaches, or scholars.
- **Remedial measures** shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and protect the victim of the act. Effective discipline should employ a school-wide approach to address bullying offenses and the associated consequences.

Investigations

- **Investigator** - The School Leader shall be responsible for investigating or designating a member of his/her staff to receive all bullying complaints.
- **Complaints** - All PLA employees, volunteers and contracted service providers who have contact with scholars are required to verbally report alleged violations to the school's Principal (or Principal's designee) on the same day that an incident was witnessed or reliable information regarding the occurrence of an incident was received. A written report of the incident shall also be submitted within one (1) school day of submitting the verbal report. Scholars, Parents/Guardians and Learning Coaches are also encouraged to submit a written report of alleged violations to the Principal (or Principal's designee) on the same day that an incident was witnessed or reliable information regarding the occurrence of an incident was received. Such a report may be made anonymously. Please note that formal action for violations may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- **Time Frame** - The Principal (or Principal's designee) shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within five (5) school days after a report or complaint is made. The Principal shall submit a written report to the President of the PLA Network Board within ten (10) school days of the completion of the investigation.
- **Findings** - The Parents/Guardians of the scholar involved shall receive written notice from the school on the outcome of the investigation. The Principal shall provide the Parents/Guardians of the scholar who are parties to the investigation with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to Parents/Guardians includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of bullying, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the bullying incident if the evidence of bullying was substantiated. This information is to be provided in compliance with current privacy laws and regulations.

Bullying Data

All reports or instances of bullying and/or harassment must be recorded by the school for annual data review. The data collected should include the frequency of verbal bullying, physical bullying, social/relational bullying and electronic or written communication bullying.

Retaliation

PLA Virtual prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

False Reporting

PLA Virtual prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying or harassment. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment shall be in accordance with Network policies.

Training

PLA Virtual shall provide annual training on this policy and bullying prevention and intervention instruction to all school employees, volunteers and contracted service providers who have

direct and on-going contact with scholars.

PLA Virtual shall disseminate the anti-bullying policy and bullying prevention instruction to all scholars in grades K-12 each school year. It is expected that anti-bullying information will be part of a more comprehensive bully prevention effort communicated to the scholars throughout the school year, and that the age appropriate, research-based instruction for all scholars in grades K-12 be delivered by a school safety specialist, school counselor or other person with training and expertise in the area of bullying prevention and intervention.

A copy of the School Safety Policy can be found in the Appendix

Honor Code

PLA Virtual expects academic honesty to be a core value for all its scholars, Parents/Guardians, Learning Coaches and staff. By making the choice to enroll in PLA Virtual, our scholars and their Parents/Guardians or Learning Coach have taken charge of their education and demonstrated a genuine desire to fulfill their academic potential.

Cheating, plagiarizing and other acts of academic dishonesty are directly counter to the principles of academic excellence. Academic dishonesty harms those scholars who engage in such activities because they cheat themselves of the opportunity to fully learn from academic events and develop their own abilities and skills.

The PLA Honor Code embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty and serves as a commitment to academic excellence. All scholars and parents must sign the Honor Code upon enrollment. **A copy of the Honor Code Agreement can be found in the Appendix.**

Academic Integrity

All submitted coursework is assumed to have been completed only by the individual scholar. Scholars are responsible to observe standards on plagiarism, cheating and properly crediting all sources used during the composition of work.

Cheating

Cheating is the use of another person's work to gain an unfair advantage. Cheating occurs when a scholar knowingly submits the coursework or an assessment of another individual and claims it as their own original work. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to the following:

- Copying a classmate's work; this may be an answer to an essay question, any written assignment or exam.
- Copying from course feedback provided by another school, person, website, and/or platform.
- Copying answers to exams found in other sources, such as entering the question into a search engine and copying the response found online.
- Collaboration between two scholars, which results in submitting identical answers on such assignments.
- Using online translators for assignments in language courses.
- A scholar using books or other technological devices for assistance during assessments is considered cheating unless explicitly allowed by the teacher. *These actions also mask a scholar's need for additional help and academic interventions, which can ultimately lead to a significant academic deficit.*
- Hints and assistance with answers from others while taking an assessment or test may be considered cheating. *These actions also mask a scholar's need for additional help and*

academic interventions, which can ultimately lead to a significant academic deficit.

- Submitting work that is not one's own.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using an author's work, without acknowledging the source of the material.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following:

- Quoting work from an outside source, without proper citations and attribution.
- Improper paraphrasing of another person's work, maintaining the original text with little alteration or re-wording and/ or not citing the source.
- Copying information from a book, play, speech, article, website or other written or spoken work without proper citation.
- Plagiarism may occur unknowingly.

It is important to understand that simply acknowledging a source through quotation marks or comments is not the same as citing it.

Responsible Use of Technology

All scholars are expected to be responsible representatives of the school at all times, whether on or off campus and whether school is in or out of session. This expectation includes scholars' behavior in the electronic world. Parents/Guardians or Learning Coaches are responsible for supporting the school's standards when scholars use technology resources. The Responsible Use of Technology Policies are in effect for as long as scholars have a valid network account and password, including during the summer months and/ or any time scholars use the school's technology resources.

- Scholars are responsible and liable for maintaining the confidentiality of their assigned passwords and access codes.
- They agree not to disclose assigned passwords and access codes or allow other persons or scholars to use them or attempt to circumvent the school's security system.
- Scholars may not interfere with other users' ability to access PLA Virtual technology resources or disclose anyone's password or allow them to use another user's account(s).
- All scholars will receive an email account.
- Scholars will use their email account for all academic work and only for legitimate and responsible communication between scholars and faculty.
- Harassing, discriminatory, or otherwise objectionable remarks and any other antisocial activities are prohibited on all communications, including email.
- Scholars may only access information that belongs to them, or that they have been given permission to use by the owner.
- Malicious use of the network to download, store, or develop programs that embarrass, harass, or are otherwise objectionable to other users is prohibited.
- Activities to infiltrate or overburden a computer or computing system and/ or damage computer software or a computing system are prohibited.
- Using technology resources to access, purchase, or download products or services that could subject the school's technology to viruses, malicious code, back doors, or other malware designed to harm technology resources are prohibited.
- Encryption of files is prohibited. Posting images, video, or audio of any scholar, visitor, staff member, faculty member, or administrator on the Internet without receiving permission from the individual(s) is prohibited.

- Scholars must not publicly post their personal contact information (last name, address, phone number, gaming identification, social media identifications, etc.) or personal messages from websites or blogs intended for personal gain or profit, as well as audio files or compressed video, any non-instructional files, or any material not approved by PLA Virtual administration.
- Using any recording device, including, but not limited to video and digital cameras or camera phones to record videos or take pictures to slander, bully or denigrate any scholar, visitor, staff member, faculty member, and/or administrator on or off campus at any time is prohibited.
- Unauthorized access to the school's website, platforms, systems, software, is strictly prohibited.
- Impersonation of a teacher/administrator/staff member in any manner is strictly prohibited.
- Impersonation of a teacher/administrator/staff member's moderation/hosting rights is strictly prohibited.

All virtual classroom behavioral conduct guidelines must be strictly followed. Failure to adhere to the Responsible Use of Technology guidelines or other misuse of a computer or the network may result in disciplinary action. Information relating to illegal or inappropriate activities must be reported to the Homeroom Teacher or School Principal.

Dress Code

PLA Virtual strives to create a safe and respectful learning environment, free from distractions. To this end, when participating in Live Classroom Sessions (LCS) or attending in person events, field trips, meetings, conferences, testing, or receiving educational support services, scholars are expected to dress in a manner that is supportive of learning and appropriate to the setting.

Clothing and accessories which interfere with, distract from, or further impede scholar learning **are not** allowed. This includes:

- Any articles that may reasonably be considered a safety hazard or potential weapon.
- Garments that expose the midriff or cleavage, see-through or mesh clothing, halter or tank tops, pajamas, sleep or loungewear.
- Shirts, blouses and dresses must cover the abdomen, cleavage, back and shoulders. Shirts/ tops must also cover the waistband of pants, shorts or skirts, with no midriff or cleavage visible while standing or while bending over.
- If wearing bike shorts (or something similar), then the top worn must fall to mid- thigh.
- If wearing leggings, then the top worn must fall to mid-thigh.
- Hats, caps and other head apparel should not be worn except for religious or medical purposes.

Clothing and accessories **may not** display any of the following:

- Racial or Ethnic slurs
- Hate Speech
- Gang Affiliation
- Vulgar, sexually explicit or suggestive language/ images
- Products such as alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs

Shorts, skorts, skirts, and dresses must cover all undergarments even when a scholar is leaning over or sitting down. It is recommended that if skirts or dresses are shorter than 2 inches above the knee that shorts be worn underneath the garment. Baggy or sagging pants/ shorts are also not allowed.

PLA Virtual Administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate or inappropriate dress for the school setting.

Role of Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach

PLA Virtual scholars access their learning resources online. While school faculty and staff support scholar learning, there is still a need for support and guidance from an adult who is physically present with the scholar to supervise and monitor progress throughout the school day. This person is known as the Learning Coach (LC). Most frequently the Learning Coach (LC) is a parent or guardian, but it can also be a tutor or other designated adult responsible for the scholar's day-to-day learning supervision. Parents/Guardians who will not act as an LC for their scholar are asked to identify the designated Learning Coach (LC), who faculty/staff will communicate with throughout the school year.

Primary duties of the Learning Coach (LC)

A Learning Coach (LC) may be asked to enter the scholar's attendance. You are also expected to communicate with the school regarding absences, check your email daily for communication from the school, complete all paperwork requests or surveys, keep your scholar's information up to date, monitor your scholar's daily assignment completion and grades, ensure that your scholar attends all **required** Live Classroom Sessions (LCS), monitor your scholar when taking assessments to ensure that no "additional help" is provided that might mask whether a scholar truly understands the concepts or not, and communicate with your scholar's teacher(s), or counselor if you feel that your scholar is struggling or needs additional support.

Scholar Engagement

To ensure that PLA Virtual scholars receive a meaningful learning experience, we have adopted a scholar-centered approach to instruction. This approach increases scholar engagement through active learning.

Scholar Attendance

Phalen Virtual Leadership Academy is committed to fostering the academic and personal growth of its scholars. It is imperative that scholars be in attendance each school day. Learning is a result of active scholar participation and engagement in the classroom and other school activities that support scholar learning. Indiana Public Law 221 and federal legislation, No Child Left Behind, have set a 95% benchmark for a school's minimum attendance rate. PLA VIRTUAL scholars are expected to be in attendance each of the approved 180 instructional school days indicated on the school calendar. This calendar is released in the spring prior to the beginning of the school year and can be found on the PLA VIRTUAL school website and in your Scholar's Handbook. PLA VIRTUAL follows the state required 180-day of instruction school calendar. Per Indiana law, schools must provide at least five (5) hours of instructional time for scholars in grades K-6, and at least six (6) hours of instructional time for scholars in grades 7-12 in a day in order to meet the daily number of instructional hours. PLA VIRTUAL scholars

meet the required hours of attendance by attending Live Classroom Sessions (LCS), completing their online coursework via Blackboard, completing offline enrichment activities approved by their teacher, and attending state testing. **A copy of the School Calendar can be found in the Appendix**

Attendance Tracking and Instructional Time

Teachers will work to track attendance and instructional time. Scholars are expected to meet attendance requirements by attending Live Classroom Sessions and completing all coursework. Scholars may also meet instructional time requirements by engaging in learning opportunities via the online curriculum, offline enrichment activities and supplemental learning opportunities available through therapy centers or alternative settings or programs. Should a scholar not log into class during an instructional day, the Learning Coach must contact the school and submit an excuse via email to the School Principal explaining the absence.

Attendance Policy

As PVLA strives to partner with families to ensure scholar attendance, PVLA has implemented the following steps in relation to scholar absences.

For each absence - An automated phone call will be sent home to make families aware of the absence.

After 5 unexcused absences - 1st notification letter will be emailed home.

After 7 unexcused absences - 2nd notification letter will be mailed home with an invitation to attend a Truancy Prevention Education Class. Successful completion of the TPEC class and an improvement in your scholar's attendance/tardy issues is expected.

After 10 unexcused absences - 3rd notification letter will be mailed home Certified Mail and a truancy hearing will be scheduled. Pending determination of the hearing or continued absences after the hearing will result in an immediate referral to the Department of Child Services and scholar withdrawal.

Procedures to Report an Absence

A parent /guardian is to call the attendance office to report an absence on the day of the absence. All communication regarding the reason for absences/tardies must be communicated through the school office. Parents may also contact the teacher regarding absences/tardies; however, it is imperative the main contact be the school office. A phone call from a parent or guardian to the school office prior to 10:00 a.m. is required for any absences.. A voice mail message may be left on the general mailbox 24 hours per day by calling 317-939-3787 and choosing Option 2.

Excused Absences

Children are expected to attend school each and every day. PLA Virtual recognizes a scholar may be absent for legitimate reasons. A scholar's absence will be counted as EXCUSED for the following reasons when such an absence is verified by parent, guardian, physician, or other responsible agency:

1. Personal illness that involves fever, vomiting, diarrhea, accidents, injuries, or other illnesses that is communicated to the school by parent or guardian in writing or by phone (no more than 5 occurrences)
2. Medical or dental appointments with documentation that cannot be scheduled outside the school day.
3. Death of an immediate family member or other relative.

4. Religious observances. Notification of the principal by parent/guardian is required for approval.

Exempt Absences

Exempt absences are those for which Indiana law requires the school to count the scholar as present, including:

- Serving as a page or honoree of the General Assembly (IC 20-33-2-14) • Serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or party on the day of a municipal, primary or general election (IC 20-33-2-15)
- When subpoenaed to testify in court (IC 20-33-2-16)
- Serving with the National Guard for no more than 10 days (IC 20-33-2-17) • Serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to 5 days (IC 20-33-2-17.2)

- The scholar or a member of the scholar's household exhibits or participates in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes (IC 20-33-2-17.7)

- Educationally related non-classroom activities (IC 20-33-2-17.5), including School sponsored field trips, subject to the following qualifications:

- Scholar must be in good standing academically and with regard to attendance
- Trip Permission Form must be completed
- Attendance must be logged as outlined above
- Scholars must make up all assignments from the missed day(s)

➤ A student may have five (5) absences excused at the discretion of the parent/guardian during a school year. Any absence after these five (5) will be considered unexcused, and will require written medical documentation to be excused. The final determination of an absence is at the discretion of the administration.

➤ Attendance and participation is an important part of a student's work and evaluation of that work is essential. All work missed must be made up. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate all make-up work. For each day absent, a scholar will have the same number of days to turn in any missed work. (ex: 2 days absent, work is due 2 days after return to school)

➤ An automated phone call home will be made each day that an absence is recorded in the system. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that contact information be kept up to date and to inform PVLA any time it changes. Attendance has a significant impact on overall student success and we welcome your support in ensuring your scholar is in school all day, every day.

Tardies

Any student arriving more than 5 minutes late to class will be counted tardy.

College Visitation/ Employment Interview/ Military Recruitment

Students in grades 10-12 may be granted an excused absence for up to two (2) days per school year for the purpose of visiting a college campus, having an employment interview, or military recruitment.

The proper paperwork, such as a confirmation email or letter, is required for the absence to be excused. Requests for additional days will need prior administration approval.

Indiana Codes Regarding Attendance

As a means of emphasizing the importance of school attendance, a scholar who violates the attendance policy may receive one or more of the following consequences: loss of driving privileges through the BMV, referral to Department of Child Services, referral to the Prosecutor's Office, or expulsion from school.

IC 20-20-8-8

Chronic absenteeism, which includes the number of students who have been absent from school for ten percent (10%) or more of a school year for any reason.

Habitual truancy, which includes the number of students who have been absent ten (10) days or more from school within a school year without being excused or without being absent under a parental request that has been filed with the school.

IC 20-33-2-27

Compulsory attendance; parent's responsibility

Sec. 27. (a) It is unlawful for a parent to fail to ensure that the parent's child attends school as required under this chapter.

IC 20-33-2-25

Habitual absence from school; report to juvenile intake officer or department of child services

Sec. 25. The superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the department of child services. The intake officer or the department of child services shall proceed in accord with IC 31-30 through IC 31-40.

As allowed by I.C. 20-33-8-25 C. Driver's License/Permit Restrictions

1. Indiana Law (I.C. 9-24-2-1) states the BMV shall suspend a driver's license or invalidate a learner's permit of an individual less than eighteen (18) years of age who meets any of the following conditions:

- a. Is a habitual truant
- b. Is under at least a second suspension from school for the school year.
- c. Is under an expulsion from school.
- d. Is considered a dropout under I.C. 20-33-2-28.5.

2. Indiana Law (IC 20-33-2-11) provides that when a student is at least thirteen (13) years of age but less than fifteen (15) years of age and is a habitual truant, a driver's license or a learner's permit to drive may not be issued until the student is at least eighteen (18) years of age. A student who has not been issued a driver's license or learner's permit to drive is entitled to a periodic review of the student's attendance record to determine whether the prohibition on the issuance of the license or permit shall continue. The periodic reviews may not be conducted less than one (1) time each school year

Withdrawal

PLA Virtual may withdraw any scholar who regularly fails to participate in class. Before a scholar is withdrawn, the Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach will be provided notice of the decision to withdraw the scholar and will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the

scholar's failure to participate in class is due to an event that would be considered an excused absence under IC 20- 33-2.

Educational Neglect

PLA Virtual requires for the Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach to commit to the educational development of their scholar(s). Any person having the care of a dependent who knowingly or intentionally deprives the dependent of education as required by law commits a violation of Indiana Code 35-46-1-4.

If a Parent or Guardian neglects or refuses to send (this includes adhering to the daily work from home requirements as outlined by PLA Virtual) his or her child to school because of the child's illness or, mental or physical incapacity, it is unlawful for the parent to fail or refuse to produce a certificate of the incapacity, if it is demanded. It is also unlawful for a parent to fail, neglect, or refuse to send his or her child to school unless the child is being provided with instruction equivalent to that given at school under Indiana Code 20-33-2-28.

Testing Attendance

All PLA Virtual scholars are required to participate in state testing. The testing site for PLA Virtual scholars will be at a PLA Network School. Each scholar will be notified of their testing site in advance of the testing date. PLA Virtual cannot guarantee that a scholar's assigned teacher will be the test proctor.

PLA Virtual administrators will make every effort to assign a scholar to the closest testing site and will work to minimize any inconvenience; however there is a possibility of having to travel to an assigned testing location.

Scholars who fail to attend or participate in mandatory state testing will be considered unexcused for the assigned testing day.

Standardized Testing

In addition to state mandated testing, PLA Virtual utilizes a variety of assessments to determine the academic needs of scholars. These assessments help the scholar and teacher understand how the scholar is learning and to measure the scholar's academic growth. It is imperative that no assistance with answering the questions is given to the scholar during the assessments. The purpose of the assessments is to provide the teacher(s) with information on the scholar's strengths as well as weaknesses. If a scholar receives academic assistance, the completed assessment(s) will not be valid. If the assessment(s) is not valid, the teacher will have inaccurate information on the scholar's abilities.

Special Education

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Scholars with disabilities who qualify for Special Education Services can receive a free appropriate education (FAPE) based on the scholar's Individual Education Plan (IEP). PLA Virtual delivers special education programming and related services in the least restrictive environment, as determined by the scholar's IEP team.

Instruction and services delivered in a virtual and/or face to face environment are provided at no cost to the Parent/Guardian or scholar. Through the virtual learning environment, scholars can be served using regular education, additional supportive services, consultative, co-teaching, collaborative, and small group settings. Progress monitoring of IEP goals is

accomplished through a variety of data collection methods using a variety of instructional programs, as well as the individualized assessments designed by special education and general education teachers.

IEP mandated specialized instructional services are provided via the online learning platform, and progress data is collected during Live Classroom Sessions (LCS). These sessions are designed to aid in the continuous progression and mastery of scholars' IEP goals and objectives. These sessions, led by certified special education teachers, are intended to support the scholar's academic, behavioral, and post-secondary needs. Additional Services, such as Speech, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy, etc. may be provided as determined through evaluations, progress monitoring, and a Scholar's IEP.

Scholars receiving special education services may have additional face to face, on camera, and attendance requirements per their IEP. The Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach may also have additional meetings with staff as is required. Any questions or concerns regarding Parent Rights, Special Education Records, and Special Education Services should be directed to the school's Principal.

Section 504 Plans

School-age children who do not meet the eligibility criteria for an IEP may be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities and activities under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations and accommodations when they have a documented disability that: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

The determination of whether a scholar has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity must be made on a case by case basis and is subject to review by the school 504 team. After all documentation of the impairment and its academic impact for the scholar is collected, an eligibility meeting will be held with the teacher(s), Parent/Guardian, 504 Coordinator, and administrator to determine plan eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Scholars who have a 504 plan or have been identified as needing RTI Tier 2 or Tier 3 support may have additional face to face or on-camera interactions. The Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach will have additional meetings with staff as is required.

Response to Intervention (RTI) / Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)

PLA Virtual supports the academic achievement of all scholars, particularly those most at-risk. The Response to Intervention (RTI) / Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS) team composed of Parents/Guardians, Learning Coaches, teachers, administrators, trained professionals and the scholar (as appropriate), uses a tiered model incorporating problem-solving methods and research-based interventions to identify and serve scholars having academic, behavioral or emotional difficulties.

The goal of the RTI/MTSS process is for the teacher and the Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach to work together so that the scholar may achieve a satisfactory rate of progress in the regular educational setting, preventing the need for more intensive services at a later period.

All scholars at PLA Virtual participate in the RTI/MTSS process, which is embedded in the school's instructional model. This model includes standards-based curriculum, direct instruction from certified teachers via Live Classroom Sessions (LCS), other supplemental programs, as well as all state mandated assessments. If a scholar is identified as needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support, they would receive supplemental help from their teacher, such as small group or individual Live Classroom Sessions (LCS) and/ or other research-based interventions and may move up the tiered process for additional support. The teacher, intervention specialist, and the Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach form a partnership to determine which additional interventions are required to further support the scholar's learning needs.

The teacher and the Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach carefully follow and document the scholar's response to those interventions over a course of six to twelve weeks. During this period, data is collected and reviewed to determine whether the recommended interventions are effective. Once the data has been collected and reviewed, the RTI/MTSS Team, made up of the classroom teacher, Parent/Guardian or Learning Coach, and other interventional specialists, reviews the scholar's progress, assignments, assessment scores, educational and family learning history, medical history and the results of the interventional strategies previously attempted with the scholar. If the interventions have shown little to no effect on scholar progress, the team may recommend a referral for further academic or behavioral screenings, a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation and/or a referral to participate in other supplemental programs designed for more intensive scholar support.

Since RTI/MTSS is a process, not a program, scholars may move up and down through the tiers throughout their academic career. The goal of RTI/MTSS is a proactive one, to provide scholars with the tools necessary to achieve academic success.

Virtual Classroom Behavior

While our online learning environment affords scholars the opportunity to attend class anywhere, it is the school's expectation that all scholars conduct themselves in a respectful manner when participating in all Live Classroom Sessions (LCS).

The following guidelines outline PLA Virtual's behavioral expectations when participating in a virtual classroom:

- Make sure to present yourself in an appropriate manner on camera, in accordance with the scholar dress code
- Make sure you are in a setting conducive to learning such as a home office, kitchen table, or personal desk. For example: A scholar *should not* attend Live Classroom Sessions (LCS) while in bed unless the scholar has a medical reasons or disability
- Be sure to eliminate outside distractions, such as televisions and radios •

Be sure to silence all mobile devices

- Refrain from using inappropriate/ offensive language in the chat, on the whiteboard, or on the microphone
- Do not share personal information and/or contact information unless specifically granted permission to do so from your teacher and/or a school administrator (*gaming identifiers, invitations to outside chat rooms, emails, phone numbers, addresses, last names, etc.*)

- Do not attempt to hack into the programs and/or platforms utilized by PLA Virtual •
- Do not impersonate a teacher's platform rights as the classroom moderator/host •
- Do not post pictures, images, websites, or links with inappropriate or illegal content

PLA Virtual faculty reserves the right to remove any scholar from a Live Classroom Session due to inappropriate or distracting behavior.

Appendix

PLA FERPA Consent Form

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of scholar education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records.

The purpose of this form is to provide consent to the disclosure of the following information and/or records to Phalen Leadership Academy staff for an internal review of educational records.

- “ Birth Certificate or Guardianship Documents
- “ Immunization Records
- “ Technology Agreement
- “ School Messenger Consent
- “ Demographic Form
- “ Home Language Survey
- “ Family Involvement Pledge
- “ Emergency Contacts
- “ Updated Phone and Email Address

I, _____, (parent or guardian’s name) do hereby grant permission to Phalen Leadership Staff members participating in the internal review to have full access to _____ (Scholar’s name) records.

Signature of Authorizing Adult

Relationship to Scholar

Contact Information (*email or Phone #*)

Date

Honor Code Agreement

PLA Virtual is dedicated to scholar achievement at the highest level and expects academic honesty to be a core value for all its scholars.

Cheating, plagiarizing and other acts of academic dishonesty directly contradict to the principles of academic excellence. You should always be proud of the work you do. Academic dishonesty prevents you from developing your own abilities and skills - take ownership in your own learning!

The PLA Virtual Honor Code aims to reinforce our scholars’ commitment to academic excellence, and all scholars as well as the Parent/Guardian must sign this Honor Code upon enrollment.

As a PLA Virtual Scholar, I understand that academic honesty is critical to my own success. I will set goals to achieve my best and will participate in school on a regular basis and complete all assignments to the best of my ability.

As a PLA Virtual Scholar I agree that I will:

- Be honest at all times
- Discourage any forms of cheating
- Never submit work that is not my own
- Never give my work to other scholars to submit as their own
- Never share or post exam or quiz answers with other scholars
- Never use test or quiz answer keys others have posted
- Never submit a forged document or signature to my teachers or PLA Virtual administrators •
Never plagiarize in written, oral or creative work

Scholar's Name _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Date _____



Scholar Enrollment Policy

Introduction

Phalen Virtual Leadership Academy serves scholars in grades K through 12. We believe that education is a partnership that thrives best with the support of every staff member, the involvement of every parent/guardian or Learning Coach, and the commitment of every scholar. We offer our scholars a supportive individualized program of study and engaging instruction that helps promote academic growth and achievement. We aim to serve all scholars and their families by providing a challenging curriculum, great instructors and the ability to continue to foster community connections to help maximize learning and personal growth.

This document provides detail with respect to our enrollment policy, procedure, and application for admission into PLA Virtual. We hope it will serve as a useful guide to you as you consider our school for

your scholar's educational needs.

Prerequisite for Participation in the PLA Virtual Education Program

Pursuant to IC 20-19-8, all scholars and a parent/guardian of the scholar shall participate in PLA Virtual's annual onboarding process and orientation. Said onboarding process and orientation shall include, but is not limited to, PLA Virtual's scholar engagement, attendance requirements and policies of the virtual education program. Additionally, the orientation shall incorporate information and notice that a person who knowingly or intentionally deprives a dependent of education commits a violation under IC 35-46-1-4. If a scholar or a scholar's parent/guardian does not participate in the annual onboarding process and orientation, the scholar may not participate in the virtual education program.

Enrollment Plan

PLA's enrollment policy prohibits discriminations on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services. Every aspect of PLA's enrollment and recruitment practices will comply with Indiana State and federal standards.

PLA will enroll any eligible scholar who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, or grade level.

Required Enrollment Documentation

Except when a child is homeless, whenever a child of school age is presented for enrollment by a parent/guardian, an Indiana school district resident, or any other person having charge or care of the child, PLA Virtual requires that the following information be documented before enrolling the child and allowing the child to attend school:

Verification of Residency

Proof of residency will be collected during the enrollment process. To be eligible to enroll, a scholar must be a resident of the state of Indiana. To verify residency, a copy of one of the following documents must be provided in the parent or guardian's name to establish both residency and occupancy.

- Gas, electric, or water bill from the last 60 days that includes your name and service address • Mortgage statement or annual lease agreement
- Property tax statement
- Driver's license
- Department of Transportation Identification Card
- A scholar who meets the definitions of McKinney-Vento as being homeless will not be prevented from enrolling (see McKinney-Vento statement that follows.)

McKinney-Vento Statement

PLA Virtual will abide by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, policies, and guidelines for scholar enrollment and does not impose enrollment requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. These policies and guidelines include compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless scholars. The school leader or his/her designee shall serve as the liaison for homeless scholars. Scholars who meet the definition of homeless shall not be barred from enrolling due to lack of required documents.

Proof of Age

In order to verify legal name, date of birth, and to confirm that age eligibility requirements are met, applicants for kindergarten or who are entering 1st grade, having not attended kindergarten, must submit a copy of the scholar's official birth certificate. Scholars in other grades may also submit a copy of the scholar's official birth certificate, passport, green card, baptismal or birth record.

Kindergarten Admissions Statement

Indiana State law requires a scholar to be at least five years of age on August 1 of the school year to participate in a KG program at a school corporation, unless the scholar is waived into kindergarten.

Custody

Custody documentation will be required if applicable.

Immunizations and Health Examination Forms

Scholar Immunizations and Health Examination Forms (dated within one year) or the appropriate exemption documents are required in accordance with state guidelines. Acceptable documentation includes:

- Child's immunization records
- Written statement from the former school district or from a medical office stating that the required immunizations have been administered, or that a required series is in progress • Completed exemption form

Eligibility for Enrollment will be Consistent with School Grade Levels

Eligibility in applicable grades requires a scholar to have successfully completed the preceding grade to which an enrollment offer is made. Academic documentation will be requested and reviewed to ensure accurate grade level assignment and course placement for each scholar if an offer of enrollment is accepted.

Enrollment Condition: Dual Enrollment of a Full-time Scholar

A scholar shall not be allowed to enroll in PLA Virtual while enrolled as a full-time scholar in another district, charter school or private institution. This statement must be acknowledged by parents/guardians prior to final confirmation.

Home Language Survey

All scholars seeking first time enrollment in a school shall be given a home language survey in accordance with requirements of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Enrollment of the scholar may not be delayed in order to administer the Home Language Survey.

Registration Form

A registration form, filled out by families for scholar enrollment, may include the following: name, address, telephone number, name of parent(s)/ guardian(s) or resident adult(s) with whom the scholar resides, emergency contact information, former school information, and other locally required information. Failure to complete this form will not be made a condition of the scholar's enrollment.

Parent Registration Statement

A sworn statement attesting to whether the scholar has been or is suspended or expelled for offenses involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, infliction of injury or violence on school property must be provided for a scholar to be admitted to any school entity. PLA may not deny or delay a child's school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement. However, PLA may wait to enroll a scholar until a current period of expulsion has expired.

Documentation Required From Other Sources

PLA is also entitled by law to receive information on an enrolling scholar from the previous school, public, charter, nonpublic or private, which the scholar attended. However, the provision of this information rests with the educational entity and not the family, and so, PLA, as the receiving local educational agency, will not require this information as a precondition to enrollment and will not delay a scholar's admission for lack of this information.

Scholar Education Records

Upon enrollment, PLA shall contact the scholar's former school for a copy of the scholar's education records. The previous school, if within the State of Indiana, is required to respond by forwarding the records within the timelines established by the state.

Disciplinary Records

Whenever a pupil transfers to another Indiana school entity or nonpublic school, a copy of the scholar's disciplinary record shall be transmitted to the school entity or nonpublic school to which the pupil has

transferred. The school entity or nonpublic school to which the scholar has transferred should request the record. Failure to receive the scholar's discipline record cannot be used to deny or delay the scholar's enrollment or school attendance. A school district may not deny or delay a child's school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement.

Enrollment Procedure:

Parent(s) / Guardians have seven (7) business days to confirm enrollment. Once Parent(s) / Guardians accept to continue the enrollment process on behalf the child, the completion of the enrollment process is conditional on the completion of the following stages of the placement process:

- a) Parents/Guardians complete a registration form (one per child) to provide/review the scholar's and family's information. This information is used to ensure appropriate course placement and the required contact information is collected.
- b) The submitted documentation is verified and course placement shall be completed by the PLA Virtual Enrollment Team.
- c) Parents/Guardians are asked to review course placement and agree to the terms and conditions of enrollment.

Requests for Scholar Social Security Number Statement

PLA Virtual does not request or collect a scholar's social security number as part of the application process.



PLA Virtual - Health Policy

The health and safety of our scholars is one of the highest priorities at PLA Virtual. As a public charter school, we ensure to follow the regulations on immunizations and health assessments required by the provisions relating to Health Services in the state of Indiana. Under state law, the following regulations apply to all scholars:

- I. Children at any grade, Kindergarten through 12th, must show proof of immunization before they can enroll in school.
- II. Any scholar, in Kindergarten through 12th grade, must have any single dose vaccine upon school entry. In the case of a multi-dose vaccine, a child is required to have at least one dose of each vaccine upon entry. If additional doses are required and medically appropriate within the first 5 days of school, the child shall have either the final dose during that 5-day period, or shall have the next scheduled dose and shall also provide a medical certificate setting out the schedule for the remaining doses. If the child has at least one dose, but needs additional doses that are not medically appropriate during the first 5 days of school, the child may provide a medical certificate on or before the 5th school day scheduling all subsequent doses. The medical certificate shall be signed by a physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. A child who meets these requirements may continue to attend school even if the child does not have all the required vaccinations, so long as the child complies with the vaccination schedule in the medical plan/certificate. School administrators or their designees are required to review that medical plan/certificate every 30 days to ensure that the child is in compliance. If the requirements are not met, the school administrator will contact the Parents/Guardians regarding any missing immunizations. These regulations also apply to all additional vaccine requirements for entry into 7th and 12th grades.
- III. A child transferring into the school may be granted a 30-day period to provide complete immunization records.
- IV. Waiver of these regulations is applied under the following specified conditions: a.

- Homeless status
 - b. If a child is unable to locate records due to a disaster
 - c. If there is a national vaccine shortage
- V. Exemptions from the school laws for immunizations may be granted only for: a.
- Medical reasons
 - b. Religious beliefs
 - c. Strong moral or ethical convictions similar to a religious belief

Medical exemptions must be submitted in writing and must be signed by the child's physician. Religious or moral exemptions must be submitted in writing and must be signed by a parent/ legal guardian. Immunization records must be delivered to the school prior to acceptance for enrollment.

Health Screenings

The state of Indiana requires that all scholars have yearly health screenings. These screenings may be completed by a PLA nurse by visiting a local PLA campus, at no cost to the family, or by a healthcare provider. Health screenings must be sent to PLA Virtual and can be completed up to 4 months before the first day of school.

Screenings are not the same as a yearly physical exam, but these can be completed as part of the physical exam and may count as the required yearly screening if your regular health care provider completes all of the following:

Growth Screening – Height, weight, and BMI (Body Mass Index) yearly screening in grades K-12.

Vision Screening – Near and far vision yearly screening in grades K-12. This screening is not a substitute for a complete eye exam by an eye care specialist.

Hearing Screening – Hearing screenings are done in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 7 and 11. This screening is not a substitute for a hearing exam by your healthcare provider.

Scoliosis Screening – This screening is done in grades 6 and 7.

If a PLA school nurse gets screening results that are outside of the Department of Health guidelines, a referral form will be sent to the parents/guardians. Referral forms are to be completed by the family's private health care provider or health care specialist and returned to PLA Virtual before the end of the school year.

PLA Virtual administrators will contact the family if a scholar's health screening documentation is not received and approved prior to the first day of school.

Health Exams

The state of Indiana requires that all scholars in specified grades receive a physical and/or dental exam. The exams can be done up to one year before the start of the school year and must be sent to PLA Virtual before the end of the school year.

A physical exam is required in Kindergarten or 1st Grade (when your child first starts school), and also in 6th and 11th grades. A physical exam is not the same as a health screening, but health screenings might be done by your healthcare provider as one part of the physical exam. Dental exams are required for scholars in Kindergarten or 1st Grade (when your child first starts school) and also in grades 3 and 7.

PLA Virtual will notify families of health screenings and/or dental events at one of our campuses through the school via email and through the PLA Virtual website.

Medication during PLA Virtual Gatherings

The Board recognizes that scholars attending PLA Virtual gatherings may require medication for various reasons. Parents/guardians are encouraged to administer medications outside the hours of school gatherings and for families to assume full responsibility for this part of their child’s health care.

When attending a school-sponsored event, such as but not limited to onsite campus events or state testing, it is recommended that a Parent/Guardian be present to administer any emergency prescription, or over the counter medication that a child may need during this time. The school shall designate licensed or trained school personnel, as indicated by the applicable Federal and State laws, to administer medication, with use of corresponding medical equipment, if administration is included as part of a Scholar’s 504 Plan, IEP, and the school has received the requisite health information and permission from scholar’s medical provider and parent/guardian. Additionally, with requisite information and permission on file, a scholar may be permitted to carry and self-administer specific emergency medications, as regulated by the state of Indiana Departments of Health and Education.

If a scholar must self-administer medication during a PLA Virtual gathering, Parents/Guardians must notify a staff member or school nurse for school health record documentation. All medication must be transported and received in the original container, with prescription label attached, if applicable.

HepB: The minimum age for the 3rd dose of Hepatitis B is 24 weeks of age.

DTaP: 4 doses of DTaP/DTP/DT are acceptable if 4th dose was administered on or after child’s 4th birthday.

Polio*: 3 doses of Polio are acceptable for all grade levels if the 3rd dose was given on or after the 4th birthday and at least 6 months after the previous dose.

*For students in grades K-10, the final dose must be administered on or after the 4th birthday and be administered at least 6 months after the previous dose.

Varicella: Physician documentation of disease history, including month and year, is proof of immunity for children entering preschool through 12th grade. Parent report of disease history is not acceptable.

Tdap: There is no minimum interval from the last Td dose.

MCV4: Individuals who receive dose 1 on or after the 16th birthday only need 1 dose of MCV4.

Hepatitis A: The minimum interval between 1st and 2nd dose is 6 calendar months. 2 doses are required for all grades Pre-K through 12.

COVID-19: COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for all students five years of age and older per CDC and FDA’s Emergency Use Authorization.

Review required after FDA full approval.

Indiana 2022-2023 Required and Recommended School Immunizations

Grade	Required	Recommended
Pre-K	3 Hepatitis B 4 DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis) 3 Polio	1 Varicella (Chickenpox) 1 MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella) 2 Hepatitis A
K-5 th grade	3 Hepatitis B 5 DTaP 4 Polio	2 Varicella 2 MMR 2 Hepatitis A
6 th -11 th grade	3 Hepatitis B 5 DTaP 4 Polio 2 Varicella	2 MMR 2 Hepatitis A 1 MCV4 (Meningococcal) 1 Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis)
12 th grade	3 Hepatitis B 5 DTaP 4 Polio 2 Varicella	2 MMR 2 Hepatitis A 2 MCV4 1 Tdap



PLA Virtual – School Safety Policy

Phalen Virtual Leadership Academy takes scholar safety and well-being seriously and believes that all scholars should have access to a safe and comfortable environment in which to learn. All PLA Virtual staff members are required to annually complete courses related to internet safety and scholars in distress. Scholars, Parents/Guardians, and Learning Coaches are encouraged to communicate and collaborate with PLA Virtual staff to address concerns related to their safety.

Child Abuse

Indiana law requires all school professionals to report any instance of suspected child abuse. PLA Virtual staff members must, by law, make a report to the Department of Child Services (DCS) whenever they are concerned about a scholar's safety.

Scholar Dress and Grooming

PLA Virtual will not interfere with the right of scholars and their parents/guardians to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices disrupt the educational program or constitute a health or safety hazard. Scholars may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, field trips, extra-curricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to ensure the health and safety of the scholar.

Internet Safety

The majority of the academic content used by PLA Virtual is available within the LMS and should not require the scholar to leave the secure site. However, if a Learning Coach or scholar is uncomfortable with any linked sites, they should contact their scholar's teacher to discuss alternatives.

Webmail

PLA Virtual utilizes an internal email account to allow for secure communications with teachers, administrators, scholars and Learning Coaches. Webmail communication is not guaranteed to be private and may be monitored for the safety of our scholars.

Field Trips

In order to ensure the safety of our scholars and comply with Indiana state child abuse laws, during scheduled field trips or school events, scholars must remain under the supervision of their parent, guardian, or a PLA Virtual Teacher.

- Scholars should dress appropriately for the climate and venue of the field trip. In addition, scholars may be requested to wear a PLA Virtual provided T-shirt for safety and accountability purposes.
- Additional rules of acceptable conduct will be determined and communicated by School Administration prior to events. Scholars must agree in writing, by signing the provided permission slip, before participating in any school function or event.

Bullying/Cyberbullying

PLA Virtual is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of our scholars and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations among members of the school community. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation and it detracts from the safe environment needed for learning to occur. Bullying and cyberbullying include an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another scholar or scholars that is persistent, severe, or pervasive and interferes with a scholar's education or creates a threatening environment. Scholars, Parents and/or Learning Coaches should report any instance of bullying or cyberbullying to their Teacher, Principal or any other school personnel. Any report will be promptly reviewed and investigated, and appropriate action will be taken.

It is the responsibility of each scholar to respect the rights of teachers, scholars, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process. Bullying, hazing, and other harmful

treatment of others will be subject to disciplinary action. Scholars are expected to use proper language, without obscenities, while attending classroom group sessions and/or school events. Any violation of these policies will result in scholar discipline.

Weapons Policy

Weapons, replicas of weapons, or any other dangerous instruments are forbidden while on school property, and at school events, regardless of location. Weapons include, but are not limited to, any loaded or unloaded firearm, any kind of explosive device, any kind of knife, or any other tool, instrument or substance fashioned with the intent to sell or use to harm, threaten or harass scholars, staff members, parents or any other visitor or guest of the school.

Any scholar found in possession of a weapon, regardless of intent, shall be reported to his/her parents and the police. The scholar will be placed on suspension and the school will follow the due process as stated in the discipline policy. Anyone in possession of a weapon will be asked to remove the weapon from school premises. PLA Virtual reserves the right to exclude Parents/Guardians, Learning Coaches, or other individuals from PLA property, or school sanctioned events, if PLA Virtual Administration believes the safety of scholars, staff or other individuals may be compromised.

This policy applies to all Scholars, Parents/Guardians, Learning Coaches and other adults visiting a PLA campus, or attending a school event, regardless of location.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Drugs, alcohol and weapons are prohibited at all school-sanctioned events and in all PLA campuses. Any violation of these policies will result in scholar discipline. The most meaningful approach to drug and alcohol abuse involves cooperative efforts on the part of scholars, parents, PLA Virtual, and community agencies.

Phalen Leadership Academies School Calendar 2022-2023

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

June 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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26	27	28	29	30		

JULY 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

AUGUST 2022						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER 2022						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

OCTOBER 2022						
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30	31					

NOVEMBER 2022						
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27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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JANUARY 2023						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2023						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

MARCH 2023						
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APRIL 2023						
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23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

MAY 2023						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE 2023						
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

- School Level Professional Development
- Teacher Work Day
- Students' First Day
- New Leader Institute
- Leadership Institute
- New Teacher Institute
- Content Level Training for Teachers/Technology Integration and Family Connection
- Staff Development Day
- Network Onboarding Day
- Back to School Night
- No School--9/5 Labor Day
- Staff Development Day
- Network Onboarding Day
- End of Quarter 1
- PSAT Primary Testing Day
- Parent Teacher Conferences (Asynchronous Learning Day)
- No School--Fall Break
- No School--Thanksgiving Break
- Staff Development Day
- Network Onboarding Day
- ISTEP+ Winter Retest Window (LEARN Biology ECA)
- Quarter 2/Semester 1 Ends
- No School--Winter Break
- Quarter 3 /Semester 2 Begins
- Staff Development Day
- No School--1/16-Dr. MLK Day
- No School--1/20 President's Day
- Network Onboarding Day
- ISTEP+ Spring Retest Window
- WIDA ACCESS 1/9-1/24/23
- Semester 2 Open House/Family Night
- SAT Primary Testing Day (Juniors) 3/1
- READ 3 Assessment Window 3/6-3/27
- LEARN! AM/ Biology ECA Window 3/28-3/30
- Quarter 3 Ends
- Parent Teacher Conferences (Asynchronous Learning Day)
- Staff Development Day
- No School--Spring Break
- LEARN Grades 3-4 Window 4/24-5/5
- No School--Memorial Day
- READ 3 Summer Retest Window 5/22-26
- Quarter 4 /Semester 2 Ends
- *Students' Last Day
- Teachers' Last Day
- Summer Advantage Begins for PIA Virtual