



HOPE COMMUNITY PCS

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Hope Community Public Charter School
Expectations of Excellence in Achievement, Attitude,
and Actions



Scholar/Family Handbook

2023-2024

Work Hard, Stay Humble, Be Kind!

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Welcome

We welcome you on behalf of Hope Community Public Charter School (PCS) administration, teachers, and staff that partner with Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA)! At the PLA Network, we believe that education is a partnership that thrives only with every staff member's support, every parent's involvement, and every scholar's commitment.

We also understand that communication is paramount in establishing a successful home-school partnership. In an effort to inform and educate our school community, we have created this handbook to tell you about important policies and practices of Hope Community PCS. 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. If you have a question or concern that needs to be addressed in this handbook, please contact the school 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 website. Additional copies may be downloaded and printed from the Phalen Leadership Academies website. We look forward to an enriching and engaging school year.

A. Mission of Hope Community PCS

The mission of Hope Community PCS is to ensure that each of our scholars meets high academic and social standards and thrives as leaders at home, in their communities, and in the world.

Guiding Principles of The Hope Community Network

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

B. General Information

Enrollment

All scholars are eligible to enroll in a PLA Network school as long as seats are available per our charter with Hope Community Public Charter School or they reside in the attendance area of our innovation school. We welcome scholars who will be entering grades PreK-3 - 8. All interested scholars must submit an application form. An adult who is a non-custodial parent or does not have legal guardianship and wishes to enroll a scholar in a PLA Network school must contact the School Enrollment Coordinator or designee for assistance completing the enrollment process.

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

- Birth certificate,
- Court documents specifying parental rights, responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- Proof of DC residency,
- Dental and Medical Forms
- Home Language Survey
- Proof of immunizations, and
- FERPA Statement

Note: The McKinney-Vento Act

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

The McKinney-Vento Act Liaisons for the PLA Network are the School Enrollment Coordinator, the registrar, and the school office manager.

EEO Statement

PLA Network does not discriminate based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin in any employment 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. PLA Network values diversity and the benefits of different perspectives and backgrounds.

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

Scholar Attendance

It is imperative that Scholars be in attendance each school day. Scholar's learning results from active participation in the classroom and other school activities that individual study cannot replace. Scholar attendance hours are 7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Scholars arriving after 8:10 a.m., leaving early, or being signed out for a portion of the instructional day that is less than 1/2 day, will be marked as tardy. Scholar truancy may trigger a referral in as few as two (2) instances. Check the school website or contact the school office manager or the registrar for the school's protocol for reporting absences and checking in late.

Hope Community PCS strives for a 95% attendance rate. To meet this expectation, every scholar should not exceed nine (9) absences per year. Unless previously notified of extenuating circumstances necessitating the frequent absences, the school may contact the parent once a scholar reaches the midway point of our (4) absences. This communication will be by phone or letter. If your child has a chronic illness, we encourage you to contact the school nurse to avoid attendance issues.

- **Missed School Work Due To Absence**

- Following a return from absence, Scholars will have time equal to the length of their absence to complete their missed work. Please do not request homework in anticipation of a planned absence. If make-up work is requested due to an illness, the request must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. on the day the scholar returns to school. Parents should call the school's office to request make-up work and to pick up books and materials at the end of the school day.

- **Attendance and Late Pick Up**

- Teachers will contact families on unexcused absences' first and second (1st-2nd) days.
- Families will be notified of excessive absences via email and a letter sent home by the registrar on the third (3rd) day of unexcused absence.
- Upon the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, families will be contacted to schedule a mandatory conference to create an Attendance Action Plan to support the family and scholar for daily attendance.
- Upon the seventh (7th) unexcused absence, a Student Support Team (SST) Truancy Conference will be mandated to revisit the Attendance Action Plan and strengthen it to ensure attendance compliance.
- If a ninth (9th) unexcused absence is reached, a safety/wellness check of the child will be conducted with members of the SST team and the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department at the current resident stated in the SIS (Student Information Systems).
- If day ten (10) of unexcused absences is reached, the school will report the excessive absences to Child and Family Services (CFSA). Attendance and current grade reports will be forwarded to CFSA. This is also considered educational neglect, at which point criminal charges against the parent may be filed by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

Tardiness

Scholars are expected to be on time for all scheduled classes. Scholars will be considered tardy if not in the classroom at the assigned start time of 8:05 am for that class. A scholar who enters the class after the bell has rung without an excused pass will receive an unexcused tardy. If a scholar accumulates five (5) tardies in a week, the scholar will serve a suspension day the following Tuesday. If the same scholar accumulates five (5) the next week, they'll serve a 2-day suspension. If you are late to class five (5) times per week for four (4) consecutive weeks, you will have reached a maximum of ten (10) days suspension which may result in expulsion.

Intent to Return/Continuing Scholars

Each spring, parents/guardians of current scholars must complete the 'intent to return' paperwork and procedures to register their scholar for the following school year. It is believed that families who do not submit intent to return materials will be considered to have withdrawn from Hope Community.

Withdrawing From School

Parents must contact the Front Office Administrator if they choose to withdraw their child from school. Parents must complete a withdrawal form and follow all My School DC Lottery Guidelines.

Classroom Assignments

The principal assigns scholars to their classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the classroom assignment should be discussed with the principal. Changes to a classroom assignment of a scholar with an Individual Education Program (IEP/Special Education) can only occur through a case conference committee.

Dress Code - See policy in Appendix.

Early Dismissal

Scholars will only be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time with verified written parental permission. Scholars will only be released to a person other than a custodial parent with a verified written permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or other legal authorization. The person picking up the scholar must have photo identification and present it to the school. **For everyone's safety, scholars are not permitted to leave early after 2:40.**

Eligibility For Extracurricular Activities

Most activities conducted at Hope Community PCS are in large part curricular. Extracurricular activities are connected to the curriculum either academically or in developing the social or physical skills of the scholar. Thus, participating in these offered activities is vital to the scholar's development. If, in the rare instance, a scholar presents a discipline problem or disrupts an activity to the detriment of other scholars, the principal, with teacher input, will decide whether to deny that scholar the opportunity to participate in certain school activities.

Physical Education

Every scholar must wear flat-soled athletic shoes that are not slip-on. A doctor's statement will be required for three consecutive absences from physical education class in one grading period.

Scholar Fundraising

The principal will approve all fundraising activities for the school. Scholars are not permitted to sell items for personal gain or for organizations not affiliated with the school-on-school property.

Emergency Closings and Delays

In the event of severe or inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, Hope Community PCS may be closed or start later. Information regarding school closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be provided via our School Messenger system (Parent Square). The Hope Community PCS website will also list delays and closings (www.phalenacademies.org). If the weather closes the school, then all extracurricular activities, including athletic practices and games, will be canceled. Our local television will also post cancellations on ABC, CBS, and NBC.

Address Change

All scholars must contact Hope Community PCS if their address changes. Parents or scholars must obtain a change of address information form from the school office manager, or they can get the documents online at www.phalenacademies.org.

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors governs PLA charter schools. These board meetings are subject to DC's Door Law. Information regarding Board meetings will be posted on the school website and in specified locations throughout the school within 48 hours of the meeting. The Board of Directors approves and authorizes all items in the school handbook.

The Pledge Of Allegiance

Each day, scholars are allowed to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. A scholar is exempt from participation in the Pledge of Allegiance and may not be required to participate if the scholar chooses not to participate or if the scholar's parent chooses to have the scholar not participate.

Visitors & Visitor Tags

Due to Covid guidelines and to ensure the safety of all scholars, ***we will offer in-person parent visits only by appointment.*** Parents should refrain from seeking to confer with a teacher during the school day (e.g., between classes, during class, during after-school tutoring, etc.). While we welcome every family's insight, perspective, and participation, teachers must focus on instruction during the school day (and immediately after the school day). We respectfully ask that you schedule a parent/teacher conference through the main office or the administrator's office.

Arranging a Conference

Parent-teacher conferences are held in the **fall and spring**. These conferences are scheduled by classroom teachers/teams. Parents wishing to schedule an additional conference with a teacher/team or an administrator should contact the individual(s) involved to make arrangements. Please get in touch with the homeroom teacher or administrator if you are unsure of your scholar's additional teachers.

Guests who cannot respect this policy will be barred from entering the academic areas of the building and confine their business to the front office, or they will be removed from our campus. In rare cases where visitor behavior causes significant disruption, visitors will be asked to prearrange all visits **virtually** or through school officials and security.

All visitors **MUST** check in at the front office security to obtain a visitor's tag. Please do not be offended if you are stopped because you do not have a visible visitor's tag displayed, as our Scholars' safety and security are of the utmost concern to all of us. Please consult the PLA Network Visitor's Policy regarding the steps for scheduling and obtaining permission to visit the school and classrooms. Parents /visitors can be denied access beyond the main office for any reason during school hours.

Loitering

Hope Community PCS will supervise scholars throughout the day. Scholars may not loiter on the school's campus. Scholars must leave school grounds within 15-20 minutes of dismissal (by 3:15 pm) unless staying on campus for an approved and supervised event or purpose. **Scholars staying after school for an extracurricular activity must always be under the sponsor's supervision.**

Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (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).

Parents or eligible scholars have the right to inspect and review the scholar's records and request that Hope Community PCS correct records they believe to be inaccurate. Hope Community PCS must obtain written permission from the parent or eligible scholar to release any information from the scholar's record. Hope Community PCS 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; and
- State and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Hope Community PCS 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, which can be found in the Appendix, and return it to the school office manager.**

School Fee Waivers

The parent of a scholar or an emancipated minor enrolled at Hope Community PCS and meets the financial eligibility standard established by IC 20-33-5-2 may not be required to pay the fees for curricular materials, supplies, or other required class fees. If Hope Community PCS pays the fees, it may seek reimbursement from the Department of Education. Suppose the reimbursement amount is less than the fee assessed for the curricular material. Hope Community PCS may request that the parent or emancipated minor pay the balance in that case.

Cafeteria/Food Service

Every day of school, free breakfast, and lunch will be available for scholars in the cafeteria. Scholars can enter the cafeteria at 7:50 a.m. - 8:05 am for breakfast. Scholars with special dietary needs must provide a medical statement to substantiate the need for a food substitution. The medical information must include an identification of the medical or other special dietary condition that restricts the scholar’s diet, the food or foods to be omitted from the scholar’s diet, and the food or choice of foods to be substituted. Medical statements for diet restrictions must be renewed every year to reflect the current dietary needs of the scholar. Hope Community PCS bars scholars from bringing fast food for school lunches or events.

Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills

Hope Community PCS complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to scholars by their teachers, who will be responsible for the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures prescribed by the state. The alarm system for tornadoes differs from the alarm system for fires, and scholars will be informed of the difference. Safety drills will be conducted throughout school year. Teachers will provide specific instructions on the appropriate procedure to follow when scholars must be secured in the building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person possessing a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Eagles Nest

PTO events are a significant part of the “life” of our schools. They provide a variety of special opportunities for our scholars, and your participation is crucial. Volunteers are needed in different

capacities throughout the year, many of which occur outside the school day. Please refer to Hope Community's website or the main office for information regarding the PTO, meeting times, and related activities.

Scholar Council

The Scholar Council serves the school, increases school spirit, and promotes better relationships and understanding between administration, faculty, and scholars. The Scholar Council also introduces new ideas for policies and activities with the school and discusses problems arising within the school community. Scholar council members represent their classes by bringing ideas, suggestions, comments, and questions to the Council and reporting views and plans to their classmates. The Scholar Council represents the scholar body as a whole by presenting ideas, suggestions, and comments to the school faculty and administration.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Hope Community PCS school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse 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.

Animals

Live animals are permitted on school property only with advance permission of the classroom teacher and Principal. Animals must be caged for safety and may not be transported on a school bus. For health reasons, individual scholars and teachers, some classrooms may not be able to have animal visitors.

Flowers and Balloons

Please only have flowers or balloons delivered to school for birthdays or special holidays with prearranged approval.

Lost and Found

Scholars who find lost articles should turn them into the Main Office. Scholars who have lost items should check with the Main Office staff to see if their missing items are in the Main Office.

Cell Phone/Apple Watch Policy

(Pre K-3-8th Grade)

Scholars are permitted to bring their cell phones, headphones, and Apple watches to school, but they must be turned off and turned in to staff upon entering your homeroom class in the morning. If a scholar is caught with their phone after phones have been collected, we will follow this process:

1. Phone will be taken by a staff member. The scholar will then receive a two-day lunch detention with community service responsibilities.
2. Phones will be taken by a staff member. The parent/guardian will have to retrieve the phone.
3. A staff member will take the phone, and the parent(s) will be notified that they will have to have a conference with the Principal or designee to retrieve the cell phone. During the meeting, the scholar and the parent will be notified that they will be prohibited from bringing a cell phone to school. Additionally, the scholar will receive an out-of-school suspension, not to exceed three days.

Dances

Scholars are permitted to attend dances unless notified by the administration for behavior or attendance issues. Parents, guardians, and family members, such as siblings or friends, who do not attend Hope Community PCS will not be permitted to attend dances.

Parental Transportation or Walking To School

Scholars who are dropped off or are walking to school should arrive between 7:45 am. and 7:50 a.m. Scholars are expected to respect the property of others when walking to and from school keeping in mind that school rules apply.

Bicycles/Scooters/Roller Blades/Skateboards/Heelys

Helmets have been shown to reduce head injuries. Therefore, as a part of its overall safety program, Hope requires scholars who ride bikes or scooters to wear a helmet. Scholars who do not have a helmet while riding bikes or scooters on school property may have their bike or scooter privileges suspended for a period of time to be determined by the principal. Bicycles/scooters shall be parked in the bike rack and locked. Skateboards may not be brought on school property. Heelys or other wheeled shoes are not permitted on school property.

Field Trips

Hope Community PCS may use bus transportation for field trips, and during such trips, scholars must comply with the following bus safety and conduct rules:

- Go immediately to the assigned seat and remain in the seat for the entire bus trip.

- Remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- Talk in a quiet, reasonable tone of voice. Loud, boisterous, profane language or indecent conduct will not be tolerated.
- Scholars will not be allowed to tease, scuffle, trip, hold, hit, or use their hands, feet, or body in any objectionable manner.
- Throwing items on the bus will not be tolerated.
- Food, drink, candy, and gum are prohibited on the bus.
- Phones and electronic games are prohibited.
- Windows are not to be lowered below the designated mark and only with the driver's approval. Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus at all times.
- Keep the bus aisle clear of all items, feet, legs, book bags, instruments, etc.
- Scholars shall respect the bus driver and follow all directions the driver gives.
- Treat all school property with respect.
- Observe the same conduct rules as expected in the classroom.
- Scholars must be completely quiet when the bus stops at all railroad crossings.
- Girls sit with girls, and boys sit with boys.
- Skateboards, scooters, etc., are prohibited on buses.

Please be advised that all parents must complete a background check.

Adult Transport

Staff Members are not permitted to transport scholars in a personal vehicle.

C. Health Services

School Clinic

A scholar will be permitted to lie down in the clinic, and a parent will be contacted if the child does not feel better in a reasonable amount of time.

The general guidelines for sending ill scholars home are a temperature above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, severe injury, or extreme pain. To return to school, a scholar must be fever-free without using fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. A scholar must also be free of vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours in order to return to school. Parents will be contacted whenever the scholar's injury or illness is such that continued school attendance is impossible. The school nurse must release all scholars who leave school, during school hours, due to illness.

If a scholar does need to be sent home due to illness, if a parent cannot be reached, office personnel will call the persons listed as emergency contacts and request that they pick up the child. Scholars will only be released from school with proper parental permission.

Parents are encouraged to keep the school informed of the status of the scholar's health by communicating with the school. It is crucial that the parent communicates any scholar's allergies to medications and various foods to the school nurse. Food allergies require a doctor's statement

for special dietary needs through the cafeteria service. If a clinic or nurse is unavailable, the scholar will be given the option to put their head down and rest.

Immunization Requirements

All scholars are required to have statutorily mandated immunizations or to have an authorized waiver. If a scholar does not have the necessary shots or releases, the Principal may remove the scholar or require compliance by a set deadline. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the school's nurse. Each scholar shall provide proof of their immunizations that comply with the rules set forth by the District of Columbia Board of Health regarding adequate dosage and age. A complete listing of immunizations can be found at:

<https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/immunization-forms>

Injury and Illness

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the Principal. If a scholar has a minor injury, the scholar will be treated by the school nurse and returned to class. If additional medical attention is required, the school will follow the emergency procedures and contact the scholar's parents. An accident report will be completed for significant head injuries and other serious injuries that occur in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any other events sponsored by the school.

These incidents must be reported immediately to the person in charge, followed by communication to the principal's office for a 24-hour follow-up of the injury. Parents will be notified of these injuries. A copy of the report will be kept in the school clinic file. Any scholar returning to school with crutches must obtain written permission from a physician stating that the scholar is allowed to use crutches in school. The note should indicate how long the scholar will need the crutches and whether they should be excused from Physical Education class.

The parents should contact the school office if the child will be attending field trips or rides the bus regularly for temporary disability needs. The scholar should present the note to the school nurse upon arrival. The school nurse will issue a pass to leave class early and for scholar assistance, including permission to use the elevator. The pass will remain in effect for the duration of using the crutches or medical treatment. Specific guidelines for using equipment on the school's campus will be discussed upon the scholar's return. Wheelchairs are available in the clinic and are only to be used to transport scholars or staff members who are ill or injured. In the event your child needs crutches or a wheelchair to attend school, the parent must make arrangements with your healthcare provider.

Prescription Medication Policy

If a scholar needs prescribed medication during school hours, a parent may come to school and give the medicine. Scholars are not allowed to leave the building to go home to take medication and then return to school. A school administrator or trained medication designee will administer/dispense some medicine with the proper forms.

All medicine must be in its original container. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Scholars may not have medication in their pockets, lunch boxes, lockers, etc. All medication brought to school must be turned in to a school administrator, nurse, or the school-assigned medication givers by an adult 18 years or older. This policy includes all field trips and extracurricular activities. Scholars may not possess or use prescription medications at school independently from a school administrator unless authorized by the child's pediatrician. This permission shall be noted on the doctor's letterhead. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action and possible expulsion from school. Scholars with acute or chronic diseases or medical conditions are exempt from this regulation. These scholars are allowed to possess and self-administer medication in the presence of the school nurse or medication giver. Parents of children, who self-administer medication, must submit their written authorization on an annual basis. The authorization statement must include a report from the scholar's physician indicating their approval for the scholar to self-administer the medication.

Over-The-Counter Medicine (OTC)

A parent/guardian must sign an OTC medication card to permit school personnel to administer OTC medication at school. The medication has to be provided by the parent/guardian and will be given according to the directions on the bottle and the dosage needs that are appropriate for the age and size of the scholar. OTC medication must be in the original container, and only one medication per bottle. OTC medication must be kept in the school clinic. An OTC permission card must be renewed at the start of every school year. For OTC medications such as cough drops, cold medicine, Tylenol, or Ibuprofen, a parent should list the medication on the OTC card to indicate a scholar may take this medication at school or send a note with the medication for the nurse to attach to the OTC card if it has already been submitted. Herbal and Homeopathic medicines will not be administered at school.

Transporting Medications

Scholars may **not** bring medications to school on the bus. Scholars cannot transport medications home during or at the end of the school year. Hope Community PCS will not permit scholars to transport controlled substances, which include narcotic pain medication, Sudafed, and some ADD/ADHD medications. A parent must transport these medications. At the end of the school year, medicines will be disposed of at the disposal center the day after the last day of scholar attendance. Parents, please pick up all medications by the last day of school unless the authorization form has been received.

Hearing And Vision Screening

The District of Columbia mandates hearing and vision screening for scholars. If a scholar does not pass a screening, the examiner is required to refer the child for further testing to the child's current pediatrician. Hearing screenings should be performed in Kindergarten or grade 1 and grades 4th, 7th, and 10th. The nurse for the school corporation performs this screening. Vision screenings should be performed in Kindergarten and grades 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th. The school nurse performs this screening. It is important to remember that these tests are only screening tools.

Lice

The school nurse will be responsible for all lice identification. All checks for head lice will be done confidentially to respect the scholar's right to privacy and to avoid embarrassment. The parent/guardian will be notified by telephone if lice are detected or if there was exposure to someone infected. The emergency contacts will be notified if the parent/guardian is unavailable. Parents/guardians of scholars with live head lice will receive an informational checklist. Educational information on treatment and prevention will also be distributed. In the event of discovery during a field trip, Hope Community PCS will provide transportation back to the school. The DCPS school bus system will continue to provide transportation for a special needs scholar who is transported by school bus per the scholar's IEP.

Bed Bugs

The school nurse will be responsible for bed bug identification. All checks for bed bugs will be done confidentially. If the nurse or designee suspects bed bug bites, the nurse or designee will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the possibility. If a live bug is found on the scholar, the scholar should have a fresh change of clothing to finish the school day, and original clothes should be bagged and sent home. If a live bug is found on a scholar, book bag, etc., the bug will be collected and double-bagged. It will be taken for positive identification from an exterminator.

Lost time in the classroom interferes with academic learning. Thus, classroom checks will be conducted. The associates of scholars at the elementary and middle school level will be checked at the nurse's discretion. All siblings of the infested child will be checked if they are enrolled in a Hope Community. Checks for the infested child and their sibling(s) will be conducted on Monday mornings for four weeks after initial discovery to aid families with detection and treatment.

E. Academics

Grades And Grading

The Hope Community has established the following grade scales. Our "Specials" subjects include art, music, physical education, media, and steam.

Subject Achievement Scale	
A+ 98-100%	C+ 78-79%
A 93-97%	C 73-77%
A- 90-92%	C- 70-72%
B+ 88-89%	D+ 68-69%
B 83-87%	D 63-67%
B- 80-82%	D- 60-62%
	F 59% & below

Honor Roll

Honor Roll identification is published for K-8th grade scholars at the end of every grading period. To be on the Honor Roll, a scholar must receive all A's and B's (no grade lower than B +). A scholar who receives all A's will be designated on the Honor Roll with an asterisk, also known as the Principal's Honor Roll.

Homework

Homework is a planned activity that the teacher asks children to do outside of class hours. The homework activity will reinforce the classroom experience. At Hope Community PCS, we believe that homework assignments should consider that the scholar has a home life that is an essential part of their total development.

Grades K - 1 homework will consist of reinforcement and drill activities. Grades 2 and 3 should not be assigned to do more than 30 minutes of homework daily. Grades 4 and 5 should be assigned to do at most 1 hour of homework daily. However, work not completed during school hours may have to be completed at home. A scholar will not be excluded from art, music, or physical education classes because of unfinished classwork.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

While formal parent/teacher conferences take place in the fall and spring, all teachers and staff are strongly encouraged to hold conferences with scholars and parents whenever it appears useful and appropriate. Because teachers are responsible for scholar groups throughout the day, it is best to pre-arrange conferences by scheduling an appointment.

Special Education

Hope Community PCS believes in providing all scholars with Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). FAPE mandates that school districts provide access to general education and specialized educational services. It also requires that children with disabilities receive support free of charge as is provided to non-disabled scholars. It also provides access to general education services for children with disabilities by encouraging that support and related services be provided to children in their general education settings as much as possible, which is considered their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Hope Community PCS provides various special education programs for scholars identified as having a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). A scholar may receive special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedure. Parent/Guardian involvement in this procedure is required. More importantly, the school encourages the parent to be an active participant. A parent or guardian who believes their scholar may have a disability that interferes substantially with the scholar's ability to function properly in school should review the special education link on the school website and contact the Special Education Director. Once contact has been made, the school committee will meet and respond to the parent with the following steps within ten (10) school days.

- **Educational Evaluations**

Hope Community PCS staff members monitor scholar academics and behavior to identify scholars who may need additional support or interventions to achieve academic success. If a staff member notices a lack of improvement, the staff member may request support for the scholar. In that instance, a staffing committee is formed and can consist of the school principal or assistant principal, the teacher, the school psychologist, the special education coordinator, special education teachers, general education teachers, parents/guardians, and other involved professionals. The staffing committee will make recommendations appropriate for the scholar's needs.

- **Multi-Tiered Support Systems**

If a determination is made that a scholar needs additional support, Hope Community PCS will utilize its MTSS (I-Team) to determine the specific interventions needed by the scholar. In the MTSS process, a struggling scholar is provided with increasingly intensive instruction in their area of academic deficits. The scholar's progress is monitored, and if there is no positive response or improvement, the scholar will be referred for testing to determine eligibility or non-eligibility for special education services.

- **Services Provided**

A Scholar who is determined to be eligible for special education services will be provided services deemed appropriate as determined and recommended by the scholar's IEP team. The recommendations may include an IEP and other related services, a screening, or an educational evaluation that will be conducted according to IDEA/Article 7 regulations. Scholars who do not qualify for services under IDEA/Article 7 may be considered for Section 504 services under the Rehabilitation Act.

Title I

Title I aims to ensure that all children have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and assessments. Scholars participating in the Title I Program are provided with intensified instruction in the District of Columbia through an interdisciplinary, thematic curriculum.

Title III

Title III is specifically targeted to benefit Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Immigrant Students. The purpose is to help ensure that children who are LEP attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and scholarly academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

Scholars identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program will be screened for English proficiency using the Scholars Home Language Survey and scored on the level system according to DC's New English Language Proficiency Levels:

- **Level 1:** Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency begin to demonstrate receptive or productive English skills. They are able to respond to simple communication tasks.
- **Level 2:** Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency respond with increasing ease to more varied communication tasks.
- **Level 3:** Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency tailor the English language skills they have been taught to meet their immediate communication and learning needs. They are able to understand and be understood in many basic social situations (while exhibiting many errors of the convention) and need support in academic language.
- **Level 4:** Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency combine the elements of the English language in complex, cognitively demanding situations and are able to use English as a means for learning in other academic areas, although some minor errors of conventions are still evident.
- **Level 5:** Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency communicate effectively with various audiences on a wide range of familiar and new topics to meet social and academic demands. Scholars speak, understand, write, and comprehend English without difficulty and display academic achievement comparable to native English-speaking peers. To attain the English proficiency level of their native English-speaking peers, further linguistic enhancement and refinement are necessary.

The Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Scholars Program increases a child's English proficiency using small group instruction and modifications to classroom assignments. A child may participate in this program until he/she is reclassified as Level 5 or Fluent English Proficient (FEP) according to the State's existing guidelines and it is determined that a language instruction educational program is no longer needed. This process may take several years. A parent/guardian has the right to remove his/her child from the program or decline services. However, if recommended, PLA at Hope Community PCS feels that the child's participation in this program will most effectively increase his/her English proficiency and knowledge of the academic content. If a parent refuses services for eligible scholars, they must still participate in the State's annual assessment for English Learners until they demonstrate proficiency.

F. Discipline

Hope Community PCS prioritizes maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and safe for all scholars, staff, and guests. Scholars who engage in illegal, dangerous, or disruptive behavior will be called upon to correct that behavior. Each scholar is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique scholar and unique situation. The odds of children learning from their mistakes increase dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequence. Hope Community PCS utilizes a Behavior Management System that focuses on that connection and individualizes disciplinary measures. Discipline is uniquely tailored to each scholar. Please contact your scholar's school. Questions

regarding discipline at your scholar's school should be directed to the Vice Principal or the Principal.

Shooting dice/gambling is prohibited on school premises, and if caught, it will result in disciplinary actions.

1. Scholars caught gambling on school grounds will receive an out-of-school suspension, not to exceed three (3) days.
2. Further disciplinary action will be taken if the same scholar is caught gambling a second time.

All scholars returning from suspension must have an in-person parent reinstatement conference, at the school, with a member of the administration team or Dean.

After a scholar reaches a total of ten (10) days of out-of-school suspensions, they will be referred to the MTSS Team. Parents will receive notification from the MTSS Coordinator and be kept abreast of the ongoing progress monitoring.

Any physical altercation will result in an automatic 1-3 day suspension.

If a scholar is involved in a physical altercation a second time, that scholar will be referred to the MTSS Team after serving a suspension of five (5) days.

Each scholar and a parent or guardian will be required to sign the school's **No Bully Contract**. (Can be found on **page 31** of this handbook)

All reported incidents of bullying, or harassment will be thoroughly investigated within 24 hours.

Upon investigation, if bullying has been confirmed, the parent(s) of the scholar who has been bullying others will be notified and requested to meet in person with the school's administrator. The consequences for the behavior are as follows:

BULLYING CONSEQUENCES:

1st Offense:

Discussion with the principal/dean and counselor, bullying lesson implemented, parent contact

2nd Offense:

Same as above and one (1) day Out of School suspension.

3rd Offense:

Scholars and parents attend a conference with the principal, dean, and counselor and 1-3 days Out of School Suspension.

4th Offense:

Scholars and parents attend a second conference with the principal and counselor and 3-5 days Out of School Suspension.

During any suspension, the scholar who has been bullying others must complete an essay after viewing a video on Anti-Bullying. That essay is to be turned in via email to the Vice Principal.

Any scholar who is arrested or involved in unlawful activity could be placed up for expulsion if their presence jeopardizes the safety of learning of other scholars, including possession of cigarettes, vapes, drugs (including, but not limited to, marijuana), alcohol, or weapons of any sort.

In addition to the grounds specified in this handbook, a scholar may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

- The unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
- The scholar's removal is necessary to restore order to protect persons on school property, including unlawful activity on a school bus, during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a scholar may not attend classes or other school functions.

G. Complaint Procedures

Grievance Procedure

Though the faculty and administration of Hope Community PCS make every effort to avoid problems, parents and scholars will occasionally disagree with decisions that are made regarding discipline or grades. In most cases, problems can be resolved when parents speak to the person directly responsible for decisions that have been made concerning a scholar. Suppose the issue still needs to be resolved after the initial communication with staff. In that case, the complaining party should put in a formal grievance by scheduling a meeting or submitting a written complaint to be reviewed by the principal. All grievances will be responded to within 48 hours. If a satisfactory resolution still needs to be achieved, the complaining party should contact the Regional Director, Melissa Morris, at mmorris@phalenacademies.org.

Appendix

Phalen Leadership Academy Network Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 Years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the scholar’s education records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the scholar’s education record within 45 days of the day the School Corporation receives a request for access. Parents or eligible scholars should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make access arrangements and notify the parent or eligible scholar of the time and place where the records may be reviewed.

The right to request the amendment of the scholar’s education records that the parent or eligible scholar believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible scholars may ask the School Corporation to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record for which an amendment is requested, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School Corporation decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible scholar, the School Corporation will notify the parent or eligible scholar of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible scholar when notified of the right to a hearing,

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the scholar's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School Corporation as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School Corporation has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or scholar serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School Corporation discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school corporation in which a scholar seeks or intends to

enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school corporation to make a reasonable attempt to notify the scholar of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

Where disclosure is to a state or local juvenile justice agency and relates to the ability of such agency to serve before adjudication the scholar whose records are being released and such agency receiving the information certifies in writing that the agency has agreed not to disclose it to a third party without the consent of the scholar's parent, guardian, or custodian, such information may not be used to aid in the supervision of a delinquent child.

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 are:

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

School Visitor Policy

Purpose

To aid Hope Community PCS in maintaining a safe and academically effective school environment for scholars, staff, and the public, Hope Community PCS has established uniform guidelines for granting and restricting access to school property and school events.

Scope

This policy applies to all visitors, including parents, maintenance workers, service providers, reporters, etc. Emergency service personnel and law enforcement personnel on the premises for an emergency are exempt from this policy.

Guidelines-General (Pre-Covid)

Hope Community PCS strives to create an atmosphere of camaraderie and cooperation between school personnel, parents, and its community. This goal is balanced against Hope Community's commitment to creating an academic environment that does not hinder a scholar's educational opportunities. To this end, Hope Community PCS has implemented the following steps for all visitors to the school.

Step 1. All visitors must report to the security desk. He or she must sign in and state the purpose for his or her visit. Permission will be granted for entry to the school unless there is a legal prohibition against the visitor's presence at the school, the visitor does not have a legitimate purpose for being at the school, or the visitor causes a disruption to the academic process.

Step 2. The security officer will give the visitor a visitor's badge, which the visitor must display on his/her clothing. The security officer will then contact the point of contact for the visitor and escort them to their destination. The badge must be visible at all times. A visitor without a badge will be asked to obtain a pass or to display their pass in a visible location. If the visitor refuses to obtain or display their pass, he or she will be asked to leave the school.

Step 3. Hope Community PCS has delegated its authority to grant or deny entry to the school to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team of the school is responsible for ensuring that scholar and school safety is not compromised by the presence of a visitor in the school building or on its premises. Permission, once granted, may be rescinded if a visitor does not comply with the stated purpose of the visit or violates any school policy, administrative regulation, and law, or disrupts the school environment.

Step 4. If the behavior of a visitor is disruptive to the school and/or undermines the learning environment, prevents the orderly conduct of the activities, administration, or classes of the school, involves illegal activity, or poses a risk to the safety of scholars or staff, the Leadership team will instruct the visitor to refrain from the disruptive behavior. If the behavior continues, the visitor will be asked to leave. If the visitor refuses to leave after being requested to do so, the staff will call the police to remove the visitor from the premises.

Step 5. The Principal must tell the visitor the reason for his or her decision to deny the visitor entry or the reason for the visitor's removal from the school. The Principal's decision to deny or restrict the entry of a visitor may be appealed to Michelle Reeves, Director of Legal Services and Human Resources. She may be reached at mreeves@phalenacademies.org.



UPDATED Hope Community PCS Dress Code 2023-2024 Uniform:

Pre-K- 1st grade: Kelly Green Polo

2nd - 5th Grade - Navy Blue Polo

6th - 8th Grade - Black Polo

Khaki or Navy bottoms, Shirt/sweater/Sweatshirt - (plain)

No hoodies (of any kind),

Closed-toe weather-appropriate shoes.

DRESS CODE CONSEQUENCES

Scholars are required to be in the Hope dress code and comply with all dress code expectations on a daily basis. If a scholar is not in compliance with expectations, administration will follow this process:

1. First offense - Scholars will be given a verbal warning and parents will be notified. A school shirt will be provided for the day.
2. Second offense - the scholar will be provided a school uniform shirt at a cost and a parent will be notified. A one day lunch detention, which is inclusive of community service responsibilities, will be given and communicated to the scholar and the parent.
3. If there is a third offense, scholars will receive an off-site suspension and be given a community service responsibility.

** If a scholar reports to school without an appropriate bottom, The parent will be required to come to the school and provide an appropriate bottom. The scholar will remain in an alternate class placement until the bottom is provided.



Hope Community PCS Master Schedule

ARRIVAL SCHEDULE	
Time	Classes
7:50a - 8:10a	PRE-K - EIGHTH GRADE

LUNCH SCHEDULE	
Time	Classes
11:10a - 11:40a	Prek
11:05a - 11:35a	Kindergarten
11:35p - 12:05p	First And Second Grade
12:00p - 12:30p	Third And Fourth Grade
12:25p -12:55p	Fourth & Fifth Grade
12:30p -1:15p	Sixth, Seventh, & Eighth Grade

DISMISSAL SCHEDULE	
Time	Classes
3:00pm	Pre-Kindergarten - 8th Grade

Important Dates to Remember

Semester 1

July

19-22: New Teacher Orientation

August

8: Teachers' First Day
8-19: Teacher In-Service
22: Scholar's First Day

September

5: No School: Labor Day
30: Staff Development

October

7: Progress Reports Go Home
10: No School: Indigenous People Day
24: End of Marking Period
28: No School: Parent Teacher Conferences
31: No School: Staff Development

November

11: No School: Veterans' Day
23-25: No School: Thanksgiving Break

December

9: Progress Reports Go Home
19: No School: Staff Development Day
Dec 20-Jan 2: No School: Winter Break

Semester 2

January

3: Return to School
11: End of Marking Period
16: No School: MLK Day

February

17: No School: Staff Development
20: No School: Presidents' Day
24: Progress Reports Go Home

March

17: End of Marking Period
23: Staff Development
24: No School: Parent Teacher Conferences

April

17-21: No School Spring Break

May

29: No School: Memorial Day

June

8: Student's Last Day
9: Teachers' Last Day
12-23: Extended School Year

Quarter 1: Aug 22- Oct 24
Quarter 2: Oct 25-Jan 11
Quarter 3: Jan 12- Mar 17
Quarter 4: Mar 18-June 8



Hope Community Public Charter School
Multi-Purpose Permission Form 2023-2024

Scholar Name: _____ **Grade Level** _____

Teacher: _____

Please CHECK MARK each item for which you grant permission and sign your name at the bottom of this form.

Field Trips:

_____ I give permission for my child to attend field trips taken with Hope Community PCS staff.

_____ I give permission for my child to attend field trips in which the class walks or travels by school-sanctioned transportation to the site.

Internet Usage and Hope Community PCS Web Site:

_____ I give permission for my child to access the use of the internet for educational purposes under the supervision of a staff member.

_____ I give permission for my child's work to be posted on the HCPCS website (art, writing samples, I-Movies, PowerPoint Presentations, etc.).

_____ I give permission for my child's work to appear in media publications.

Photography and Video: HCPCS is frequently visited by universities, educational organizations, and the local media (television and newspaper).

_____ I give permission for my child's photo and/or video image to appear in media publications.

_____ I give permission for my child's work to appear in media publications.

Attendance Policy:

_____ I have read the Attendance Policy of HCPCS.

_____ I hereby agree that I will adhere to the Attendance Policy of HCPCS.

Name of adult completing this form (please print): _____

Adult Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Hope Signature Page (Handbook)
Hope Community Public Charter School
2023-2024

Dear Scholars and Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

This handbook was developed as a guide for scholars and parents and to answer commonly asked questions that arise during the course of the school year. Our goal is to create a positive educational atmosphere conducive to learning where rules/procedures are enforced firmly, fairly, and consistently to all scholars.

We ask that you familiarize yourself with this handbook by reading it and ask that you sign this page as evidence that you are aware of the policies and procedures. This form is part of the scholar's registration process at Hope Community Public Charter and must be returned as a condition of enrollment.

Signing below is evidence that parents and scholars have or will read and understand the contents of this handbook.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Scholar

Date

Print Name of Scholar

Grade



Hope Community Public Charter School ANTI BULLY CONTRACT 2023-2024

“Bullying” is when a person or group repeatedly tries to hurt or control another person. There are many different kinds of bullying, and they all hurt. Sometimes bullying means hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, or making someone do something they don’t want to do. Sometimes bullying is using mean words or threats, spreading rumors, calling someone names, or saying bad things behind their back. Sometimes bullying is making someone feel unsafe or scared, leaving them out, or making them feel they are not liked. Some bullies use technology to hurt their targets.

Hope Community PCS is NOT a place for bullying. During each school year, we learn the harmful effects of bullying and what to do if we are bullied or if we are a bystander who sees another person being bullied.

By signing this contract, I am promising to stand up to bullying by doing the following:

- A. I will NOT be a bully.
- B. I will not encourage a bully by joining in or laughing along.
- C. If I’ve used my anti-bullying strategies and the bully continues, I will let an adult know about the bullying.
- D. I will be a friend to those who have been bullied and will include scholars who may be left out.

ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES:

1. Ignore the bully or walk away.
2. Look at the person and use “I Messages” such as, “I don’t like that, you need to stop.”
3. Use “I Messages” that are more assertive such as, “I don’t like that, Stop it!” or “If you don’t stop now, I will get adult help.”
4. Tell an adult(s) until the bullying stops.

BULLYING CONSEQUENCES:

1st Offense: Discussion with the principal/counselor, bullying lesson implemented, parent contact

2nd Offense: Same as above and 1 day In-School Intervention.

3rd Offense: Scholar and parent attend a conference with the principal and counselor and 1 day Out of School Suspension.

4th Offense: Scholar and parent attend a second conference with the principal and counselor and 3 day Out of School Suspension.

Scholar Signature: _____

Parents, please read the information on the back of this page and provide your signature.

Dear Parents,

While the back side of this page provides your elementary scholar with an age appropriate explanation, we are providing you with the legal definition. Please read over it and sign this page, indicating that you understand the meaning of bullying. Be sure your child signs the other side as well, and have him/her return this page to the classroom teacher.

Definition: "Bullying" is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically); physical acts committed; aggression; or any other behaviors committed by a scholar or group of scholars against another scholar with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted scholar and create for the targeted scholar an objectively hostile school environment that:

1. Places the targeted scholar in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property;
2. Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted scholars' physical or mental health;
3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted scholar's academic performance; or
4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges by the school.

Parent Signature _____