

Phalen Leadership Academies
**Expectation of Excellence In Achievement, Attitude,
Actions**



PLA@Promise Prep
Elementary Scholar Handbook
Phalen Leadership Academies
2023-2024

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Welcome

On behalf of the administration, teachers, and staff of Phalen Leadership Academies (“PLA Network”), we welcome you to our network of schools. At the PLA Network, we believe that education is a partnership that thrives only 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 the PLA Network. 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 administration.

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. Each family can retrieve the handbook via website. Additional copies may be downloaded and printed from the Phalen Leadership Academies website. We look forward to a very rewarding and engaging school year.

A. 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 students 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 Scholars.
- PLA will provide a variety of 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 there are seats available per our charter with the Indiana Charter School Board (“ICSB”), or they reside in the boundary of the school. We welcome scholars who will be entering grades K-12th. All interested scholars must submit an application form. An adult who is a non-custodial parent or does not have a legal guardianship and wishes to enroll a scholar in a PLA Network school must contact the School Enrollment Coordinator or designee for assistance to complete the enrollment process. Elementary scholars who do not reside in the boundary must have satisfactory attendance or can be asked to remove their scholar from PLA.

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 Indiana residency,
- Proof of immunizations, and
- Ferpa Statement

Note: 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.

EEO Statement

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. 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. Learning is a result of active participation in classroom and other school activities that cannot be replaced by individual study. Scholar attendance hours are 8:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Scholars arriving after 8:50 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. Check the school website or contact the principal to get the school's protocol for reporting absences and checking in late.

PLA strives for a 95% attendance rate. To meet this expectation, no scholar should exceed 9 absences per year. If your child has a chronic illness, we encourage you to contact the school nurse to avoid any 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 the request for homework is due to an illness, the request must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. Parents should call the office to request homework and to pick up books and materials at the end of the day.

Withdrawing from School

Parents must contact the front office if they choose to withdraw their child from school. If a scholar is withdrawing to homeschool, a form must be completed at the school. For information or questions regarding the Home School Enrollment Process, please contact the Indiana Department of Education's Home School Liaison at 317-232-9111.

Classroom Assignments

The principal assigns scholars to his or her classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the administration. Changes to an 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

No scholar will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without parental permission. No scholar will be released to a person other than a custodial parent without a permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or other legal authorization. The person picking up the scholar should have photo identification and present it to the school.

Eligibility For Extracurricular Activities

Most activities conducted at PLA Network schools are in large part curricular. These activities are connected to the curriculum either academically or in the development of social or physical skills. Thus, it's important to the scholar's total development that he/she participates in these offered activities. If in the rare instance a scholar presents a discipline problem or disrupts an activity to the detriment of other scholars, the principal with input from the teachers, will decide whether to deny that scholar the opportunity to participate in certain school activities. All sports in grades 7-12 will require a sports physical.

Scholar Fundraising

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

No scholars are permitted to sell snacks, drinks or food of any kind inside the building. Selling of any goods on school property must be approved by administration.

Emergency Closings and Delays

In the event of severe or inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, PLA may be closed or start at a later time. Information regarding school closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be provided via our School Messenger system (phone and text alerts). Additionally, the PLA website will list delays and closings (www.phalenacademies.org). If weather closes the school, then all extracurricular activities including athletic practices and games will be canceled. The TV will also post cancellations via ABC, CBS, and NBC.

Address Change

All scholars must contact PLA if he or she changes his or her address/contact number. Parents and/or scholars must obtain change of address information from the front office or they can obtain the documents online at www.phalenacademies.org.

Board Meetings

A Board of Directors governs PLA charter schools. These board meetings are subject to Indiana's Open-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.

Visitors & Visitor Tags

Parents should not seek 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. 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.

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 a major disruption, visitors will be asked to prearrange all visits through school officials and security.

All visitors are expected to check in at the office to obtain a visitor's tag. Please do not be offended if you are stopped if you do not have a visible visitor's tag displayed, as our scholars' safety and security are of the utmost concern for all of us. Any inappropriate adult behavior could result in being banned from entering the building. This includes, but not limited to cursing, violent threats, and other inappropriate actions.

Loitering

PLA staff will supervise scholars throughout the day. Scholars may not loiter on school campus. Scholars must leave school grounds within 15-20 minutes of dismissal, unless staying on campus for an approved and supervised event or purpose. Scholars staying after school for an extracurricular activity must be under the sponsor's supervision at all times.

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 PLA correct records which they believe to be inaccurate. PLA must obtain written permission from the parent 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 student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State 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 student'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 front office.**

School Fee Waivers

The parent of a scholar or an emancipated minor who is enrolled at PLA, and who 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 PLA pays the fees, it may seek reimbursement from the Department of Education. If the reimbursement amount is less than the fee assessed for the curricular material, PLA may request that the parent or emancipated minor pay the balance of the amount.

Cafeteria/Food Service

Every full day of school, breakfast and lunch will be available for scholars to purchase in the cafeteria. Scholars will be allowed to enter the cafeteria at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast. Cafeteria times will change based on each individual school. For scholars with paid or reduced lunches, the scholar prepays on his/her account and will be charged accordingly. Scholars who qualify for free lunch will use his/her account number to assist in record keeping for the Federal School Nutrition Program. Scholars with special dietary needs must provide a medical statement to substantiate the need for a food substitution. The medical statement 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. PLA bars scholars from bringing fast food for school lunch or events. ***Under no circumstance are scholars allowed to order outside food and have it delivered to the school. Scholars who proceed to do this will have disciplinary action.*** Due to the safety of scholars, no candy will be permitted on school property.

Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills

Phalen Leadership Academies 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 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 is different from the alarm system for fires, and scholars will be informed of the difference. Safety drills will be conducted once per school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedure to follow in situations where scholars must be secured in the building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

PTO events are a major part of the “life” of our schools. They provide a variety of special opportunities for our scholars and your participation is extremely important. Volunteers are needed in different capacities throughout the year, many of which occur outside the school day. Please refer to PLA Network’s website or main office for information regarding the PTO, meetings times, and related activities.

Scholar Council

The Scholar Council provides service to 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, suggestion, comments, and questions to the Council and taking information, ideas, and plans back 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

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.

Flowers and Balloons

Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to school for birthdays or special holidays without prearranged approval.

Lost and Found

Scholars who find lost articles should turn them in to the front office. Scholars who have lost items should check with the front office to see if their missing items are in the office.

Library/Media Center

The library has books and magazines for study and recreational reading. Scholars must return books and other items checked out from the media center on time. If a scholar loses a book, he/she must pay for it. If a book is damaged while checked out to a scholar, he/she must pay for its repair or replacement.

Elementary Cell Phone Policy

All internet accessing devices (cell phones, iPad/tablets watches, laptops) will be required to turn into the teacher. The teacher will lock up the device for safekeeping and return the device to the scholar at the end of each day.

It is recommended that scholars avoid bringing expensive devices to school to prevent loss, damage, or theft. It is likely the school will not be able to recover lost property. We are not responsible for any damaged or stolen devices.

**Filming/Recording staff members without permission will result in disciplinary action.*

**Filming anything during school hours and posting to social media could result in disciplinary action.*

C. Transportation

PLA Network has a variety of transportation options. Not all options are available at each school. Check with your school administrator regarding which options are available at your school.

Parental Transportation or Walking to School

Scholars who are dropped off or are walking to school should arrive by 8:50a.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, PLA requires scholars who ride bikes or scooters to wear a helmet. Scholars who do not have on 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.

School Bus Conduct and Safety Expectations

PLA provides bus transportation for some affiliated network schools. Riders must reside within the school attendance boundary to ride PLA buses. All riders must comply with PLA policies and procedures for riding the school bus. Any violation of PLA transportation policies or misconduct that jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the scholars riding the bus may result in the scholar being denied the privilege of riding the school bus. When this happens, school attendance is still required, and parents must make other arrangements for their children to get to school. Bus discipline will follow this process: Warning, 1 day off, 3 days off, 5 days off, and 10 days off. We reserve the right at any time to remove a scholar for behavioral concerns.

Field Trips

PLA 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 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 aisle of bus clear of all items, feet, legs, book bags, instruments etc.
- Scholars shall be respectful of the bus driver and follow all directions given by the driver.
- Treat all school property with respect.
- Observe the same conduct rules as expected in the classroom.
- Scholars must be completely quiet when bus stops at all railroad crossings.
- Girls sit with girls and boys sit with boys.
- Skateboards, scooters, etc. are prohibited on buses.
- If tickets are pre purchased and the scholar receives a disciplinary action, they will not receive a refund.
- If a scholar is suspended or receives disciplinary action, they are not permitted to attend field trips and/or extracurricular activities.

D. Health Services

School Clinic

A scholar will be permitted to lay 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: temperature above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or serious injury or extreme pain. A scholar must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours in order to return to school. 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 attendance at school is not possible. The school nurse must release all scholars who leave school, during school hours, due to illness.

In the event that 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. No scholar will be released from school without 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 any scholar allergies to medications and various foods are communicated by the parent 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 not available, the scholar will be given the option to put his/her head down and rest.

Immunization Requirements

All scholars are required to have the statutorily mandated immunizations or to have an authorized waiver. If a scholar does not have the necessary shots or waivers, 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 complies with the rules set forth by the Indiana State Board of Health pertaining to adequate dosage and age. A full listing of immunizations can be found at:

http://www.state.in.us/isdh/files/2015_-_2016_School_Reqs_Chart_WR_9029.pdf

Injury and Illness

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the administration. If 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 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 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 he or she 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 at school. 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 the use of the crutches and/or medical treatment. Specific guidelines for use of equipment on school 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 health care provider.

Prescription Medication Policy

If a scholar needs prescribed medication during the 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 nurse or designee will administer/dispense some medication 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 nurse or designee. This policy includes all field trips and extracurricular activities. Scholars may not possess or use prescription medications at school independently from a school administrator. Noncompliance may result in disciplinary action and possible expulsion from school. Scholars with an acute or chronic disease or medical condition are exempt from this prohibition. These scholars are allowed to possess and self-administer medication on an emergency basis. Parents of children, who self-administer medication, must **submit their written authorization, on an annual basis**. The authorization statement must include a statement from the scholar's physician indicating his or her 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 medications will not be administered at school.

Transporting Medications

Scholars may bring medications to school on the bus as long as the scholar turns the medication over to the school nurse or office upon their arrival to school. Scholars will not be permitted to transport medications home during the school year or at the end of the school year unless a Medication Transport Release form has been signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. However, PLA will not permit scholars to transport controlled substances, which includes narcotic pain medication, Sudafed, and some ADD/ADHD medications, even with a Medication Transport Release form on file, these medications must be transported by a parent. At the end of the school year, medications will be disposed of the day after the last day of scholar attendance unless the authorization form has been received.

Hearing and Vision Screening

The State of Indiana mandates hearing and vision screening for students. If a scholar does not pass a screening, the examiner is required to refer the child for further testing. Hearing screenings should be performed in Kindergarten, 1st and grades 4th, 7th, and 10th. The speech therapist 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.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

The school nurse or designee will be responsible for all lice identification. All checks for head lice will be done in a confidential manner, 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 that there was exposure to someone infected with lice. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, the emergency contacts will be notified. An informational checklist will be given to parents/guardians of Scholars identified with live head lice. Educational information on treatment and prevention will also be distributed. In the event of discovery during a field trip, PLA will provide transportation back to the school. For a special needs scholar who is transported by school bus per the scholar's IEP, the school will continue to provide transportation.

Bed Bugs

The school nurse or designee will be responsible for bed bugs identification. All checks for bed bugs will be done in a confidential manner. 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 scholar learning, thus, classroom checks will not be conducted. The associates of scholars at the elementary, middle school and high school levels will be checked at the nurse’s discretion. All siblings of the infested child will be checked if they are enrolled in a PLA Network school. Checks for the infested child and his/her sibling(s) will be conducted on Monday morning for four weeks after initial discovery to aid families with detection and treatment.

E. Academics

Grades and Grading

The PLA Network has established the following grade scales. The special area subjects include: art, music, physical education, media, and technology.

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

An Honor Roll is published for K-12th 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 High 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 PLA we believe that homework assignments should take into consideration the fact that the scholar has a home life that is an important part of his/her total development.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

While formal parent/teacher conferences take place in the fall, 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

PLA believes in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all scholars. 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 students. 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, in their least restricted environment, (LRE). PLA provides a variety of 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 his/her 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/or contact the Special Education Coordinator. Once contact has been made the school committee will meet and respond to the parent with the next steps within ten (10) school days.

- **Educational Evaluations**

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

- **Response to Intervention**

If a determination is made that a scholar needs additional supports, PLA will utilize its Response to Intervention Process (I-Team) to determine the specific interventions needed by the scholar. In the RTI process, a struggling scholar is provided with increasingly intensive instruction in his or her area of academic weakness. 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 for special education services and what services the scholar needs to succeed.

- **Services Provided**

Scholars who are determined to be eligible for services, as a scholar with a specific learning disability will be provided services deemed appropriate as determined and

recommended by the scholar's case conference committee. The recommendations may include a general interventional plan, 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

The purpose of Title I is to ensure that all children have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and assessments. Scholars who participate in the Title I Program are provided with intensified instruction in the Indiana Academic Standards 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 student 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 assessed for English proficiency using the Students Home Language Survey and scored on the level system according to Indiana'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 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 Students 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 exiting 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 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 students those students must still participate in the State's annual assessment for English Learners until such time as they demonstrate proficiency.

F. Discipline

PLA places a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and is 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 increases dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequence. At PLA we utilize a Behavior Management System that focuses on that connection and individualizes disciplinary measures. Because discipline is uniquely tailored to each individual scholar, please contact your scholar's school. Questions regarding discipline at your scholar's school should be directed to the building dean or administration.

Any scholar who opens an exterior door to let someone (scholar, parent, vendor, stranger) enter the building is prohibited. It will result in disciplinary actions which can include suspension and/or expulsion.

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

After a scholar reaches 10 total days out of school on suspension they will be placed up for expulsion. Parents will receive official paperwork and be asked to attend an expulsion meeting.

Any fist fighting will result in a mandatory 5-day suspension. Depending on the severity of the fight, it may be up to 10 days/pending expulsion. Building administration will make the determination if law enforcement needs to be contacted. After school, security and administration is able to view footage and evidence of the incident, a determination will be made in regard to consequences.

Weapons of any kind will result in automatic dismissal or arrest. Weapons include, but not limited to guns, knives, box cutters, blades, tasers, mace, etc.

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

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

Any scholar who is arrested or involved in unlawful activity could be placed up for expulsion if their presence jeopardizes the safety or learning of other scholars including possession of cigarettes, vapes, drugs, alcohol, and/or weapons of any sort.

If a scholar is suspended, they are not permitted to attend field trips and/or extracurricular activities.

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 an unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a scholar may not be attending classes other school functions; or
- if a scholar receives an excessive number of write ups, this could lead to a suspension or further disciplinary action.

An arrest for any reason on or off school property could result in immediate dismissal from the school.

The school will report and comply with law enforcement anytime a scholar is involved in disciplinary incidents on school property, and is on probation due to incidents occurring outside of school property.

If a scholar is expelled or withdraws from the academy due to behavior reasons, the scholar MUST conference with their parent/guardian as well as building leadership to discuss return and expectations moving forward.

This could include a mandatory behavior contract for returning scholars.

Any scholars who are suspended, expelled, or who have withdrawn from JRPLA in order to avoid an expulsion hearing are not permitted to attend any function on the JRP property including but not limited to; sporting events, award ceremonies, banquets, graduations/promotions, dances extra-curricular club events, and stage performances.

Parents who are banned from the property, any former PLA network employees who were terminated or who had their yearly contract non-renewed are not permitted to attend on property events at JRP. In addition, any individual whose presence jeopardizes the safety of others on property will not be permitted to attend events. PLA police, IMPD, network administrators, and contracted security may ask any individual to leave the property at any time.

Social Media Expectations

In regards to social media, we still hold scholars to a high standard. Any unlawful activity, violent threats, bullying, or blatantly inappropriate behavior will be reprimanded and follow the student discipline code of conduct. Posting inappropriate videos, photos, fighting, or exploiting others will result in disciplinary action which could include suspension/expulsion.

Referral Process

1. Teacher/Staff Refer Scholar Online
 - use online Discipline Referral Form
 - when referring scholars, the incident must be thoroughly explained in the section "Please State Incident Below"
0. Teacher/Staff writes a pass for the scholar to go to the Dean's Office
1. If the scholar refuses to go to the Dean's Office in a civilized manner, the front office, a Dean, or an administrator will be notified and the scholar will be picked up and brought to the Dean's Office

Discipline Process

Minor Offenses

1. If the offense is minor, the scholar will spend at least the remainder of the period in the Dean's Office.
2. If the scholar has more than one referral in a day, the dean will be notified, and the scholar and the dean will meet to discuss the next steps.
3. After meeting with the Dean, if the scholar needs to be suspended, the parent/guardian will be notified, the suspension papers will be written up, and the reinstatement conference date will be scheduled and shared with the scholar and the parent/guardian.
4. If at any time an administrator needs to get involved, the dean will reach out to an administrator to sit in and help out with any of the steps outlined above.

Major Offenses

1. If the offense is major, the dean will be notified, and the scholar and the dean will meet to discuss the next steps.
2. After meeting with the Dean, if the scholar needs to be suspended, the parent/guardian will be notified, the suspension papers will be written up, and the reinstatement conference date will be shared with the scholar and the parent/guardian.

3. If at any time an administrator needs to get involved, the dean will reach out to an administrator to sit in and help out with any of the steps outlined above.

Reinstatement Process

1. The scholar, parent/guardian, the dean, and at least one other staff member will meet to discuss the expectations once the scholar is reinstated after a suspension.
2. The scholar and the parent will sign the reinstatement form stating that they understand all expectations moving forward for the scholar in the school.
3. If the scholar does not meet the expectations set forth in the reinstatement form, the scholar will be subject to further disciplinary actions.
4. Reinstatement conferences will not take place during arrival nor dismissal.

Documentation, Filing, and Paperwork

1. Discipline referrals will be printed and filed by grade and last name by 8:00 each morning for all referrals from the previous day.
2. A copy of all suspension and reinstatement paperwork will be copied and delivered to an administrator by 8:00am each morning for suspensions from the previous day.
3. All suspension paperwork will be delivered to Mr. Berry by 8:00am each morning for suspensions from the previous day. All suspension reinstatements will be completed by deans and Mr. Berry will always be available for additional support at all reinstatement meetings.
4. Suspension and reinstatement paperwork will also be filed in the administrative filing cabinet by grade and last name.
5. If a staff member needs disciplinary paperwork for a scholar, each scholar will have a hanging file folder containing all disciplinary paperwork for the school year in the Dean's Office. No originals should be removed from a scholar's folder other than to be copied. Originals will need to be copied and then the originals should be placed back into the scholar's file.

G. Complaint Procedures

Grievance Procedure

Though the faculty and administration of the PLA Network make every effort to avoid problems, parents and scholars will occasionally disagree with decisions that are made in regard to 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. If the issue is not resolved after the initial communication with staff, the complaining party should contact the administration. If a satisfactory resolution is still not achieved the complaining party should contact the Regional Director, Nicole Fama at nfama@phalenacademies.org

Appendix

Phalen Leadership Academy Network Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and scholars 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 arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible scholar of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the scholar’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School Corporation to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents should write 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 interest. 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 student 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 student seeks or intends to

enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school corporation to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student 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 student 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 student'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 is:

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

If a parent does not wish for a scholar to be photographed or have any of their images used for advertisement, website usage, media or press releases, is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school in writing. Failure to notify the school could result in appropriate images being shared.

School Visitor Policy

Purpose

To aid PLA in maintaining a safe and academically effective school environment for scholars, staff, and the public, PLA 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

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

Step 1. All visitors must report to the administrative office. 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 receptionist will give the visitor a visitor's badge, which the visitor must display on his/her clothing. 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. The PLA Board has delegated its authority to grant or deny entry to the school to the Principal. The Principal of the school is responsible for ensuring that scholar and school safety are 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 students or staff, the Principal 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 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 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.

Step 6. Parents will not be permitted in the building during testing windows.

Guidelines-Classroom Observations

The presence of adult observers in the classroom can sometimes distract the scholars and disrupt the overall classroom program. To lessen this effect, PLA has limited the observation time to one hour per week. If additional observation time is needed, the visitor may contact an administrator for approval. Any extensions must be for the benefit of the scholar and must not undermine the academic environment of other scholars in the classroom.

Step 1. All visitors wishing to observe a classroom must contact the administrator, in advance of the visit, to schedule a time. To minimize classroom disruptions, morning visits should be scheduled during the hours of 8:00a.m. - 9:30am and afternoon visits should be scheduled during the hours of 1:00p.m.- 2:15p.m. The Principal may reschedule or deny the observation request due to school testing or assessments.

Step 2. Upon arrival for a classroom observation, the visitor must sign in at the front desk. Visitors should arrive at the classroom at the start of their scheduled observation time.

Step 3. All visitors must take a seat in the rear area of the classroom, or in an area out of the direct line of sight of the scholars. Visitors may not bring other children, relatives or friends with them for the classroom visit.

Step 4. Visitors may not engage in any behavior that detracts from the learning environment (e.g. talking on the cellular phone, playing games, calling or engaging their child in other activities during class).

Guidelines-Administrative

- Any visitor who wishes to discuss his or her concerns stemming from a visit may e-mail regional director at nfama@phalenacademies.org.
- Any visitor who wishes to talk with a teacher or make a suggestion to a teacher stemming from an observation should contact the Principal via email, phone call or make an appointment. This is distinct and separate from a communication between a parent and teacher to discuss a scholar's behavior or performance in class.
- Any Parent/Grandparent/Guardian who wishes to participate in the PLA Parent Volunteer Program may e-mail operations@phalenacademies.org

Phalen Leadership Academies Dress Code



Dress Code Mandates

Elementary (PLA@48, 93, 103, PP, GVP)	JRP MS/HS
Tops	Tops
K – 5 th = Red/Gray Polo	Solid Black, Red, Gray, White Polo
6 th = Black White Polo	No Hoodies
7 th – 8 th = Any of the colors above	PLA Crew Neck Sweatshirts
PLA Crew Neck Sweatshirts (must be grade level color compliant)	
No Hoodies	
Bottoms	Bottoms
Solid Color Pants (Black, Khaki, Navy)	Solid Color Pants
Solid Denim (No holes, paint, art)	Solid Denim (No holes, paint, art)
Shorts (Cannot be worn 11/1 – 4/1)	No Shorts
No leggings	No Leggings
No patches	No Pajama Pants
Shoes	Shoes
No Open Toe	No Open Toe
No Flip Flops	No Flip Flops
No Slippers	No Slippers
No Slides	No Slides
No House Shoes	No House Shoes
No Crocs	

Dress Code Consequences

- Step 1: Teacher will call home.
- Step 2: Dean will give verbal warning and send letter home.
- Step 3: Dean will call home.
- Step 4: Dean will call home and 1 day ISS.
- Step 5: Dean will call home and 1 day OSS.

Step 6: Step 5 will be repeated as necessary.



PLA Athletic Code

The FALCON Way...

Expects positive participation, promotes team success through commitment to individual improvement and loyalty to teammates, demands fearless and noble behavior regardless of adversity, and recognizes that striving for excellence should be the never-ending goal.

The Six Characteristics of Phalen Falcon Athletes:

Fearless - compete relentlessly in every contest by giving 100% effort in practices and games

Academic - understand that school comes first, and the purpose of athletics is to learn and apply lessons that are important in both school and life

Loyal - represent the school positively and encourage teammates with your positive attitude and a willingness to go out of your way to make everyone better

Compassionate - respect the hard work and dedication of your teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents

Optimistic - approach every challenge with a positive attitude and dedicate yourself to improving on weaknesses and using strengths to make the team more competitive

Noble - respect your school, your team, your sport, and yourself by following the rules, displaying good sportsmanship, and putting the needs of the team above your own

INCLUDEPICTURE
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Falcon Athletics 2023 - 2024

FALL

Football
Cross Country
Soccer
Cheerleading

Winter

Basketball
Cheerleading

Spring

Track

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PLA 2023 – 2024 School Calendar



Phalen Leadership Academies School Calendar 2023-2024

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

August						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September						
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October						
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29	30	31				

November						
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December						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

January						
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28	29	30	31			

February						
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25	26	27	28	29		

March						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April						
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28	29	30				

May						
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June						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

First Semester-81 days

Thurs., Aug. 1 (1st Day of School)
Teacher Work Days/PD
 Mon., Aug. 14 (Tues., Aug. 15, Wed., Aug. 16)
 Wed., Sep. 6 (Early Release)
 Wed., Oct. 4 (Early Release)
 Wed., Nov 1 & Tues., Nov 21 (Early Release)
 Fri., Dec. 15 (Early Release)

Parents in Touch

Wed., October 11 (e-Learning)

Fall Break

Mon. October 16- Fri. October 20

Election Day

Tuesday, Nov. 7 (e-learning)

Thanksgiving Break

Wed., Nov. 22-Fri., Nov. 24

Winter Break

Thurs., December 22 - Friday, January 4

Second Semester-99 days

Teacher Work Days/PD

Monday, January 8 (No Students)
 Wednesday, January 24 (Early Release)
 Wednesday, February 7 (Early Release)
 Fri. March 22 (Early Release)
 Wednesday, April 3 (Early Release)
 Wednesday, June 5 (Early Release)

Parents in Touch (at-risk)

Wednesday, February 28 (e-learning)

IREAD Window

Monday, March 4 - Friday, March 15

Spring Break

Monday, March 25 - Friday, March 29

ILEARN Window

Monday, April 15 - Friday, May 10

ALL SNOW DAYS WILL BE REPLACED WITH E-LEARNING

Yellow	Teacher Work Days/PD (Fall, Dec)
Orange	P.L.T. (e-learning/scholarship)
Green	Early Release/PD (1:15-2:45 AM Dismissal)
Blue	Holiday Break
Pink	Testing Windows (School Session)
Light Blue	End of Grading Period (Denver Day)
Light Green	End of Grading Period (MSJ, IS)
Light Purple	Custom Day (e-learning/scholarship)
Light Orange	Optimal PD for New Staff
Light Yellow	New Teacher Orientation

● = Black Out Days

▲ = JRP Only E-Learning



Parent/Scholar Signature Page (Handbook)
Phalen Leadership Academies ~ Elementary
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 Phalen Leadership Academies 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