



THE  
CHESTER  
CHARTER  
SCHOOL  
FOR THE  
ARTS

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Scholarship. Character. Craftsmanship. Purpose.

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# Student and Family Handbook 2016 – 2017

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## The Chester Charter School for the Arts

Dear Families and Students,

This handbook is presented as a guide to success at CCSA. We seek to inform and empower students, parents, families, community members, and all others involved in the education of our students. The policies and procedures presented in these pages relate to the academic, social, emotional, and safety goals important to defining and sustaining an excellent learning community.

We have identified several key expectations to maintain the safe, nurturing environment that will help foster academic success and positive emotional growth. Our students, families and friends are expected to *Be Safe, Be Peaceful, Be Respectful, Be Caring and Be Responsible* while at school, traveling to and from school and representing the school in the community.

Thank You,

The CCSA Leadership and Staff

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## Our Mission

The Chester Charter School for the Arts prepares children to employ their intellectual and creative powers to enrich their community.

## Our Vision

Upon graduation, all CCSA students will be prepared for rigorous study in a selective college, conservatory, technical school or the military. This means that students will demonstrate:

1. **Scholarship** - All students will meet or exceed the standards for proficiency in all academic areas and demonstrate scholarly habits.
2. **Strong Character** - All students will exhibit integrity, empathy, and a commitment to serving their community.
3. **Craftsmanship** - All students will possess the 21st century skills to create academic and artistic works with high quality craftsmanship.
4. **Purpose** - All students will have a clear action plan for their future academic/career pursuits.

## Strategic Approach

To bring the vision to fruition, we will embark upon a strategic approach that focuses on developing and maintaining each of the following essential elements:

- A rigorous standards-based, arts integrated curriculum
- A safe, nurturing learning environment where self expression is encouraged
- A collaborative faculty cultivated through purposeful ongoing professional development
- A family involvement program that provides parents and guardians with a variety of opportunities to learn about and serve the school community
- Community partnerships that increase academic and arts offerings for students.

## The Arts Program at CCSA

CCSA was founded on the principle that arts education is vital to each child's learning process and development. We seek to empower all students to reach their full potential through the incorporation of arts education during both the school day and the extended day program. Studies have shown that exposure to and instruction in the arts helps children develop memory, comprehension and critical-thinking skills and also aids in mastering other subjects, including mathematics and reading.

In addition to the arts-integrated study built into the daily curriculum, CCSA students also benefit from classes with specialists in drama, music, dance, and visual arts. The Pennsylvania Academic Standards for the Arts form the basis for these lessons, just as the state's academic standards are implemented and applied in the study of reading, writing, listening, speaking, mathematics, science and the humanities. Students will also have classes in math lab and physical education.

During each school year, CCSA families can look forward to additional avenues of enrichment in the arts, including field trips and visits from professional musicians and dance companies, all intended to enhance the students' artistic and academic development.

It is also expected that students will create and present their own art and media projects, which will be displayed in the school and globally on the World Wide Web. School assemblies and seasonal concerts will provide an opportunity for students to participate in performances and showcase the skills they have acquired in dance, visual arts, drama and music.

It is imperative that our families understand that the school's mission centers on the concepts of arts integration and arts enrichment. Given this understanding, we expect CCSA families to put forth their best effort to support their children's education in this unique environment. With equal commitment and dedication to both academics and the arts, family support is essential to CCSA's objective: to guide all children to develop their full potential.

## Our Partner

### The Chester Fund for Education and the Arts

The Chester Charter School for the Arts has been created as the result of a charter school application sponsored by The Chester Fund for Education and the Arts, a charitable non-profit organization that was founded by a group of community members from Swarthmore College and the surrounding area.

The Chester Fund raises money to pay for items that would otherwise not be provided at The Chester Charter School for the Arts, including:

- A Teaching Assistant at most grade levels with an average of 25 students in each classroom
- Full-time teachers of music, dance, visual arts, drama, physical education and math lab
- An instructional-technology equipment that features iPads and interactive educational software

The Chester Fund (TCF) will raise more than \$600,000 per year to support these innovative programs.

In addition, The Chester Fund serves on CCSA-related committees that help to hire staff and provide advice to the school leadership on various school matters. TCF serves in a supportive role and has no operating responsibilities in the school.





## School Leaders

### **Akosua Watts, *Head of School / CEO***

Watts possesses a unique talent for empowering children to learn and motivating teachers to bring their best to the classroom. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Finance from The George Washington University and worked as a Financial Analyst at Salomon Smith Barney in New York, NY. After three years, she decided to heed the call to become an educator and pursue graduate level coursework in the field. While at Columbia University's Teachers College, she was named a Helena Rubenstein Foundation Scholar and earned a Master's degree in elementary education. Upon graduation, she taught for four years at Hugo Newman College Preparatory School – P.S. 180 in New York City. Drawing upon her work in the classroom, Watts served as an Adjunct Professor at Mercy College and a Fellow Advisor to the New York City Teaching Fellow Program. In this role she prepared prospective teachers to enter high-need schools in the New York area. Watts joined the Russell Byers Charter School in Philadelphia in 2005 as a classroom teacher and later served as the school's Instructional Guide before becoming Assistant Principal. She came to Chester in 2010 as the Assistant Principal of Chester Upland School of the Arts. Watts was the Assistant Principal at CCSA for the first year and served for two years as the school's Principal prior to her promotion to Head of School. She completed her Principal Certification program at Eastern University.

### **Michelle Robinson, *Principal (K - 8)***

Michelle Robinson's new role as K-8 principal of CCSA is one for which she is uniquely prepared. Her professional career includes foundational work as a classroom teacher serving elementary students, experience as an adjunct professor of pre-service teachers, and other education administration support roles. Additionally, Robinson has spent the past thirteen years serving as the Founder and CEO of a respected, large-scale afterschool program serving hundreds of students in Philadelphia public and charter schools. Complementing her professional experience is academic preparation that includes an undergraduate degree in English and early childhood education from Hampton University and a graduate degree in elementary education, K-6, from Columbia University's Teachers College. Robinson completed a post-graduate leadership program for aspiring principals through the University of Pennsylvania. She also holds certifications representing her status as a qualified administrative principal, K-12, and as an instructor for elementary aged students, K-6.

### **Mindy Nguyen, Dean of Arts Integration**

Mindy Nguyen-Balli earned both her Bachelor's degree in the Biological Basis of Behavior and her Masters in Early Childhood Education from the University of Pennsylvania. Upon graduation, Mindy taught first grade in Brooklyn, NY for five years. Her last year in NY, she was a founding teacher for the Clearpool Children's School, a charter school inspired by the Reggio Emilia model of learning with an environmental studies focus. Moving back to the Philadelphia region, Mindy became a Museum Educator and Liaison to Public Schools at the Philadelphia Museum of Art for the next seven years. It was there that she honed her arts integration teaching skills. When she was looking to return to a traditional classroom, Mindy came across the perfect job description blending all of her passions into one mission: first grade teacher at an arts-integrated school in an urban setting, Chester Upland School of the Arts. She is proud to be one of the founding teachers who transferred when we became the Chester Charter School for the Arts. Since 2008, Mindy has also taught History/Critical Thinking to the high school bass cohort of the Chester Children's Chorus. She is currently pursuing a principal certification at Eastern University.

### **Stacey Milliken, *Special Education Coordinator***

Stacey has always had a passion for special education and believes that each student has the ability and potential to be successful. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with a dual certification in Special Education from Neumann College. Stacey later earned a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership along with the Autism Endorsement certification from Neumann University. Prior to becoming Special Education Coordinator, Stacey has worked as an instructional support teacher at CCSA.

### **Antonio Goodman, *Dean of School Culture***

Antonio Goodman is CCSA's Dean of School Culture. He earned his Bachelor's degree in English from Temple University where he was also a member of the Temple University Gospel Choir. He formerly served as Choir Director, Sunday School Superintendent, and operator of the Children's Church at Word of Life Healing Ministries. It is here where he remains, a Minister and Worship Leader. Prior to coming to CCSA in January of 2013, he was the Site Coordinator for two years at Lutheran Children and Family Services where he facilitated an afterschool program and summer camp.

### **Tasliym Goodman, *School Operations Coordinator***

Tasliym Goodman earned her Bachelor's degree in Education and Urban Studies from Metropolitan College of New York. While completing her Bachelor's degree she worked for several companies supporting C-Level Executives in the areas of Finance and Human Resources. In 2012, she began working at CCSA as the school's Executive Assistant. In August 2013, Tasliym received her Masters of Science in Organizational and Strategic Leadership from Neumann University in Aston, PA, where she turned a Master's Capstone Study into a successful Parents as Partners Program at CCSA.



## **Board of Trustees**

### **Donald Delson, President**

Donald Delson worked for several years as a Managing Director in the Investment Banking Division, Keefe, Bruynette & Woods, Inc. before retirement. He is a former member of both the Wallingford-Swarthmore Board of School Directors and the Swarthmore Borough Council. He is a long time supporter of The Chester Children's Chorus.

### **Maurice Eldridge, Co-Vice President and Secretary**

Maurice Eldridge currently serves as the Vice President for College and Community Relations, Executive Assistant to the President at Swarthmore College. A career educator, he served as the Principal of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, DC. Committed to the City of Chester, he is also a member of the Chester Children's Chorus Board of Directors.

### **Barbara Klock, Co-Vice President**

### **Scott Beaumont, Trustee**

### **Ben Berger, Trustee**

### **Ramona Jones, Trustee**

### **Marcine Pickron-Davis, Trustee**

### **Steve Piltch, Trustee**

# General Information

## School Hours

9:00a.m. – 4:00p.m. for grades Kindergarten through Grade 10.

## Student Arrival

All students will be permitted to enter the building at 8:45a.m. Students must use the front entrance to the building just off of Commerce Street. However, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students will enter and exit through the side exit door to the left of the front entrance. Students will go directly to their classrooms after entering the building. Students are expected to immediately unpack, enter class and begin the assigned work for the morning. At exactly 9:00a.m. daily, the arrival announcement will be made. Any student who has not reported to his/her teacher at this time will be considered late. This rule will be waived, if the student rides the bus and the bus arrives late.

Punctuality is an important habit for success. We appreciate your support to ensure that your child(ren) arrive(s) at school on time and ready to start the day. Lateness causes disruptions to the educational program of your child(ren) and the other students. Excessive lateness may impact your child(ren)'s ability to remain at CCSA. (See Appendix Attendance Policy)

## Student Dismissal

All pick up students will be dismissed at 4:00p.m. from the Kindergarten common area. There are (6) scheduled early dismissal days: November 23, December 8, December 9, March 16, March 17 , June 2. On these days, student must be picked up promptly at 12:00p.m.

Except in the case of a pre-arranged early dismissal, please wait until students are escorted by their teachers rather than asking for them to be called from class early. Student **WILL NOT** be called from their class between **3:40 – 4:00p.m.** unless previously arranged. Early dismissals should only occur for appointments, which cannot be scheduled during non-school hours and for family emergencies. It is vitally important that children arrive on time and remain for the entire day.

If a student is repeatedly picked up late, it will be documented and may impact your child(ren)'s ability to remain at CCSA.

## Mandatory Uniform

Students must be in uniform daily unless otherwise communicated in writing by CCSA administrators or staff. The CCSA uniform consists of the following:

### 2016 – 2017 UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

9 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
School shoes or sneakers in any solid school color (black, gray, red or white) or combination of those colors. Shoes MAY NOT have any other color. Closed toes shoes no slippers or sandals.	
Ladies	Gentlemen
Black Cardigan Sweater w/ logo (optional, no other garment may be worn if chilly)	Black Cardigan Sweater w/ logo (optional, no other garment may be worn if chilly)
White Oxford Shirt	White Oxford Shirt
Criss Cross Tie (solid red)	Custom Tie
Custom Plaid Kick Pleat Skirt <b>OR</b> Black Uniform Pants	Black Uniform Pants

Kindergarten – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
TOP	SWEATER (Optional)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collared solid gray, red, white, short or long-sleeved golf (polo-style) or button-down oxford shirt.</li> <li>Optional - Red golf (polo-style) shirt w/ logo (Purchase from Cramers for \$16)</li> <li>CCSA gym t-shirt on gym/dance days only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black sweater w/ logo (Purchase from Cramers for \$28) Strongly recommended as it is the only garment that any student will be permitted to wear in the building if chilly.</li> <li>NO hoodies, jackets or sweaters of any other sort.</li> </ul>
BOTTOM	SHOES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black uniform pants, shorts or skirts (NO jeans, leggings).</li> <li>Shorts/skirts must be knee length.</li> <li>CCSA logo sweatpants on gym/dance days only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School shoes or sneakers in any solid school color (black, gray, red or white) or combination of those colors.</li> <li>Shoes MAY NOT have any other color.</li> </ul>
SOCKS	LOGOS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SOLID uniform color (black, gray, red or white) socks/tights.</li> <li>NO patterns of any kind are permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any logos on items MUST be no larger than 1 inch in size.</li> <li>NO WRITING or brand names may be on uniform clothing.</li> </ul>

### Additional Note:

- No headscarfs or hats may be worn in the building.
- Any accessories must be modest. No nose rings are permitted.

## **Uniform Violations**

Students are expected to be in full and proper uniform every day. Actions for the violation of uniform policy are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Infraction - letter will go home from classroom teacher with the policy restated and infraction documented internally.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Infraction - A parent will be called to bring student the proper uniform OR student will serve a lunch detention.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction - A parent will be called to bring proper uniform AND student will serve a lunch detention
- 4<sup>th</sup> Infraction - A parent will be called to bring proper uniform AND student will serve an afterschool detention
- 5<sup>th</sup> Infraction - A conference will be required with school administration that may impact the student's ability to remain in the school.

Note: Uniform items that belong to CCSA are used for in-school emergencies. If a parent/guardian communicates directly to a CCSA staff member, these items may be borrowed for a family emergency on a temporary and limited basis. Students may still be issued relevant consequences for violating the uniform policy.

## **Optional Gym Uniform**

Students may wear a CCSA t-shirt and CCSA sweatpants/shorts on days when they have physical education. Non-CCSA t-shirts or bottoms may be worn.

## **Uniform Purchases**

ALL official uniform items are available from Cramer's. Items may be purchased online ([www.crameruniforms.com](http://www.crameruniforms.com)) at the CCSA mobile store on the following dates/times:

- Thursday, August 4 from 2:30 – 4:30pm
- Thursday, August 18 from 3:00 – 4:30pm
- Thursday, August 25 from 3:00 – 6:30pm

Note: Some select items will remain onsite for purchase. Please contact K-8 Principal, Michelle Robinson ([mrobinson@chestercharterschoolforthearts.org](mailto:mrobinson@chestercharterschoolforthearts.org)) to inquire about availability of items.

## Attendance

In order for our students to grow academically, socially, and emotionally, they must make every effort to attend school every day. This includes arriving at school on time and remaining in school until dismissal. One of our goals at CCSA is to maintain a daily attendance rate of 95%.

According to the CCSA Attendance Policy (see Appendix for details), the following are considered excused/lawful absences. Absences for any other reason except those listed here are unexcused/unlawful:

- Illness and/or Doctor's appointment
- Death in the family
- Religious commitment
- Family emergency
- Scheduled court dates
- Educational family trip (If granted prior approval from Principal)
- Out-of-School suspension (Reinstatement meeting required)

In order for the absence to be determined as excused, a note written by the parent/guardian should accompany the child upon returning to school. Excuse notes **MUST** be received within 3 days of the absence. If the note is received after that time the absence will remain unexcused and will be processed for truancy, if applicable. The note must include:

1. The child's name
2. The excusable reason for the absence
3. Date of the absence
4. Parent or guardian's signature and date
5. Valid telephone number

Skipping classes and poor attendance will not be condoned. Teachers will record if a student skips a class, parents will be notified. The absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Students in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade will be assigned detention for 3 tardies within a week or for cutting any class even once. Continued cutting or excessive tardiness will result in one of the following:

1. Afterschool detention
2. Mandatory Parent Conference
3. In-School Suspension
4. Out of School Suspension
5. A recommendation to the Board for expulsion

## Breakfast Program

Breakfast will be served to students from 8:45 to 9:00 a.m. in student classrooms only. Breakfast should end by 9:00 a.m. It is crucial that your child arrives to school promptly by (8:45 a.m.) to allow time to eat breakfast.

## Lunch Program

All CCSA students are entitled to receive lunch free daily. The monthly lunch menu will be sent to you via email. If your child is particularly picky, please send him/her with a lunch. Please note that students may NOT heat up food at school. During lunch, students are to remain seated and conduct themselves according to the rules of the cafeteria, including taking responsibility for cleaning their eating area when finished. We subscribe to a "Leave No Trace Policy." NO FOOD OR DRINK MAY BE TAKEN FROM THE CAFETERIA BY STUDENTS.

	<u>Lunch Schedule</u>	<u>Recess Schedule</u>
Grade K	11:25 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.	1:40 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.
Grade 1	11:25 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.	2:20 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Grade 2	11:25 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.	3:35 p.m. – 3:55 p.m.
Grade 3	12:15 p.m. – 12:35 p.m.	3:10 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.
Grade 4	12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.	12:00 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.
Grade 5	12:00 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.	12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.
Grade 6	12:50 p.m. – 1:17 p.m.	(Lunch/Recess combined)
Grade 7	12:50 p.m. – 1:17 p.m.	(Lunch/Recess combined)
Grade 8	12:50 p.m. – 1:17 p.m.	(Lunch/Recess combined)
Grade 9	1:20 p.m. – 1:47 p.m.	(Lunch/Recess combined)
Grade 10	1:20 p.m. – 1:47 p.m.	(Lunch/Recess combined)

## Emergency Closing

CCSA follows the Chester Upland School District for closings due to weather. We will post closing information on Fox29. In the event of an emergency closing, due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstance, CCSA will send an automated call, text message and/or email to all parents/guardians for whom there is updated information. Additionally, CCSA will display closing information on the school website. If an emergency closing is determined while school is in session, in addition to the above mentioned communication efforts, classroom teachers will attempt to make contact.

## Behavior Expectations

It is our desire that CCSA is a safe and peaceful school. As a result, we do not tolerate fighting, teasing, bullying, inappropriate language/conduct, or disrespect to a staff member, student, or visitor. CCSA has clear expectations for appropriate behavior that are detailed in our *Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct*.

## Damage to School Property

At CCSA, we want to teach our students to respect and value our school building and its contents. If a student damages any school property, the student will receive a justifiable consequence, and his/her parent/guardian will be held responsible for restoration of the damaged item(s) including any costs associated with repair or replacement.

## Single School Culture

CCSA ascribes to "Single School Culture" as the way of organizing and running a school. It begins with shared norms, beliefs, values, and goals and results in agreed upon processes and procedures that produce consistency in practice. It is not a program. It should result in consistency of both adult and student practices related to:

- **Academics** – We share the belief that students are capable of intellectual development. If they are not learning, the fault lies in the quality of instruction or the need for more personalized support, but not with the student.
- **Behavior** – Expectations for appropriate behavior are clear and adults model what they want to see in return. Students are coached so they want to learn and behave in a pro-social manner.
- **Climate** – Refers to the emotional atmosphere we generate around us, the "context" of the school. Climate involves the perception of stakeholders concerning the fairness, openness, friendliness, ethos of caring, and sense of welcome of the school. It also refers to the degree of satisfaction experienced within its organizational structure.
- **Culture** - Adults in the school are on the same right page for academics, behavior, and climate, and an ethos of fairness with a sense of connectedness to the school and its mission are evident.



# Conduct Expectations

## "The CCSA Way"

At The Chester Charter School for the Arts, I will do the following to help myself and others succeed:

- **Be Safe**
  - This means that I walk calmly, stay in my own personal space, follow directions, and remain in assigned areas.
- **Be Peaceful**
  - This means that I listen to others and solve problems with words.
- **Be Respectful**
  - This means that I use appropriate words, body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
- **Be Caring**
  - This means that I use kind words, help others, and think of their feelings.
- **Be Responsible**
  - I am on-time and prepared for success each day. This also means that I "leave no trace" and "make it better."
- **Be Honest**
  - This means that I tell the truth even when it hard to do.

## Comprehensive Discipline Plan

Positive Behavior Support (PBS), lead by our Dean of School Culture, is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. PBS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of undesired student behavior.

The CCSA PBS plan is based on our Conduct Expectations and provides:

1. Opportunities for student achievement and exemplary behavior to be acknowledged on our "Gotcha Board".
2. Occasions to reinforce positive behavior through daily morning meetings (for grade K – 8) and advisory and town hall meetings (for grades 9-10).
3. The use of data collection tools to identify students who may need behavior interventions.
4. Immediate consequences for undesired student behavior.

As a parent/guardian, you provide support to the plan when you:

1. Sign CCSA correspondence and have your child return it to school.
2. Discuss daily developments with your child.
3. Remind your child of the upcoming rewards for good behavior.
4. Ensures that your child attends and/or follows the discipline plan.

## **School Bus Rules and Regulations**

A student riding on a school bus is expected to behave as he/she would in a classroom. The opportunity to ride the bus is a privilege not a right. Misconduct on a bus will not be tolerated, as it may endanger the safety and well-being of others. **ALL STUDENTS MUST ADHERE TO THE RULES AND DIRECTION OF THE BUS DRIVER!**

Student misbehavior of any kind will be reported by the bus driver and recorded on the bus video cameras. This report will be given to our Dean of School Culture, who in turn will determine an appropriate disciplinary measure. These measures may include: lunch detention, after school detention and/or suspension from the bus for an appropriate specified time frame.

Each student should:

- Follow all instructions given by the bus driver and/or attendant.
- Remain seated during the entire ride; the bus driver or a school official may assign seats.
- Keep hands, feet and head inside the bus.

- Not throw any objects or spit out of the window.
- Speak using a conversation voice. Screaming is not tolerated.
- Not eat or drink on the bus; keep the bus clean.
- Be courteous and not use profane language.
- Not be destructive.
- Not engage in fighting, bullying or any type of horseplay.
- Become quiet when the bus stops at railroads crossings.
- Observe safety precautions at discharge points; where it is necessary to cross the highway, the student should proceed to a point at least ten feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the highway where traffic may be observed in both directions, then wait for a signal from the bus driver permitting him/her to cross.

**\*\*\* Safety is our number one priority. Three suspensions from the bus will result in a student losing the privilege of receiving school bus transportation for the remainder of the school year.\*\*\***

### Homework

Homework assignments are given to students as an extension or reinforcement of class lessons. Homework can provide an opportunity for students to interact with family members, in the form of conversation, help, and/or game playing. Completing homework teaches responsibility and gives students a sense of accomplishment. Each month, we will recognize the students who have completed 95% or more of their homework. Please consult your child's teacher, if you have any questions about specific expectations.

**Student Planners** – All students in grades 5 – 10 will be provided with school issued planners to support the development of their organizational skills. Teachers require students to write down their homework assignments in the planners each day. Both parents and teachers should sign the planners daily to ensure that students are completing their homework. Teachers will post homework on the board at the beginning of class for students to copy it within their planners. These planners will also be used to track how often students are given passes to the bathroom daily.

## Grading System

Students in grades 3 – 10 will receive numeric grades for applicable subject areas. Students will receive a report card at the end of each trimester. It will ONLY be issued to the parent/guardian during the scheduled report card conference. Your involvement is essential in your child’s academic success and we look forward to your attendance. The grading system for all grades and the Cultural Arts Department are provided below.

<b>Content Area Marks (Grades 3-10)</b>	<b>Cultural Arts/ Work Habits (All Grades) Content Area Marks (Grades K &amp; 2)</b>
A: 100 - 90	4: Advanced/ Exemplary
B: 89 - 80	3: Proficient/ Satisfactory
C: 79 - 70	2: Basic/ Needs Improvement
D: 69 - 60	1: Below Basic/ Unsatisfactory
F: 59 and below	N/A: Not Applicable

## Attendance Grade

All students will receive an attendance grade each trimester that reflects the percentage of time that the student was present at school. Excessive tardiness will reduce this percentage even if the student is present. The attendance percentage corresponds to the letter grade scale above.

## Scholarly Conduct Grade

Students in grades 3 – 9 will receive a scholarly conduct grade each trimester that reflects the student’s demonstration of behaviors that are consistent with the CCSA Conduct Expectations. Each student will begin the trimester with 100 points but will lose points for behaviors that distract from the scholarly learning environment. If approved by their teacher, students may have the opportunity to earn back scholarly conduct points by providing service to the school. The points that each student has remaining will translate to a scholarly conduct grade based on the letter grade scale above.

## Recognition for Excellence

At the end of each trimester, we will recognize scholars for their outstanding efforts and achievements.

- Grades 3 – 10 - Students will receive grades in each subject area as well as grades for attendance and scholarly conduct. They are eligible to achieve the following distinctions:
  - **Distinguished Honors** – Students who received A’s in ALL subject areas, attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct.
  - **Honor Roll** – Students who received A’s and/or B’s in ALL subject areas, attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct.
  - **Individual Certificates** – Students may also be eligible to receive certificates for achieving 100% attendance or a grade of 95% for homework completion or scholarly conduct.
  
- Grades K – 2 - Students will receive grades in each subject area as well as grades for attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct. They are eligible to achieve the following distinctions:
  - **Individual Certificates** – Students may be eligible to receive certificates for achieving 100% attendance or a grade of 95% for homework completion or scholarly conduct.

## Student Council

Following the first trimester, students in upper elementary, middle and high school will have the opportunity to participate in student council. Officers will be elected from among the upper grades 6 – 10:

- President (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Vice President (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Treasurer (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Secretary (6/7<sup>th</sup> Grade)

Students may not serve consecutive terms in a single office. Additionally, a representative will be elected from each class. To be eligible to run for officer or representative positions, students must have an attendance grade of 95% or higher, subject grades in all academic areas of C better, and a scholarly conduct grade of 90% or better.

## Cell Phone Policy

CCSA does not assume responsibility for the loss or theft of any cell phone or other device. Students may bring their cell phone to school. However, they **MUST be "OFF and AWAY"** upon arriving and stored in their LOCKER or BACKPACK. This means that student may NOT have their phones in their pockets, pocket books, on, out or visible, at any point in the day. We advise that you buy a lock for their lockers if you send your child to school with a cell phone. Please do not contact your child on his/her phone during the school day. Any message concerning your child should be relayed to Mrs. Ahmed at the front desk or your child's teacher. If any student has a phone or other electronic device visible while in the school, it will be confiscated by a staff member and a parent/guardian must schedule a time to come to CCSA to retrieve it.

## CCSA Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy

The purpose of the CCSA Computer Network is to provide students with access to educational and research resources to promote excellence in education, to encourage lifelong learning, and to offer the opportunity to be competent users of technology to communicate and build knowledge. All use of the CCSA Computer Network must be consistent with each network user's role and responsibility as a member of the community and with the educational objectives and mission of CCSA.

The acceptable-use policy governs student conduct while using computer and communication technology, both on campus and off-campus. Students represent CCSA at all times, including vacations, nights and weekends. Any inappropriate behavior, which is harmful or negatively affects the educational environment of the School, the reputation of the School, or potentially impacts the safety or privacy of individual students or employees, including postings on social networking sites, will subject the violator to discipline by the School in accordance with the *Discipline Guideline for Student Misconduct*.

Any student, who receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via e-mail, text or on the Internet, should report the concern to a faculty member or school administrator immediately so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately.

## **Solutions Team Process**

The Solutions Team Process meets as needed in order to develop strategies for students who are in need of significant academic/ behavioral and/or socio-emotional assistance. The purpose of the process is to develop interventions that will support student success. If your child is being supported through the Solutions Team, a member of the CCSA staff will contact you to schedule a meeting time.

The Solutions Team may consist of the following members: the Principal or Special Education Coordinator, the parent, the Teacher(s) and other relevant school personnel. In order to refer a student to the Solutions Team staff members adhere to the following:

1. Identify students who are struggling academically/behaviorally/social-emotionally in class.
2. Attempt to identify the root cause of the presenting academic/behavior/social emotional symptom and implement specific strategies.
3. Discuss strategies and progress with grade level colleagues and the Principal during common planning meetings.
4. Monitor the impact and outcomes of the strategies over 4-6 weeks.
5. If after the monitoring period, the student has not progressed, the teacher will refer the student to the Solutions Team.
6. The Solutions Team will determine next steps, which may include additional strategies and interventions or a recommendation to conduct a psychoeducational evaluation.

## **Special Education Services and IEPs**

CCSA believes that all students can and must have an opportunity to reach their potential. CCSA strives to ensure that the needs of students who have an individualized education plan (IEP) are met in the appropriate least restrictive setting. Each student's IEP will outline the goals for the student as well as the interventions and supports required to assist the student in meeting those goals. Although we do not provide Gifted Support (per Chapter 711), teachers provide differentiated learning opportunities that allow for enrichment within the classroom. More information about the special education process can be found in the Procedural Safeguard Notice or CCSA special education policy upon request.

## Student Supports

It is expected that every adult in the building will work to assist children in learning the expectations and following the school rules. The following is a list of people who may be involved in helping you develop a plan of action for discipline:

- **Principal and Dean of School Culture (DoSC)** - The Principal and DoSC will assist the employee with philosophy and management issues related to discipline. They provide assistance to the Teacher when dealing with students who have on-going behavior challenges and work with families, outside agencies and employee to provide support for a child. They will address Level 3 and 4 offenses and determine appropriate consequences after review of the relevant discipline referral forwarded via MMS.
- **Head of School/CEO** - The CEO can be consulted to offer support regarding a variety of student concerns. He/She may be the primary point of contact for specifically identified students, but in most cases will serve as a secondary contact.
- **Guidance Counselor (2)** - The guidance counselor provides support for students, families, and employees in dealing with a child's behavior associated with self-esteem, family issues, and peer relationships. Counseling is provided both individually or in a small group setting for a designated period of time. The guidance counselor also collaborates with employees, families, and/or outside agencies to ensure success in the classroom.
- **Nurse** - The nurse often has information about family issues as well as medical issues that relate to a child's behavior. The nurse can also assist with contacting outside agencies to help a child and support our families. Regular duties also include assisting with first aid, treatment of illness and completing of mandated screenings.
- **Homeless Liaison** - The homeless liaison provides resources to issues surrounding family stability (shelter, food, clothing, and the like) that may be related to a student's behavior and works in conjunction with the Principal or CEO to provide short-term and/or long-term solutions.
- **Solutions Team** - This team is a school-based group typically comprised of the Principal or Special Education Coordinator, Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist, Classroom Teacher, and parent/guardian who will work together to develop a plan for students with on-going academic/behavioral challenges. The Sped Coordinator and Guidance Counselor will outline the system for referral. Meetings will be scheduled as needed for individual students.

## Home and School Partnership

The Chester Charter School for the Arts recognizes that parents, grandparents, guardians, and other family members are the children's primary teachers. CCSA is dedicated to strengthening and reaffirming the family, because as our families grow stronger, so will our school, and our children will become better students and better people.

CCSA strongly believes in the partnership between school and home. We will not be successful without your help, support, and continued academic, emotional, and behavioral reinforcement. To this end, every parent/guardian will sign a compact, committing themselves to behaviors and actions that will help ensure our children's success.

### Protocol for Addressing Concerns

CCSA teachers and staff will make every effort to meet the needs of your child(ren) and your family. In the event that you have a concern or question that requires attention, the following protocol should be followed:

1. Discuss the concern privately and respectfully with the staff member. If you are unable to find resolution, proceed to step 2.
2. Share the concern with the Principal and/or Dean of School Culture. If necessary, a meeting will be arranged between relevant parties to discuss the concern and secure a resolution.
3. If the above steps are not successful in resolving the concern, the Principal will determine whether to request a meeting with the Head of School.
4. If the resolution is not resolved, the Head of School will determine whether to request a meeting with a member of the CCSA Board of Trustees.

### Parental Involvement

As a parent, your involvement is an important and powerful key to students' academic success. Showing an interest in your child's education, setting high expectations for achievement and letting your child know you believe in his/her abilities creates a positive atmosphere for growth and achievement. Ways you may be involved include but are not limited to: attending conferences, workshops, volunteering in the class, chaperoning trips.

## Classroom Celebrations

Each grade level is responsible for deciding whether or not to plan classroom celebrations during the year. *A copy of any written communication regarding classroom celebrations should be submitted to Administration.*

If the team decides that a celebration is appropriate, the following dates and times will be standard for the entire school:

- **Harvest Celebration** – Friday, October 30 at 3:00 pm
- **Winter Holiday** – Friday, December 18 at 3:00 pm
- **Valentine’s Day** – Friday, February 12 at 3:00 pm
- End of the year classroom events are planned as a grade level team and must be discussed with and approved by Administration.

Your child’s homeroom teacher will communicate with you directly if the team decides to plan any celebrations or other class events.



## Parent/ Guardian Conduct Expectations

The Chester Charter School for the Arts (CCSA) has high expectations for the conduct of its students and families. Teachers and school staff will be required to model respectful behavior while functioning in their positions within the school. It is expected that parents/ guardians will also conduct themselves appropriately while on school grounds and on school trips, attending meetings, conferences or any other CCSA function.

If there is a difference of opinion, the matter should be resolved in a respectful, peaceful manner. It is expected that parents/guardians will follow the rules established within the school and refrain from yelling (or speaking loudly), name-calling, using inappropriate language, making threats or engaging in physical violence or intimidation of any kind.

If a parent/guardian chooses to behave in a manner that is disrespectful, threatening, and/or inappropriate, the school administration will take appropriate actions to protect the safe climate and environment of Chester Charter School for the Arts. These actions may include but are not limited to the following: a mandatory meeting with administration, a strict written warning outlining the infraction and consequences, limiting the parent/ guardian's access to specified areas of the school, and if warranted, contacting law enforcement authorities.

# CCSA Family Compact 2016-2017

Following is the compact that teachers, families, and students will sign, together, at the beginning of every school year. Failure to abide by the compact may impact your child's ability to be successful at CCSA.

## Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

- I will be sure that my child comes to school **EVERY** day and arrives **on time** by 9:00a.m.
- I will know and reinforce the *CCSA Code of Conduct*.
- I will read to, and/or with, my child every night for at least 15 minutes.
- I will be sure my child completes his/her homework every night.
- I will provide help with homework and review/sign all school forms.
- I will attend all required Family/Teacher Conferences and scheduled meetings.
- I will put my child to bed at a reasonable hour each night. (We suggest by 8:00p.m. for elementary students and by 9:30p.m. for middle and high school students).
- I understand that, except in the case of illness or legitimate emergency, attendance is required for the entire instructional day, so that my child does not miss learning time.
- I will inform the school administration and teacher in writing of any change in address, phone number, email or family status for my child right away. Contact information must be current for the safety of the students.

## How CCSA will be My Partner

- CCSA will be flexible in scheduling parent/teacher conferences so I can attend.
- CCSA will provide the schedule of school events and meetings in ample time for me to attend.
- CCSA administration and staff will be available to meet if a family situation arises that keeps me from meeting my obligation.
- CCSA will offer me a variety of volunteer opportunities to best link the talents and interests of my family with the needs of the school.



# Retention Policy 2016-2017 School Year

**Process:** When there is the risk of non-promotion for any student the teacher will notify the parent/guardian as soon as the possibility arises. The student will be referred to the Solutions team to identify appropriate interventions and instructional support.

## Retention Guidelines

Grades K and 1 – Students will be retained if a consensus is reached among the Solutions Team members based on tangible data. The Light Retention Scale may be used to determine if the student might be a suitable candidate to benefit socially and academically from an additional year in the same grade. Attendance will be a factor in the decision, particularly if the student missed 10% (18 days) or more of the school year.

Grades 2 and above – The Light Retention Scale may be used to determine if the student might be a suitable candidate to benefit socially and academically from an additional year in the same grade. Additionally, if a

- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student meets 2 or more of the criteria
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade student meets 3 or more of the criteria

below he/she is also likely to be retained in the same grade for the next school year:

- Attendance – Students was absent for 10% (18) or more of the school year.
- Academic Performance – Student received a final cumulative grade of F in the core subjects of Reading and/or Math.
- Reading Growth – Student is reading 1.5 years or more behind grade level. Students who made at least 1 year’s growth as measured by the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System will be exempt from this criteria.
- PSSA (Grades 3-8) – The student performed at the Below Basic level in Reading and/or Math.
- Keystone Exam (Grade 9) – The student performed at the Below Basic level in English Language Arts, Mathematics or Science.

Note: Retention decisions for students who receive special education services will be determined by the IEP team.

# Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct

The Chester Charter School for the Arts expects that all students will act respectfully towards all Employees visitors and other students, in accordance with our Code of Conduct. The Discipline Guidelines, as detailed in this section, apply to school grounds, buildings, and premises during the following times when the student is present: before, during, and after school hours; anytime school buildings or grounds are used by a school group; on or off school grounds at any school function or event; when traveling to and from school, or school function or event; at bus stops; or at any time or place which may affect an educational function or be associated with the school. Our Discipline Guidelines are intended to assist students in making appropriate choices that support their learning. Disciplinary measures will be handled by the teacher, designated administration employee, and the Board in accordance with the Discipline Guidelines. Parents/guardians will be notified in a timely fashion of disciplinary actions in accordance with the Discipline Guidelines.

**Behaviors Warranting Disciplinary Action:** Students who commit any of the following offenses shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, as set forth in Chapter 12 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. Offenses are leveled for suggested disciplinary consequences. Any offense can receive the suggested consequence, a lesser, or a more severe consequence depending on the severity of the offense, repetition of offense or effect on others. This list is not exhaustive of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action.

<b>Level 1 – Disruptive Behaviors</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Level 1 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated uniform violation</li> <li>• Repeated instances of incomplete homework/classroom assignments</li> <li>• Talking, yelling, gesturing inappropriately or throwing a tantrum</li> <li>• Rough activity or horseplay</li> <li>• Not following directions in the classroom or other areas of the school</li> <li>• Teasing or name calling</li> <li>• Bringing school property home without teacher permission</li> <li>• Damage or loss to textbooks, library books, or learning tools</li> <li>• Disrespect toward adults and/or peers</li> <li>• Disruption of class, study or instruction</li> <li>• Inappropriate language or gesture</li> <li>• Leaving class without teacher’s permission</li> <li>• Failure to follow established school rules and/or classroom rules</li> <li>• Possession or use of cell phones, iPod, MP3 players, or any electronic or digital device, not including a calculator or digital watch, during school hours or programs</li> <li>• Tardy to class</li> <li>• Skipping Class</li> <li>• Out of Uniform</li> <li>• Bus Infraction</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom or supervising teacher will determine appropriate in-class consequences. These consequences may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• restitution (logical consequence)</li> <li>• loss of privilege</li> <li>• student/ 1:1 teacher conference</li> <li>• “talk it out” process</li> <li>• note or phone call to parent/guardian</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• other consequences as determined by the teacher</li> <li>• Confiscation of device</li> <li>• Demerit (Parent must bring proper uniform)</li> </ul>

## Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct *(cont.)*

Level 2 – Disruptive or Disorderly Behavior	Consequences
<p>Level 2 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 1 offenses</li> <li>• Cheating and/or plagiarism</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviors, including but not limited to hitting, pushing, and shoving</li> <li>• Disobedience to teacher or other staff member</li> <li>• Dishonesty/lying/falsehood: including presentation of forged notes or passes or refusal to identify yourself properly</li> <li>• Misuse of school property or property of others including computers, networks, web pages</li> <li>• Violations of school’s technology/acceptable use policy</li> <li>• Use of obscene/profane language or gestures</li> <li>• Creation or possession of obscene writing, pictures or articles</li> <li>• Theft of school or other peoples’ property</li> <li>• Use of profanity</li> <li>• Repeated Bus Infraction</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom or supervising teacher may determine appropriate consequences as described under Level 1 and/or seek guidance regarding other forms of appropriate consequences from the School Psychologist, Guidance Counselor, Assistant Principal, Principal or Special Education Teacher (for students who have a 504 Plan and/or an IEP) as needed.</p> <p>In some cases, Administration may determine additional consequences</p>

Level 3 – Safety Issues / Aggressive / Threatening Behavior	Consequences
<p>Level 3 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 2 offenses</li> <li>• Repeated Truancy</li> <li>• Multiple Bus Infractions</li> <li>• Fighting</li> <li>• Bullying; Cyber-bullying when initiated in the school building</li> <li>• Bus Infraction</li> <li>• Unauthorized entry into restricted areas</li> <li>• Creation or possession of violent writing, pictures or articles</li> <li>• Threats of violence (verbal or physical)</li> <li>• Gang activity</li> <li>• Hazing</li> <li>• Student actions that present a danger to the safety and well-being of themselves or others</li> <li>• Use of profanity toward staff member</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom or supervising teacher will refer the student to Administration to determine appropriate consequences. These consequences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• referral to outside evaluations and/or support</li> <li>• suspension from the school bus (for bus infraction)</li> <li>• in or out of school suspension (for up to 10 days) which requires both parent and student to attend a reinstatement meeting</li> </ul>

## Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct (cont.)

<b>Level 4 – Egregious Behaviors and/or Criminal Acts</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Level 4 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 3 Offense</li> <li>• Excessive Truancy</li> <li>• Excessive Bus Infractions</li> <li>• Setting false fire alarms or reporting false emergencies</li> <li>• Possession/ Use of prescription or over the counter drugs without permission</li> <li>• Threats of death or serious bodily injury– either written, electronic or verbal</li> <li>• Vandalism or defacing or destruction of school property or property of another (includes writing on walls, etc.)</li> <li>• Leaving school grounds without proper authorization</li> <li>• Harassment of any kind – verbal, written or gestures</li> <li>• Tobacco products, possession or use of</li> <li>• Possession or use of lighters, matches, or laser pointers</li> <li>• Arson or attempted arson</li> <li>• Assault and/or battery of an employee or student</li> <li>• Other criminal acts in violation of local, state, or federal laws</li> <li>• Possession, use, distribution, solicitation or sale of a weapon</li> <li>• Possession, use, manufacturing, growing, distribution, and/or sale of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia</li> <li>• Possession, use, manufacturing, making, distribution, and/or sale of alcohol</li> <li>• Extortion, attempted extortion, robbery, burglary and/or larceny</li> <li>• Possession, distribution, use or lighting of fireworks, stink bombs, or other explosives</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment – see specific policy (on file at the school)</li> </ul>	<p>The CEO or Principal will determine the appropriate consequences. This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in school or out of school suspensions up to 10 school days or removal from the school bus (for repeated bus infraction).</li> <li>• if deemed necessary, he/she may recommend expulsion to the Board of Trustees and/or police involvement</li> </ul>

### Cooperation with Legal Authorities

Our school will cooperate as required with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers who may contact the school in the course of any criminal investigation.

All investigators and law enforcement officers must present proper identification prior to obtaining any information from the school. All investigators or law enforcement officials must identify themselves to the school principal or principal’s designee upon contact with the school. Whenever

an investigator or law enforcement officer comes on school property with the appropriate legal authority to request records and information, that person will be provided with access to these records. Appropriate legal authority typically involves a court subpoena specifying the documents and information to be reviewed (see FERPA notice on file at the school).

Except in cases involving abuse at home, the principal will contact the parents of a child with whom the law enforcement person wishes to speak. In the former case, the principal will request permission to call the parents, but will follow the decision of the investigative officer. The school principal or designee shall select a Charter School administrator or appropriate staff person to be present at any meeting between a student and an investigator or law enforcement officer that occurs on school grounds. In cases involving abuse at home, the principal will request permission for a school representative to be present at the meeting or within the line of sight of such a meeting, but will follow the decision of the investigative officer.

### **Detention/Suspension/Expulsion**

**Detentions:** Detentions are determined by the CEO, Principal, Dean of School Culture or a Teacher. It is a form of disciplinary action that requires students to lose a privilege or remain for a set amount of time either After School or during the student's scheduled recess time. It is the responsibility of the school to give parents with advance notice when assigning a detention afterschool. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to and from an assigned detention before or after regular school hours. Failure of a student to report to an afterschool detention may result in additional detentions and/or escalation of the consequences to be determined by the Principal or designee. This may include an out of school suspension.

**In-school Suspension:** Communication to the parents or guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by the school. The school will make provisions for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension. If the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the Head of School or Principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in the Pennsylvania School Code.

**Out of School Suspension and Expulsion:** Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may result in permanent removal of the student from the school.

### **Suspension Procedures and Guidelines:**

- Suspensions may be given by the CEO, Principal or designee.
- A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- The parents or guardians shall be notified in writing when the student is suspended

- When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements of the Pennsylvania School Code.
- Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.
- Students have the responsibility to make up tests and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and be permitted to complete these assignments.
- The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.
- The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
  - (1) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.
  - (2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
  - (3) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
  - (4) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
  - (5) The school shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

**Expulsion Procedures and Guidelines:** Students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In all cases involving a possible expulsion a formal hearing is required pursuant to the Pennsylvania School Code:

- During the period prior to the formal expulsion hearing and decision of the Board, the student shall be placed in his normal class unless there is a safety risk.
- If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others or himself and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties.
- All formal hearings will take place before a qualified hearing examiner or authorized committee of the Board who will consider the evidence presented by Administration and the student in connection with a formal hearing and will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a formal Board resolution must be presented and a majority vote of the entire board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
  - (1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
  - (2) At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the

rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.

- (3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
  - (4) The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
  - (5) The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
  - (6) The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
  - (7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
  - (8) A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
  - (9) The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
    - a. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
    - b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1482).
    - c. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
    - d. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.
- Any student expelled will be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
  - The initial responsibility for providing a student an education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program may be approved by the Chester Upland School District Superintendent.
  - Within 30 days of expulsion by the Board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.
  - If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school may take action in accordance with 42 PA. C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

## Discipline of Disabled Students

CCSA complies with Chapters 711 and 15 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities and thought-to-be eligible students. Please refer to the school's Discipline of Special Education Students Policy and Annual Notice of Special Education Services for applicable accommodations. Any questions regarding the discipline of special education or Section 504 students should be directed to the school's special education coordinator.

## Disciplinary Records

All official disciplinary records for incidents involving the possession of a weapon or acts of violence shall remain in the student's permanent record (pocket) and be transferred with the student to any public school within Pennsylvania. All incident reports shall be maintained in the student's permanent record. All incidents involving violence (to a person or to property) or possession of a weapon shall be maintained in the student's permanent record and transmitted to any K-12 school in Pennsylvania in which the student is enrolled.

Prior to admission to any school entity, the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a student shall, upon registration, provide a sworn statement or affirmation stating whether the pupil was previously or is presently suspended or expelled from any public or private school for an act or offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs or for the willful infliction of injury to another person or for any act of violence committed on school property. The registration shall include the name of the school from which the student was expelled or suspended for the above-listed reasons with the dates of expulsion or suspension and shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record. Any willful false statement made under this section shall be misdemeanor of the third degree.

# Attendance Policy

## Unlawful/Unexcused Absences (Truancy)

If a child is absent for three or more consecutive days, he/she must provide a medical excuse from the treating physician upon his/her return to school. Please make sure that the school receives all absent notes. The absence(s) will be considered unlawful/ unexcused, if the excuse note is not submitted to the school **within 3 days**.

- 3 unlawful/unexcused absences, you will receive a warning from our operations assistant
- 6 unlawful/unexcused absences, you will be required to attend a parent workshop with our Dean of Students
- 10 unlawful/unexcused absences, the case will be referred to District Court and you will be held accountable for truancy. After ten unlawful or unexcused absences, parents can be fined per day for each unlawful or unexcused absence, and sentenced to jail time for failure to pay the fine.

\*\*\* Note: That repeated truancy also carries consequences per the Code of Conduct including suspension and possible expulsion.

Excused/Unexcused Tardy: Arrival after 8:00 a.m. but before 10:00 a.m. is defined as tardy except in the case of a late school bus that is not considered as "Tardy". A Tardy can be "Excused" or "Unexcused". An Excused Tardy includes:

- A medical appointment or a family emergency (death, hospitalization) supported by acceptable documentation provided to the School within 48 hours of the Tardy
- Exceptional circumstances approved by the CCSA's Dean of Students.
- Reasons such as car trouble, personal/family reasons, heavy traffic, and the like while understandable, are not acceptable excuses and will be listed as unexcused lateness

Acceptable documentation of an Excused Tardy includes: 1) a note signed by a medical professional in the case of a medical appointment or medical emergency to be turned in to the teacher or Dean of students. Without acceptable documentation, a Tardy will be classified as Unexcused.

Consequences for Excessive Unexcused Tardiness:

- Three (3) unexcused tardies: CCSA will send parent(s)/guardian(s) a letter outlining the school's tardiness policy.
- Ten (10) unexcused tardies: the parent(s)/guardian(s) may be requested to meet with a school administrator regarding the tardiness or early dismissals..
- Fifteen (15) unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals: will send the parent(s)/guardian(s) a letter notifying them that the child and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to

attend a meeting with Dean of Students to develop a plan to eliminate tardiness. Depending upon the circumstances surrounding the unexcused tardies and/or or early dismissals and/or compliance with the plan, the Dean of Students will also make a determination if other actions are to be taken, including but not limited to: 1) in-school or out-of-school suspension; (2) suspension or exclusion from clubs, after-school and extracurricular activities; (3) requiring make-up classes after-school and/or on Saturdays; and/or (4) Informal hearing; 5) and/or referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing.

Excused/Unexcused Early Dismissal: Leaving school before 3:25 p.m. is defined as an "Early Dismissal". An Early Dismissal can be "Excused" or "Unexcused". Excused early dismissal includes: 1) A medical appointment or a family emergency (death, hospitalization) supported by acceptable documentation provided within (form) 48 hours of the Early Dismissal or 2) Exceptional circumstances approved by the Dean of Students. (Put up a sign that explains behind desk to spare the argument

Acceptable documentation of an Excused Early Dismissal includes: 1) a note signed by a medical professional for a medical appointment/medical emergency. Without acceptable documentation, an early dismissal will be considered unexcused. 2) A note or email to the teacher stating the reason for the early dismissal, time of dismissal, and who will be picking the child up. Excessive Unexcused Early Dismissals will result in the following actions:

- 3 unexcused dismissals- a warning letter (we need to create this warning letters and keep them in folders handy at front desk as well as give copies to teachers) will go home stating our policy/MMS.
- 6 unexcused dismissals- Parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Dean to outline a plan for success
- 10 unexcused dismissal-will result in revisiting the plan for success, The 10 will equal an unexcused absent and recorded as such. The Dean of Students will also make a determination if other actions are to be taken, including but not limited to: 1) in-school or out-of-school suspension; (2) suspension or exclusion from clubs, after-school and extracurricular activities; (3) requiring make-up classes after-school and/or on Saturdays; and/or (4) Informal hearing; 5) and/or referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing.

# Miscellaneous

## Field Trips

Most field trips are intended to enrich learning for students by aligning the experience to content and skills taught in class. Occasionally, students may have opportunity to attend trips as an incentive for consistently demonstrating scholarly behavior and academic work. In either case, field trips are considered to be a privilege. Students may be excluded if there is concern about their ability to demonstrate appropriate and safe behavior while off campus. For incentive trips, students may be excluded if they have not met established expectations or criteria. Staff members endeavor to provide as much advance notice as possible for scheduled field trips and inform you of any required fees. There may be opportunities to chaperone for specific trips if you might be interested in doing so. Pennsylvania Law now requires that you have required clearances (child abuse, criminal background check and FBI Clearance). These take a significant amount of time to process. See Mrs. Ahmed at the front desk for information about securing clearances.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Program

CCSA has a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center. Parents will receive a letter to participate which will outline our course offering. Students are encouraged to participate in after-school extra curricular activities sponsored by the school. Upon acceptance of enrollment students will be expected to attend everyday Mon.-Thurs. from 4pm-5:30pm. Students who wish to participate in any activity must demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, a willingness to meet the standards set forth by the sponsor(s) and act responsibly at all times. Participation in these programs is a privilege. Students will not be allowed to participate if they fail to maintain the standards of CCSA. In addition for the support for students, parents will be encouraged to participate in engagement activities offered by school personnel through the after school program.

## Classroom Volunteering/Visits

We strive to ensure that there is as little disruption to the classroom environment as possible. There may be structured opportunities for parents/guardians to volunteer and/or visit the classroom for specific events during the year. We welcome you to participate in those opportunities. Non-scheduled visits by parents/guardians are not permitted.

## Volunteering Clearances

In order to assist teachers in the educational program and to give students the benefits of exposure to the diverse talents and skills represented in this community, CCSA encourages school volunteer assistance. If you are volunteering for a one-time event during which your involvement will be in an area that is completely supervised by school, clearances are required. Please see front desk to obtain all child protective service law documents to volunteer (child abuse, criminal background check and FBI Clearance)

## Valuable Items and Money

Money and valuables not needed at school should be left at home as CCSA does not accept responsibility for them. Students should only bring money to school for specific reasons. Please be sure to label the purpose for any money brought to school. If a student has a personal cell phone he/she is responsible for its safety. CCSA and staff are not liable for lost or stolen cell phones.

### **Lockers and Search**

While lockers are issued to each student for use during the school day for storage of items related to the student's school day, all lockers are and shall remain the property of the Charter School. No student may use a locker as a depository for illegal or dangerous substances or objects which are prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or substances or objects which constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the student body or pose a threat to the building itself. The CEO, Principal and/or his/her designee may inspect a student's locker, personal property, (bookbag, handbag, etc.) and/or person, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that storage of contraband, a substance or object the possession of which is illegal, or any substance, object or other material which poses a hazard to the health, safety, welfare and good order of the school is being stored in or on the student's locker, personal property or person.

### **Custody Issues**

This school abides by the provisions of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents.

- In the absence of a court order to the contrary, this school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. A current address must be provided by the non-custodial parent.
- If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.
- It is also the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the addresses where the students' records should be sent.
- Divorced parents must provide the school with a court certified copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. If no such copy is on file, school officials will assume that both parents have custodial rights.
- School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court-mandated custody arrangements. However, the parent(s) must accept primary responsibility for such arrangements and should instruct their children as to which parent should have physical custody of them on any given day.

## Admission and RE-Enrollment

Admission to the Chester Charter School for the Arts is open to all appropriately-aged children living in the Chester Upland School District and surrounding Pennsylvania school districts. Parents must complete an application to enroll and provide all required documentation for each of their eligible children in order to be qualified for enrollment or included in the lottery process. The following documentation is required:

1. A copy of the child's Birth Certificate
2. A copy of the child's Immunization Record
3. A copy of one of the following documents to use for residency verification
  - a. Utility bill (electric or gas), or
  - b. PA Department of Transportation identification or drivers license, or
  - c. PA Department of Transportation vehicle registration, or
  - d. Copy of State/Federal program enrollment
  - e. Copy of paycheck stub with name and address of employee and employer, or
  - f. Residency affidavit, or
  - g. Government agency identification card, or
  - h. Deed, or
  - i. Agreement of Sale.

## Admission and RE-Enrollment

**The Lottery:** If the number of children applying for enrollment in the Chester Charter School for the Arts exceeds the number of available spaces, students will be selected for admission by lottery. Spaces will be offered in the order of the names drawn with the names creating the waiting list. If the number of applicants for a given grade does not exceed the number of available spaces, all applicants will be offered admission to the school in that grade. Specific dates and deadlines will be set each year for the admissions process. Please check at the beginning of each school year for that specific school year's enrollment and lottery dates.

**The Re-Enrollment Process:** Students attending CCSA must submit a *Re-Enrollment Form* before the end of each school year. The form requires the student's parent/guardian to complete it and return it with current proof of residency by the deadline stated on the re-enrollment form. If any student does not have a completed re-enrollment form by the specified deadline it is assumed that he/she will not be returning for the following year and his/her space may be forfeited. It is mandatory that all parents provide contact information that includes address, telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts.

## Board/Principal's Right to Amend

The Board/Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. CCSA will distribute notification of any changes to parents/guardians in writing.

## **Full Disclosure Policies**

The following policies are available in their entirety for review upon request. They are located at the school in the student records office. Please see Taslym Goodman for additional information.

- Annual Child Find Notice
- Annual FERPA Notice
- Harassment Policy
- School Family Conference and Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities
- Discipline of Special Education Students Policy
- Asthma Medication and Equipment Policy
- Epinephrine Auto Injector Policy
- Diabetes Awareness and Management Policy
- Self Monitoring & Treatment for Diabetes and Asthma Policy
- Emergency Care Plan Template

# CCSA 2016 – 2017

## Statement of Understanding and Agreement

Please read each of the following statements, complete and sign this form. Return it to your child's teacher by Friday, September 2, 2016.

I understand that I must agree to all the terms in the *CCSA Family Compact* in order for my child to attend The Chester Charter School for the Arts.

I understand that if I do not live up to the terms of this compact, my child may not be able to continue as a student at The Chester Charter School for the Arts.

I acknowledge that I have read the entire **CCSA Student and Family Handbook** (including the *Code of Conduct, Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct* and *Parent/Guardian Conduct Expectations*). I am aware of the policies and expectations described and will reinforce them with my child.

*Please print clearly.*

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #1 Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #1 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #1 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #2 Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #2 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #2 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please **provide your email address(es)** so that we can include you on important CCSA informational messages. Email will be our **primary means of communicating** with families as it is fast, efficient, and reduces paper usage and waste.

Please sign and return this page to your child's teacher,  
by: **Friday, September 2, 2016.**