



SOUTHSIDE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

2200 Onondaga Creek Road
Syracuse, NY 13207-2361
Phone: (315) 476-3019

Parent and Student Handbook 2017-2018

**A charter school managed by
National Heritage Academies, Inc.**



Parent and Student Handbook

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Board of Trustees

Carol Hill, President
Tracy Miller, Vice President
Anthony Ortega, Treasurer
Dr. James Duah-Agyeman, Secretary
Dr. Leonese Nelson, Trustee

Board meetings are open to the public and meeting dates and times are posted at the school.

Administrative Staff

Ronald Large, PhD, Principal
Tammy Curry, K-2 Dean
Kristen Jones, 3-5 Dean
Brian Luciani, 6-8 Dean
Nicole Moss, Resource Dean
Lynette Menifee, Registrar

Student Creed

I am a Southside Academy student.
I strive to achieve academic excellence.
I exemplify high moral character.
I strive to realize my potential.
I work diligently to prepare for the future.
I know my success in school and life is dependent on my own effort.

School Mission

The mission of the Southside Charter School is to offer families and students a community public charter school, which provides a challenging academic program and focuses on high-achievement and instilling a sense of family, community, and leadership within all of our students.

National Heritage Academies

National Heritage Academies (NHA) is an educational management company based in Grand Rapids, Michigan pursuing its purpose of *challenging each child to achieve* and its vision to *better educate more children*. NHA's Parent Relations Department provides assistance to parents and the school in resolving concerns. The classroom teacher and principal should be the first line of communication.

National Heritage Academies
3850 Broadmoor Avenue, Suite 201
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49512
Main Phone: (877) 223-6402
www.nhaschools.com
Parent Relations: (877) 642-7471 (Monday - Friday; 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Philosophy

Our belief is simple: set high standards, make expectations clear, provide meaningful instruction, and watch children excel. Every student is given the tools for success - in and out of the classroom. With a commitment to hard work, good citizenship, and personal responsibility, students experience a safe, secure learning environment where achievement thrives.

We make a nine-year commitment to every child. It begins from day one, in kindergarten, setting the expectation that every student will be prepared to attend college.

- **Our curriculum is built** around a strong emphasis on math, reading, science, and social studies—the foundation for college readiness.
- **We teach critical life, work, and study skills**, emphasizing that hard work and good character are essential for success in school and in life.
- **Students take a nationally-recognized test** three times a year. Teachers use test results to establish academic goals, develop learning plans, and track progress.

The K-8 Model

Studies show that students who stay in the same school from K through 8th grade perform better, feel more secure, and remain more engaged than students who transition to middle school settings. The K-8 model offers:

- **Greater academic success.** The K-8 model prevents learning loss which often occurs in the transition from elementary to middle school. Studies show that 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in K-8 schools score higher on standardized tests than students in middle schools settings.
- **Higher self-esteem.** Adolescents in K-8 schools have better self-esteem, participate more in extracurricular activities, and have more interest in leadership opportunities than students in middle-school settings.
- **Fewer behavior problems.** Adolescents in K-8 settings have better attendance and fewer behavior problems than their middle-school counterparts.
- **More collaboration among teachers.** Our K-8 teachers work together across and within grade levels to ease transitions and ensure each child's academic needs are planned for and met each year.

College Prep

The NHA curriculum is designed so that each year builds upon the last so that students leave our school with a solid foundation for learning. The curriculum was developed to prepare each student with the knowledge, skills, and character traits to succeed in high school, college, and the competitive world beyond.

Academic Excellence: Curriculum and Moral Focus

Grades K- 2

During these years, students are *learning to read*. They’re also introduced to basic math, science, history, and places in the world around them. The bar is set high because these early years are the most important for preparing students to excel in the years ahead.

Grades 3-5

During these years, *learning to read* becomes *reading to learn*. Math prepares students for algebra and beyond. Science focuses on plants, animals, earth science, the human body, and healthful living. While social studies explore ancient and American history, state studies, economics, and geography.

Grades 6-8

During the middle school years, the NHA curriculum ensures students are well prepared for high school. English language arts concentrate on in-depth reading comprehension, discussion, research, and writing. Math centers on reasoning and algebra. Science focuses on energy, motion, forms of matter, objects in space, technology, and more. Social studies explore regions of the world, civics, economics, American history, and government. The bar is set high because success in high school is essential for success in college.

Moral Focus

It is our goal to not only support the virtues parents try to instill at home, but to explicitly teach students the skills, behaviors, and virtues necessary for leading an ethical life. We believe it is imperative to equip students with both the moral and academic foundations necessary to interact successfully in today’s society. Our Moral Focus Program is centered on the study of 9 Virtues: Wisdom, Respect, Gratitude, Self-control, Perseverance, Courage, Encouragement, Compassion, & Integrity. Virtues are fundamental to a great education, and great schools place equal importance on developing the heart and mind of students.

MONTHLY VIRTUES				
WISDOM (September)	RESPECT (October)	GRATITUDE (November)	SELF-CONTROL (December)	PERSEVERANCE (January)
COURAGE (February)	ENCOURAGEMENT (March)	COMPASSION (April)	INTEGRITY (May)	

Character is defined by which virtues our students determine are important to their lives and there are certain necessary steps to acquire or strengthen those virtues. Our Moral Focus Program is structured around a clearly defined process for teaching and learning virtues. The process outlines those steps allowing teachers to intentionally guide students through the process of teaching virtues, they provide them with the opportunity to learn virtues in a way that will not only affect their mind, but change their heart.

Academic Excellence: Achievement

Supporting our vision *to better educate more children*, the school has implemented grading practices that best match the needs of our students, parents, and teachers, with the ultimate goal of supporting high-quality learning for all students.

Teachers utilize the MyNHA gradebook application to track students' academic performance on identified learning goals, with the ultimate goal of ensuring high levels of learning and proficiency on state accountability tests.

We encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or talk with a member of the school's leadership team if you have questions or would like more detailed information related to the school's grading practices.

Monthly Celebrations

At the end of each month, special recognition is given to those students who have achieved excellence in their academic progress as well as in the Moral Focus. Another ceremony is held as an extension of the opening ceremony. Students are given awards based on their individual accomplishments during the previous quarter.

Student Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion, or Retention

The principal is authorized to make initial grade placement of a student and to promote, accelerate or retain students after initial grade placement. After initial grade placement, a student is expected to progress through the grades one year in each grade receiving the benefits of academic, social and physical growth usually accompanied with a full year of development. On occasion, it may be in the best interest of the student to have a new grade placement, be accelerated more than one grade, or be retained in the current grade. In this event, supporting documentation with interventions already offered to the student will be provided by the school. If a student's parent or teacher believes one of these grade changes should be considered, a written request for consideration should be provided to the principal, including the reasons for such consideration. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a student rests solely with the principal.

The principal shall consider the following, when making such decisions:

1. The education record of the student, including but not limited to a student's grades, standardized test scores, attendance, discipline, reading, speaking and math skills, the curriculum of each grade, the available teacher(s) skill(s) delivering the instruction and available programs
2. The physical, social and emotional readiness of the student for the curriculum of each grade
3. The current research on grade placement, promotion, acceleration and retention
4. The recommendation of the student's parents and teachers
5. The completed Student Placement Form including, but not limited to, a) an initial request by the school for a parent meeting before winter break, b) a request by the school for a progress meeting with the parent prior to March 1, and c) a request by the school for a final parent meeting prior to the last day of the school year.
6. The applicable laws governing these decisions.

The goal of placing, accelerating, promoting or retaining a student is to enhance the opportunity for the student to achieve learning goals, meet state and school performance expectations, and to be prepared for high school, college, and career plans.

Special Education Students

Students with individualized education programs (IEPs) may be promoted to the next grade level in the spring, whether or not standardized tests indicate mastery of the grade level curriculum. The decision to retain or advance a special education student who has not mastered the grade level curriculum is made jointly by the CSE and the school. In considering whether a special education student will be retained, the following factors are considered:

- IEP goals and objectives. Has the student mastered the goals and objectives established by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's district of residence?
- The student's social and emotional development. Will the student benefit from being moved to the next grade level?

The principal will make the final determination on retention. The parent of the special education student may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees of the school or may seek review of the suitability of the school for the student by the Committee on Special Education. The school's special education team and building administration will work with the CSE and the parent to determine if the student's needs are better met through retention or through change of placement to another setting. If the parent objects to a recommendation the CSE, the parent may initiate mediation or impartial review.

Academic Excellence: Student Support Services and Special Education

It is the goal of the school to provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students.

It is the school's obligation to provide appropriate educational opportunity to all students with suspected disabilities or disabilities, as defined under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and state regulations. For additional specifics regarding a student's special education rights, parents are encouraged to review the *Procedural Safeguards* that are available from a school administrator or special education provider.

Child Find

The Individuals with disabilities Education Act includes a Child Find Mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of their disability. This obligation encompasses all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children receiving passing grades and "advancing from grade to grade..." A parent who suspects that their child may have a disability and is in need of special education and related services may initiate a free evaluation of their child by contacting the school principal or the local Committee on Special Education ("CSE") and providing a written request for an evaluation under IDEA and/or Section 504. The school must take the parents request into consideration and provide a response consistent with State and Federal special education requirements. If the CSE does not suspect a disability, it may refuse to conduct an evaluation. If the CSE refuses, it must give the parent written notice explaining the reason(s) why it is declining to initiate an evaluation, what data the decision was based upon, and other factors considered. The parents then have the right, if they choose, to request a due process hearing to seek a ruling to conduct an evaluation.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Section 504 (General Education)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 794, (sometimes referred to as "Section 504") prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities solely on the basis of their disability. If you have Section 504 questions please contact the school's principal who has been designated as the Section 504 Coordinator. The Section 504 Coordinator is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. In addition, any individual who desires information related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act, may contact the school's principal or the NHA Special Education Department at (616) 222-1700. The school does not discriminate against individuals seeking to access a program or service of the school based on disability. Where an individual desires to participate in a program or service and needs a reasonable accommodation in order to do so, they should contact the school's principal to request an accommodation. In addition, if you suspect that your child has a disability which may qualify him/her for support under Section 504, you should contact the school's principal to begin the referral process. Upon initiation of the Section 504 referral process, parents will be provided with a copy of the Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Parent/Student Rights which contains complaint and due process procedures.

The Intervention Assistance Team

The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) is a committee of school personnel set up by the principal to ensure ongoing and effective support for students and classroom teachers. Parents are informed if their child is being considered for referral to the IAT for behavioral and/or academic support. The IAT is a general education intervention process and team membership

will generally include: a building administrator, the student's general education teacher, and a staff member knowledgeable in accommodations and interventions. Parents may also be invited to participate in this meeting. The team provides a forum to discuss the student's academic and behavioral data and needs. In addition, the team generates, initiates, and monitors implementation of interventions designed to address the individual needs of the student. This includes use of the resources of the school, family, and the community. This process creates awareness and understanding of the issues affecting the student and their academic and behavioral performance. The IAT may serve as the pre-referral intervention-planning team for those "unidentified" students whose difficulties may suggest the presence of a disability. As appropriate, the IAT may refer a student to the Committee on Special Education ("CSE") of the student's district of residence for formal assessment. Parents should be informed if the IAT is considering a referral of their student to the CSE. Prior to initiating a special education evaluation, written parental consent/permission must be obtained. Information gathered through implementation of interventions identified by the IAT will be taken into consideration as a part of the special education evaluation along with progress monitoring and other data sources provided by the parent, educational staff, and others as deemed appropriate. The IAT's review of documentation of intervention strategies, the student's response (progress monitoring data), in addition to a referral for special education testing for a suspected disability, fulfills the Child Find requirement under IDEA and State special education requirements.

The Individual Education Program

The school will comply with the IDEA and state regulations and every student identified as having a disability will be provided an Individual Educational Program (IEP) designed to address their unique needs. All required components of the IEP will be addressed by the CSE including but not limited to: a description of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance including disability related needs, goals and objectives, supplementary aides and services, program services, ancillary services, extended school year, etc. All students with disabilities are considered general education students first. Each IEP is designed to assure that eligible students receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and specialized instruction delivered by highly qualified special education staff within the least restrictive environment (LRE). Prior to the opening of school, registration forms are reviewed to identify students with current IEPs from previous schools attended. The parents are informed of their rights, procedures, and responsibilities under special education law. Decisions regarding an IEP are made by the IEP Team. This team has required participant's which minimally includes, general and special education providers, administrators, and the parent(s).

The IDEA includes specific rights for parents of children with disabilities. This information is contained in the document commonly referred to as the *Procedural Safeguards*. We encourage parents to review this document carefully so they are fully informed of their rights. Copies of this document can be obtained from your school office or by contacting the state's Department of Education.

Educational Placement of Students with Disabilities

The school is committed to educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in order to meet their educational needs as determined by the student's IEP Team. This means that to the maximum extent appropriate, children who are disabled are educated with children who are nondisabled and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In an effort to meet with the LRE requirements, the school must ensure that a continuum of placement options is available to students with disabilities, including: services provided within the general education classroom; pull-out services; special classes; home instruction; instruction in hospitals and institutions; and in unique circumstances, access to programs and services located in settings outside the school including those operated by the CSE. Placement decisions are the determination of the Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) which is facilitated by the CSE/local district.

Transfer Students:

In-State transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in the same state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide the child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP, until the public agency adopts the prior IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state laws.

Out of State Transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in a different state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide such a child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP's until the public agency conducts an evaluation, if determined to be necessary by the agency, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, that is consistent with federal and state laws. The evaluation conducted is considered an initial evaluation as special education eligibility within the new state must be determined.

In order to comply with these transfer requirements, under certain circumstances the school may need to contract with another school/entity for the provision of educational services.

Parent Participation

Parents are an important member of the school community and have the right to participate in all meetings involving the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of their student. Parents will be invited to participate and share information about their student prior to and during the IEPT meeting. Parents are encouraged to review the *Procedural Safeguards* so that they are fully informed of their rights.

Crisis Management: De-escalation, Isolation and Restraint of Student

The school is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. It is the policy of our school to only utilize approved physical restraint in response to emergency or crisis situations. Use of restraint procedures should: (a) not be viewed as a behavior change or intervention strategy, (b) be implemented only under extreme situations and as a matter of last resort, (c) be implemented only by trained personnel, and (d) be accompanied by school wide pro-active positive behavior supports to prevent the need for their use. When such activities are utilized, documentation procedures are required in addition to timely communication with parents and other key members of the educational system. This documentation must remain on file at the school and is considered part of the student's educational file.

Student Responsibility: Homework

Philosophy

The school staff believes that homework is an important component of the educational process. It is expected that the following objectives will be accomplished through regular and well-planned homework:

- Students will develop more self-direction and individual responsibility.
- Students will develop independent study skills.
- Students will become organized.
- Students will learn to budget their time.
- The learning process will be expanded through extensions not accomplished in the school setting.

Guidelines

1. Parents and students should expect homework each weekday evening.
2. Assigned homework that requires completion is a part of each student's evaluation. Any homework assignment that is not turned in on time will receive a maximum of 50 percent credit and a minimum score of a zero; it is up to the discretion of the teacher.
3. Homework will be planned and assigned for specific instructional purposes related to classroom objectives.
4. The quantity of homework will be within reason. As the school year progresses, the amount of homework and the number of days homework is assigned may increase depending on the maturity and ability of the students.
5. Each student in grades 3-8 may be issued an assignment book by the school.
6. Parents are to initial the student assignment book each evening to signify that their child has completed the assignment.

Suggested Homework Guidelines

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Minutes per day</u>	<u>Days per week</u>
Kindergarten	15-30	4
First	25-30	4
Second	30-45	4
Third	30-60	4
Fourth	30-60	5
Fifth	60-90	5
Sixth	90-120	5
Seventh	90-120	5
Eighth	90-120	5

Make-Up Work

Students have an obligation to complete assignments missed during illness or unexpected absence from school. In keeping with our belief that students should develop a sense of responsibility, we expect them, with their parents' help, to contact their teachers to secure missed assignments. Students are guaranteed one school day for each day absent from school to make up their work. Additional time may be given at the teachers' discretion.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the student's teachers should be called, so necessary arrangements can be made to have assignments picked up. At the request of the parents, the teachers will provide assignments for a student who is absent two or more days. Parents must call before 8:30 a.m. on the day the homework is needed in order to allow the teachers adequate time to assemble the assignments. Parents may pick up the assignments after 3:45 p.m. on the date requested.

Suspended students' homework may be picked up in the main office after 12:00 p.m. on the first day of suspension. Suspended students are required to turn in their late work the day they return to school. They do not receive make-up days.

Student Responsibility: Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures

Students are offered access to the National Heritage Academies (NHA) computer network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the NHA academic program. All use of computers, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by NHA are the property of NHA and are intended for school business and educational use. Students are to use the computer network responsibly. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and using the NHA computer network and the school's technological resources.

The school educates students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response.

General Rules

1. **Privacy:** The school and NHA reserve the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using the NHA network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any NHA technology or transmissions originating within or around school property.
2. **Bullying:** The school prohibits cyber-bullying, an act involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to e-mail, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal Web sites, on-line social directories and communities, video-posting sites, and online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate or repeated hostile behavior, by an individual or group, that is intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass students, staff members, or the school during or outside school hours and on or off school premises.
3. **Materials and Language:** Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web-filtering is prohibited.
4. **Installing/Copying:** Students are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed. Downloading of non-work related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission. Students may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. All copyright laws must be respected. Use of any other organization's network or technology resources via the NHA network requires the instructor's permission and must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.
5. **Access:** Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Users are to use their own username and password when using a computer. Users must log off the computer when they are finished with their work and are not to log on to a computer for someone else or tell others their password. Students are to notify the instructor if someone else is thought to know his/her password.

6. **Data Protection:** Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files. Though efforts are made by NHA to ensure the safety and integrity of data, NHA makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it provides. NHA will not be responsible for any damage to data.
7. **Storage:** Users are to delete their files and materials they no longer need.
8. **Printing Resources:** Paper and toner are costly, and excessive use is wasteful. Documents must be proofread before printing. Users are to print only the needed part(s) of documents. Students must obtain permission from an instructor before printing documents.

Internet Use

The World Wide Web is a vast collection of resources readily available to any user on any computer connected to the Internet. NHA integrates the use of these resources into student instruction. Student Internet usage is permitted only in the presence and supervision of a teacher, the child's parent, or other designated adult school personnel. NHA is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet or the NHA computer network.

Some material accessible via the Internet contains illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive language or images. While the school uses Internet resources to achieve educational goals, there is always a risk of students accessing other materials. However, we believe that the benefits of using technology outweigh the disadvantages. Teachers are trained in the appropriate use of technology with students, but ultimately, parents of students are responsible for setting and conveying the expectations regarding the use of media and information sources at home and at school.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to the Internet and other information. Under CIPA, schools must certify that they have certain Internet safety measures in place. These include measures to block or filter pictures that (a) are obscene, (b) contain child pornography, or (c) when computers with Internet access are used by minors, are harmful to minors. Schools subject to CIPA must adopt a policy such as this to monitor online activities of minors and to address (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online, (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors, and (e) restricting minors' access to harmful materials.

NHA complies with CIPA by deploying a Web content filtering product called OpenDNS, which categorizes Internet sites and sends updates to NHA site-based hardware. A process is in place for changing the categorization of Web sites. The following categorizations are currently in place:

- **Obscenity and Pornography Filtering:** OpenDNS allows schools and libraries to manage Internet access to over 90 URL categories pertinent to CIPA.
- **Accurate Web Filtering:** OpenDNS offers the best-of-breed filtering database.
- **Filtering of Search Engine Images:** OpenDNS filters inappropriate images that can be found in search engine query results.
- **Monitoring:** OpenDNS reporting tools Explorer, Reporter and Real-Time Analyzer offer many different ways to monitor and report online activities of minors.

- Policy Management: OpenDNS allows customization of Internet policies, based on a user or group, with the ability to set appropriate policies based on age or need.

Student Responsibility: Student Code of Conduct

Our goal is to offer a quality education program. To fulfill this goal, students need a positive, safe, and orderly school environment in which learning can take place without disruption. Students who do not observe the rules of good conduct in the classroom or on the playground decrease both the learning and safety of others and their own opportunities to learn. Therefore, our staff takes a very proactive role in enforcing the Student Code of Conduct outlined below.

Students are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy by obeying staff members, being kind to others, and being considerate of others' and the school's property.

Acts of Misconduct

Both minor and major acts of student misconduct will result in school disciplinary procedures. Discipline within the school building will be administered by the teachers or another staff member, but the principal of the school will be responsible for any disciplinary action which results in short or long term suspension from school.

The acts of misconduct listed in this Student Code of Conduct are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list or as a limitation upon the authority of school officials to deal appropriately with other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school, the proper functioning of the educational process, or the health and safety of students.

A student who engages in any of the acts of misconduct listed in this Student Code of Conduct will be disciplined in accordance with the disciplinary levels described below. Additionally, a student who engages in an act of misconduct that violates the law may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement. A student who engages in an act of misconduct when the student was enrolled in another school for which the disciplinary action has not been fully served may be required to serve out the length of the suspension or expulsion.

Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct when

- on school property;
- in a motor vehicle being used for a school related purpose;
- at a school-related activity, function or event;
- en route to or from school;
- at any time or place when the student's behavior creates or would foreseeably create a substantial disruption within the school environment

Acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to cooperate or comply with directions of school personnel and volunteers
- False allegations against staff, volunteers, or students
- Falsification of records or scholastic dishonesty (including cheating and plagiarism)
- Misuse of copyrighted materials
- Improper or disrespectful communications to staff, volunteers, or students
- Use of profane and/or inappropriate language and/or gestures
- Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community
- Discrimination, bullying (including cyber-bullying) and/or harassment of any student, staff member or volunteer
- Criminal Sexual Conduct as defined by state law

- Improper dress in violation of the Dress Code
- Indecency (either with clothing/exposure, pictures or public display of affection)
- Any public display of affection having sexual connotations
- Violations of building rules and regulations
- Violations of rules or policies as set forth in the Parent and Student Handbook
- Smoking, tobacco possession or use
- Trespassing, loitering
- Suspended or expelled student on school property or attending school activities
- False alarms
- Possession of electronic device(s) defined by school policy
- Defacement/Damage of property or theft/possession of stolen property
- Coercion, extortion or blackmail
- Arson
- Selling, using or possessing obscene material
- Possession of firework(s), explosive(s) and/or chemical substance(s)
- Possession and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs (narcotic drugs, look-a-like substances and illegal chemical substances)
- Possession of look-a-like weapons
- Possession of dangerous weapons as defined by state law and dangerous weapons or instruments not otherwise enumerated herein
- Possession of personal protection devices (such as tasers, mace, pepper-spray, etc.)
- Fighting, physical assault and/or battery on another person
- Engaging in gangs or gang-related activities, displaying gang-related items or affiliation (e.g., wearing clothing, using language, throwing signs, and writing names or symbols associated with a gang)
- Violation of Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures
- Misconduct prior to enrollment
- Persistent disobedience. Out of school suspensions show a disregard for the rules and regulations established by the School Board.
- Malicious or willful types of behavior that endanger the safety of others
- Extreme acts of defiance and/or threats toward teachers/other adults/fellow students
- Verbal assault
- Criminal acts other than as enumerated herein
- Excessive tardiness or absences as defined in the Attendance Policy

Parents or students who are unsure of what conduct is prohibited by each act should consult with the principal.

Students who bring, distribute, or use alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs on school grounds may be recommended for counseling as a condition of their continued enrollment.

Disciplinary Procedures

A student may be disciplined at any level depending upon the frequency and/or severity of the act of misconduct. A Behavior Referral Report will be completed for each violation of the Code of Conduct and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. Discipline records will be included in any student file properly requested by the parent to be transferred to a subsequent school. Corporal punishment is prohibited as a means of discipline.

Level 1 EARLY INTERVENTION: The behavior may be a violation of the code of conduct or a disruption of the orderly operation of the classroom or a school activity. The inappropriate

behavior with the student is addressed. Level 1 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Informal talk:** School personnel talk with the student, describing the inappropriate behavior and informing the student of acceptable behavior. The parent may be notified.
- **Restriction of privileges:** Inappropriate behavior may result in a restriction of a student's privilege to participate in playground, cafeteria, or specific special activities.
- **Discipline conference with student:** A conference is held with the student and school personnel to discuss the behavior and to develop a plan for changing the student's behavior. The parent may be notified.

Level 2 PARENT NOTIFICATION: The parent is notified by mail or a note home of the misbehavior. Level 2 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Time out:** The student is assigned by the teacher to a location removed from the student's classmates. This may be within the classroom or in a designated classroom.
- **Lunch detention:** The student may be required to serve a lunch detention.

Level 3 PARENT CONTACT: A conference with the parent is held in order to discuss the incident and appropriate disciplinary action. Level 3 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Parent conference:** The parent is required to attend a conference with the student and school personnel to discuss the student's inappropriate behavior and to develop a plan for changing the behavior.

Level 4 BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN (BSP): When the behavior(s) has reached a level of persistent disobedience, the teacher and/or principal shall schedule a meeting with the parents in order to implement a Behavior Support Plan or BSP. A BSP will take into consideration the cause of the inappropriate behavior, positive interventions that might be utilized to diminish the inappropriate behavior and necessary consequences that will take place if the behavior continues. The B BSP shall be signed by all parties and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. If the disciplinary action is related to unexcused tardies or absences an Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP) will be implemented. Level 4 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Detention:** A student may be detained after regular school hours to make up work or for other disciplinary reasons. The parent is notified about the student's detention, and arrangements for travel from school to home are discussed with the parent before the student is kept for detention.
- **Remainder-of-day release to parent:** The parent comes to school for a conference. The student is released to the custody of the parent for the duration of the school day.
- **Exclusion from Extra Curricular activities:** A student may be excluded from field trips, extended/overnight day trips, or end-of-the-year activities, trips, parties, and awards ceremonies.

Level 5 SUSPENSION OF 5 SCHOOL DAYS OR LESS OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS: When the act of misconduct is such that it disrupts the school learning environment or violates the Behavior Contract, the resulting consequence by the school administration may include suspension from school for up to five (5) school days, or other disciplinary interventions such as restitution, counseling and exclusion from school activities. The school administration may convene a meeting with the student, parents and others to develop or update an existing Behavior Contract that outlines the expected behavior and disciplinary action. The Behavior Contract shall be signed by all parties and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. The student will be granted a right to due process as described in the Due Process

Procedures of this Code of Conduct. Level 5 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Detention:** A student may be detained after regular school hours to make up work or for other disciplinary reasons. The parent is notified about the student's detention, and arrangements for travel from school to home are discussed with the parent before the student is kept for detention.
- **Suspensions:** A student may be suspended at the discretion of the principal with rights to due process defined below. During the suspension, the student is not permitted on school property or at school functions, unless he/she is attending alternative education sessions set up through the school's administration and the student's parent. The student is eligible for up to (2) two hours of tutoring per day by a certified teacher at the school.

Level 6 LONG TERM SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION: When the act of misconduct is considered a crime under state law, constitutes extreme non-compliance with school rules, or so extreme that it threatens the safety of others, or a student is persistent in his/her disobedience of the rules of the school, the student may serve a long term suspension or be expelled from school. The student will be granted a right to a due process as described in the Due Process Procedures of this Code of Conduct. Level 6 consequences usually entail the employment of the following:

- **Suspensions:** A student may be suspended at the discretion of the principal with rights to due process defined below. During the suspension, the student is not permitted on school property or at school functions, unless he/she is attending alternative education sessions set up through the school's administration and the student's parent. The student is eligible for up to (2) two hours of tutoring per day by a certified teacher at the school.
- **Expulsion:** Expulsion means the permanent withdrawal of a student's privilege to attend the school, unless the School Board of Trustees reinstates that privilege. Students are entitled to due process rights defined below. During any expulsion, a student is not permitted on school property or at school functions.

NOTE: Other possible consequences for student misconduct include:

- **Denial of school bus service:** Bus riding is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate conduct at bus stops, on buses, or in the process of boarding or disembarking from a bus may result in the denial of bus riding privileges.
- **Restitution (liability):** Parents will be liable for damage to school property caused by their child(ren).

Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment

The school prohibits any and all acts of discrimination, bullying (including cyber-bullying) and harassment of students by school employees or students that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that would unreasonably and substantially interfere with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being or reasonably cause the student fear of physical harm. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and intimidation includes a gesture or written, verbal, graphic or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts - i.e. internet, cell phone, or wireless hand-held device) that is reasonably perceived, under the circumstances, to have the effect of harming a student or damaging a student's property, placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property, or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to materially disrupt or

interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying and intimidation apply to behavior in school during school hours, before and after school, while on school property, at all school-sponsored events or off school property where such conduct creates or would foreseeably create a substantial disruption within the school environment.

The Principal shall be the Dignity for All Students Coordinator ("Coordinator"). The Coordinator may be reached by contacting the school office.

Procedures:

1. Any school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of discrimination, bullying or harassing behavior shall promptly report the incident to the Coordinator and shall make a written report to the Coordinator within two (2) school days of the initial report.
2. A student, volunteer, or visitor who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of discrimination, bullying or harassing behavior should, and are strongly encouraged to, report the incident to a teacher, other staff member or the principal.
Such report of should be done in written form, providing as much information as possible. The report may be done anonymously.
3. The Coordinator will conduct a thorough and prompt investigation.
4. Within two (2) school days of receiving a report the Coordinator shall notify the parent of the alleged victim of bullying and the parent of the alleged perpetrator of bullying. Upon completion of the investigation report, the Coordinator shall notify the parent of both the victim and perpetrator of the results of the investigation.
5. There will be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination, bullying or harassment in good faith. Such reprisal or retaliation by a student is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.
6. Any student who is found to have falsely accused another of discrimination, bullying or harassment is subject to remedial action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Discrimination, bullying or harassing behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

Due Process Procedures

The following due process procedures only govern the suspension or the expulsion of a student from the school's regular educational program. If a student charged with violation of the Code of Conduct has been returned to the regular school program pending a decision, then such action of reinstatement shall not limit or prejudice the school's right to suspend or expel the student following that decision.

A. Suspension of Five (5) School Days or Less

As a general rule, prior to any suspension of the student, the principal shall provide the student with the following due process:

1. The principal will provide the student with notice of the charged misconduct, and, if the student denies the charges, the principal shall provide the student with an explanation of the basis for the suspension.

2. The student and the student's parent(s) shall, on request, be given an opportunity for an informal conference with the principal to present the student's version of the event and to ask questions of the complaining witnesses.
3. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension.

If a student's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, at the principal's discretion, the conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

B. Suspension of More Than Five (5) School Days and Expulsion

The principal, or dually appointed hearing officer, has the discretion to recommend a long-term suspension or expulsion. This decision will be based upon the above-referenced informal conference with the pupil and his/her parent(s). The principal will hear all long-term suspensions and expulsions within five (5) school days of the act of misconduct.

1. Opportunity for a Fair Hearing for Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

If a student is charged with a violation of the Student Code of Conduct carrying a consequence of long-term suspension or expulsion, the student and his/her parent(s) shall be notified as set forth in Section (A)(3) referenced above.

The written notice of the violation shall contain a description of the alleged misconduct, the proposed consequence, and an explanation of the student's and parent(s) rights to a due process hearing at a specified time and place to determine (i) whether a violation occurred and (ii) whether the consequence of such violation merits the imposition of a long-term suspension or expulsion.

The notice shall also set forth the right of the student and his/her parent(s) to representation by counsel, at their own expense, with the right to question witnesses against the student and to present witnesses and other evidence on his/her behalf.

A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required and a tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record.

The principal will make a final decision about long-term suspension or expulsion within a reasonable time after the hearing. The student shall remain suspended pending the decision of the principal.

2. Appeal of Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

The student, together with his/her parent(s), may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. A written record will be made of all actions taken.

Provisions for Services During Suspension or Expulsion

The school hereby commits to ensuring that all students receiving suspensions or expulsions are provided alternative instruction sufficient in quality and quantity to comply with section 3214 of the Education Law and other applicable laws. Strategies to be implemented may include but are not limited to home-based instruction, after-school instruction, tutoring, and contracting with additional providers, sufficient to attain the school's learning standards.

For all suspensions, the school shall provide an alternative education program at the school. The services provided will be designed in order to ensure that the student is given the opportunity to master the school curriculum and take such assessment tests and measures as the school would otherwise provide.

For students expelled from the school, the school will provide an alternative education program for the remainder of the school year or until the student is enrolled in another accredited school or is otherwise participating in an accredited program, including any alternative education program operated by the student's school district of residence.

Definition of Terms

Behavior Referral Report is a specific written record of the student's act of misconduct. It documents the date, nature of the offense, and the disciplinary action taken by the teacher and/or school administration.

Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP) is a written document that identifies the causes for excessive tardies and/or absences and what steps will be taken to minimize the number of occurrences. It is signed by the parents, student, and staff member.

Behavior Support Plan (BSP) is a written document that identifies the cause of repeated misconduct and what steps will be taken in order to help a student overcome inappropriate behavior. It is signed by the parents, student and staff member.

Behavior Contract is a written document that outlines the expected behavior and disciplinary action for a student. It is signed by the parents, student, and staff member.

Short Term Suspension is defined as a suspension from school of five (5) school days or less. A meeting with the parents may be convened to discuss the incident that led to the suspension and to develop a Behavior Contract for the future. The student will be afforded his/her due process rights. The final decision shall be made by the principal.

Long Term Suspension is defined as a suspension from school in excess of five (5) school days. *The law requires students to be suspended no less than one year in the event that a dangerous weapon is brought to school, but the suspension may be modified on a case by case basis, subject to review by the Board of Trustees.

Expulsion is defined as a decision to remove a student from school due to extreme non-compliance with school rules/state law.

IDEA Student Discipline

Students who are served under IDEA (Special Education) or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are entitled to certain additional rights in the area of discipline based on their qualification for services under these federal laws.

Discipline Procedure for Special Education Services

Students with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other students and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses. Discipline of a student identified as having a disability, however, will be in accordance with the following:

- Students for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) includes specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines are ineffective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others, the matter will be immediately referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's district of residence to reconsider the guidelines.
- Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy relating to each infraction. The CSE of the student's district of residence shall be notified immediately whenever suspension from classes for more than ten days is contemplated, and the school shall work with the CSE to arrange appropriate alternative instruction.
- If the student has been identified as a student with a disability or is a student who should be deemed to have a disability and suspension for more than ten days is contemplated, the school's special education coordinator will take immediate steps to refer the student to the CSE of the student's district of residence. If a connection between the disability and the misconduct is found, no penalty may be imposed, and the school will work with the CSE to consider a possible program modification.
- Although no penalty may be imposed on a student whose misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability, a student may be removed from school and placed in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting, whether or not the conduct is a manifestation of disability, if the student is found guilty of bringing a weapon to school, of bringing drugs to school, or causing serious physical injury to another individual in the school.
- If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight (8) days, the student will immediately be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. The student shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten (10) days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh (11th) day of suspension, because a suspension of more than ten days is considered to be a change in placement.
- In considering change of placement of students referred for disciplinary purposes, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement. The school shall work with the CSE of the student's district of residence to schedule an expedited meeting to consider a change in placement for the student under the following circumstances:
 - A student with a disability who has previously been suspended for the maximum allowable number of days violates the code of conduct; or
 - The CSE has determined that the conduct which resulted in the disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability; or
 - A student with a disability violates the code of conduct and the conduct would be punishable by a suspension in excess of ten days if the student did not have a disability

Provision of Services during Suspension for Special Education Students

Students removed for a period less than ten (10) days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete the assignments during their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of suspension. The school will also provide alternative instruction, including assignment instructions, phone assistance, computer instruction, and home visits and one-on-one tutoring, so suspended students are given a full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum. School personnel, in consultation with the student's special education teacher, make the service determination.

During any removal within the school year, which combined with previous removals equals ten (10) days or more () but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and to achieve the goals of his/her IEP. School personnel, in consultation with the student's special education teacher, make the service determination.

During any removal of the student from the general education setting for more than ten days services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and to achieve the goals of his/her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The school will implement the recommendation of the CSE with respect to services to be provided to the student in an interim alternative education setting.

A student may be expelled or suspended for the balance of a school year when the behavior resulting in the suspension is not a manifestation of the disability; removal for up to forty-five days may be ordered, even if the CSE determines that a student's misconduct was a manifestation of disability, if the misconduct which resulted in the disciplinary proceeding involves weapons, drugs, or serious physical injury to another individual. In any such long-term removal the student will receive services in an interim alternative education setting as determined by the CSE of the student's district of residence.

Committee on Special Education (CSE) Meetings

Meetings of the CSE of the student's district of residence are required either to develop a behavioral assessment plan or, if the student has one, to review the plan when (a) the student is first removed from his/her current placement for more than ten (10) school days in a school year and (b) when commencing a removal that constitutes a change in placement. Subsequently, if other removals occur that do not constitute a change in placement; the school will work with the CSE of the student's district of residence to review the student's assessment plan and its implementation to determine if modifications are necessary.

Due Process

If the discipline contemplated would constitute a change in placement , then (a) no later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents shall be notified of that decision and provided with a copy of New York State's procedural safeguards, and (b) within ten (10) school days after the decision is made, the CSE of the student's district of residence shall meet to determine if the behavior subject to the disciplinary action is a manifestation of the student's disability.

If, upon review, it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability.

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. The student will remain in his/her current educational placement during the pendency of the hearing unless his/her offense involves a serious bodily injury, drugs, or weapons or he/she poses a health or safety risk.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting (IAES) or the manifestation determination regarding a disciplinary action relating to weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, the student shall remain in the IAES pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and school agree otherwise.

Note: In a situation involving drugs, weapons or serious bodily injury, a student with a disability may be removed to an IAES for forty-five (45) days, even if the CSE concludes that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. The School's Special Education Coordinator will work with the CSE to review the services to be provided in the IAES.

Student Searches

School lockers, desks, and other such equipment are not the private property of students, but the property of the school, and as such, they may be opened and subject to inspection from time to time by school officials. School officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter (e.g., a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs).

Parental Partnership: Communication

Effective communication between the school and home is vital to the successful academic, emotional, and social well-being of students. To keep parents informed of school events and student growth, the school communicates often with parents through newsletters, telephone calls, and individual and group meetings.

Secure School Website

National Heritage Academies is committed to student achievement and parental involvement. NHA maintains a secure website containing student information to link these two core values. This secure online tool can be accessed by visiting the school website and logging-in through the Parent Login link on the homepage. Administrators and teachers update this site daily to record student records, analyze data, and communicate important information.

NHA recognizes the value of informed and involved parents in the learning process. The website provides another way for parents to stay connected to the school. The online connection begins as soon as a student applies to attend an NHA school. The parent(s) of the applicant are sent a letter with detailed instructions for accessing their own *free* online account. After following these instructions, parents can log on to the system from any computer on the Internet and review their child's admissions information, attendance, and grades. Using the website, parents can also e-mail staff members, review important publications, check calendars, and subscribe to automated e-mail updates about their child. Questions related to the website should be directed to info@nhaschools.com.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Measuring and understanding parent satisfaction is an important part of our culture. In an effort to understand school-wide parent satisfaction, our students' parents are surveyed once per year. Parents are expected to complete one survey for each child enrolled at the school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are conducted face to face twice each school year. In addition, parents are encouraged to inquire about their child's performance any time during the school year. We believe that by continually monitoring students' progress, the parent-teacher conferences will serve as a review with very few surprises.

During each conference, teachers review the student's progress and discuss his/her strengths and opportunities. Parents are encouraged to ask questions in order to learn as much as possible about their child's performance. We aim to make parent-teacher conferences a positive experience for everyone involved.

Parental Partnership: Attendance

Regular attendance establishes good work habits and self-discipline. Our school records student attendance daily.

Arrival

Students should arrive at school between 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. After exiting their vehicle or buses, students may enter the building in a single file line. All students wearing hats should remove them immediately upon entering the building. Prompt arrival is essential for an orderly opening ceremony.

Dismissal

School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. In the interest of students' safety and 3:15 p.m. At 3:35 p.m., parents may enter the building to pick up their children. The front doors are locked at 3:15 p.m. The side door is opened at 3:20 p.m. to start car pickups. Students may not go to the school curb to meet their parents when their car tag is called.

Bussed students are dismissed at 3:35 p.m., and students who walk home are dismissed at 3:45 p.m.

Release of Students to Parents

If a parent wishes to pick up his/her child before the normal dismissal time, he/she must come to the main office. Students will not be dismissed to parents who are waiting outside the building in their vehicles. A parent may be required to show proper identification.

Students will only be dismissed with the approval of the principal. A request for an early dismissal must be in writing and signed by the parent. Early pick-up on a regular basis is strongly discouraged.

Release of Students to Others

If a parent wishes a relative under the age of 18 to pick up his/her child, he/she must first ask the school administration. The main office will maintain a list of authorized individuals to whom students may be released prior to the regular end of the school day. Students will not be released to any individual who is not a parent unless the individual's name appears on the list. Any individual seeking the release of a student must report to the school office and present proper identification.

At the beginning of the school year, parents may submit a list of individuals who are authorized to obtain the release of their child from school. If a parent wishes to add or delete an individual from the list, he/she may do so by filling out a new form. (Forms will be maintained in the office.) *In the event of an emergency, if the principal has been contacted and has approved the release, a student may be released to someone who is not on the list.*

Early Dismissal

Students who are dismissed early from the school day, for any reason, must be signed out by a parent in the office. Students will only be dismissed early from school for family emergencies, doctor or dental appointments that could not be scheduled outside school hours, or other circumstances deemed acceptable by the principal. The student must have a note signed by a parent indicating who is picking him/her up, the time he/she will be picked up, and the reason for the early dismissal.

Tardiness

Students who arrive late (after 8:45 a.m.) to school need to sign in at the office before going to their classroom and provide an excuse signed by a parent. Tardiness due to oversleeping, baby-sitting, being caught in traffic jams, etc. will be considered unexcused. Three or more unexcused tardies will fall under the Student Code of Conduct. Abuse of excused tardies will be addressed by the principal and may result in unexcused tardies with disciplinary action taken under the Student Code of Conduct in the sole discretion of the principal.

Absences

All absences, including absence due to medical and dental appointments, are to be verified by a call from the parent to the school office before 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. Students who are dismissed early from the school day, for any reason, must sign out in the office. Voicemail is available before and after school hours. A written excuse signed by a parent must be handed in to the classroom teacher. Three or more unexcused absences will fall under the Student Code of Conduct.

Absences are excused only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- Funerals
- Doctor or dental appointments (which could not be arranged outside school hours)
- Religious observances
- Required court appearances
- Pre-authorized absence (approved by the principal)

Abuse of excused absences will be investigated by the principal and may result in a referral to the Local School District Attendance Officer or other disciplinary action.

Unexcused tardies and absences are handled in the following manner:

Range of Unexcused Tardies	Range of Unexcused Absences	Progressive Consequences
1 - 3	1 - 2	Early Intervention
4 - 6	3 - 4	Parent Notification (Email or note)
7 - 9	5 - 6	Parent Contact (Phone or meeting)
10 - 12	7 - 9	Completion of Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP)*
13 - 16	10 - 14	Appropriate Consequence*
17 - 20	15 - 18	Appropriate Consequence*
21 - 24	19 - 22	Possible Expulsion/Withdrawal*

*Potential referral to the Local School District Attendance Officer with certified return receipt to parent. Factor considered in grade promotion.

Note: Any student who accumulates 20 consecutive days of unexcused absences will be subject to potential withdrawal from the school.

Truancy

A student is truant if unexcused absences total ten (10) or more school days in a school year. If truant, the student will be referred to the Local School District Attendance Officer.

The principal may act as the school's attendance officer or delegate that duty. The school's attendance officer investigates possible school attendance violations and takes other necessary actions to enforce the compulsory education laws.

Family Vacations

Parents planning to take their child on a trip must notify the principal or secretary at least two weeks before departure. The student's absence will be an excused absence if approved by the principal. Lengthy trips are discouraged and may be cause for withdrawal. It becomes the student's responsibility, with the help of the parents, to make arrangements with each teacher for missed assignments and to complete assigned work upon his/her return to school. The student is to complete all assignments within the same number of days as the length of the vacation. Incomplete assignments will not receive credit. Students who miss an announced test during their absence will take the test when all missed work is completed and within the same number of days missed due to the vacation. No exceptions will be made to this policy, including asking for work in advance of the trip.

Family Death or Terminal Illness

If there is a death, terminal illness, or similar traumatic situation in a student's family that may affect his/her attendance, emotional well-being, and/or level of concentration, the office staff members should be notified.

Illness during the School Day

If a student becomes ill during the school day, appropriate arrangements will be made for the student's care while waiting for parent pick-up. Students with vomiting or a fever must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Voluntary Withdrawal

To withdraw a student, a parent must complete a Student Withdrawal form available in the office.

Parental Partnership: Dress Code

To enable students to reach high academic standards, the school has put in place a dress code designed to reduce distractions and competitions. Implementing a simple, flexible, cost-effective dress code promotes student learning and increased academic instruction time. The school administration shall determine dress or grooming as appropriate or inappropriate. Interpretation of the Dress Code is at the principal and staff's discretion and their decision is final. Any family in need of financial assistance to purchase school clothing may see the principal.

Personal Hygiene

The personal grooming of students should be in accord with the standards set by the uniform dress code. Students should be clean and neat when at school.

All Students

- Hair and facial hair must be neatly groomed.
- Chains and body piercing ornaments are prohibited. Males may not wear earrings, and females may wear two (2) small earrings per ear. Earrings should be no larger than a quarter. Any jewelry or similar artifact that is obscene or distracting may not be worn. Necklaces, dog tags, and keys must be worn inside the shirt or sweater.
- Tattoos must be covered.
- Sneakers with roller skates attached are not permitted.

Grades K-5

- All pants must be navy blue. No cargo or crop pants are permitted. Pants may be pleated or flat front. They must be full length and appropriately fastened at the waist; sagging pants are not permitted. Pants with loops require belts. Pants must be cotton, canvas, corduroy, linen, polyester, or twill.
- Girls may wear solid navy blue skirts and jumpers that are at least knee length. Leotards are not permitted under shorts or skirts.
- Shorts must be navy blue. They must be at least knee length. Shorts may be worn in September, October, May, and June. Shorts may be worn on warm weather days in September, October, and after Spring Break through the end of the school year. No cargo or jean shorts are permitted.
- Shirts must be polo style and must be solid bright green or white. A bright green polo purchased only through Image Builders is encouraged. Please contact the Image Builders toll-free customer service hotline at (855) 654-6243. A customer service representative will be available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday - Eastern Standard Time or go to the school website for more information. Striped shirts are not permitted, nor are other accessories such as multi-layered/multiple shirts, scarves, or wraps. Manufacturer trademarks, if any, must be one inch or less in size. Undershirts must be either white or the color of the student's current top. All tops must be tucked into bottoms. Girls may not show cleavage.
- Sweaters and jackets must match the dress code. They may not have hoods. No jackets, hoodies, or vests are permitted to be worn after the child has arrived in his/her classroom.
- Shoes must be brown or black. Slippers, flip-flops, sweater shoes, Crocs, steel-toed boots or shoes, or other footwear that could be a safety hazard are prohibited. Sneakers may be worn throughout the day by students in K-1 only when they have P.E. that day. Students in

grades 2-5 must bring their sneakers to school and only wear them just prior to and after P.E. After P.E. they must change back into their dress shoes.

- Socks must be solid in color.
- Pant legs may not be tucked into socks.

Grades 6-8

- Shirts must be a short or long sleeve bright green polo. A bright green polo purchased only through Image Builders is encouraged. Please contact the Image Builders toll-free customer service hotline at (855) 654-6243. A customer service representative will be available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday - Eastern Standard Time or go to the school website for more information. Alternatively, a white polo may be purchased at a manufacturer of your choice.
- Middle school students may also wear a long or short sleeve white dress shirt with a tie. Bright green and navy striped ties purchased only through Image Builders are encouraged.
- Cold weather attire may include sweaters or vests that are solid navy. All cold weather attire must be free of any designs or writing (for example, stripes, wording, etc.)
- Only navy blue pants are permitted.
- Students in grades 6-8 must bring their sneakers to school and only wear them just prior to and after P.E. After P.E. they must change back into their dress shoes.

The following are *examples* of inappropriate student dress and grooming:

- blue jeans
- low-cut and/or low-rise pants
- sweatpants
- sweatshirts
- hats, caps, and bandanas
- hair rollers, hair curlers, and combs
- plastic hair bags or hair nets
- sweat bands
- skull caps
- insignia on outwear not related to school or to Southside
- revealing or provocative clothing
- attire that may be considered weapons (e.g., chair belts, wallet chains, etc.)
- radical or distracting hair styles or color

Parental Partnership: Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

The school has adopted a policy addressing the importance of parent and family engagement. The Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, included below, was jointly developed with, and agreed on, by parents and family members of Title I participating children. In addition to existing policies and guidelines, the school also recognizes the need for a policy that meets the requirements under Section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-95).

Parents and family members of students are vital contributors in the education of their children. Accordingly, they are encouraged to participate in the development and structure of Title I activities and to be kept informed about programs in which their children belong. Moreover, they are to be kept informed of the academic progress their children make as a result of participation in these programs, for it is through mutual understanding and close cooperation between the school and home that a student’s academic success improves. Two-way communication between the school and home, both verbal and written, provides a sound base for a good partnership to provide an effective educational program for all students. Full realization of the partnership will be achieved through the on-going commitment and active participation by both home and school. The policy describes how federal and applicable state requirements for parental engagement will be met and sets the school’s expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement and engagement.

ESSA Section	Ways in Which School Staff Accomplish these Activities
<p>1116 (c) (1) The school shall convene an Annual Title I Parent and Family Meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under Title I, to explain requirements of Title I, and their right to be involved.</p>	<p>Early in the school year, parents and family members are invited to an annual Title I Parent and Family Meeting to meet the staff, learn more about Title I programs, ask questions, and give suggestions. The following information is part of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Title I requirements <input type="checkbox"/> The right for parents and family members to be involved and to provide input on the Title I program, the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, the School-Parent Compact/Commitment to Excellence Contract, and the Homeless Dispute Resolution process <input type="checkbox"/> How progress is measured and how they receive feedback about their child’s progress. <p>Parents and family members who are unable to make this meeting are invited to schedule a meeting with school staff to go over the information at a time that is convenient for them.</p>
<p>1116 (c) (2) The school shall offer flexible number of meetings at times convenient to parents and provide transportation, child care, or home visits as it relates to parental involvement.</p>	<p>Meetings are offered at times convenient for parents and family members and if needed, transportation, child care, and home visits can be arranged. Teachers, deans and principal also available by email, voicemail, and appointment.</p>

<p>1116 (c) (3) The school shall involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school’s parent and family engagement policy and joint development of the schoolwide program plan.</p>	<p>Parents and family members are involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the school’s parent and family engagement policy, and the joint development of the school improvement plan, Parent and Family Engagement Plan, and Title I Program. At least annually, the school, parents and family members convene to evaluate the school improvement plan, Parent and Family Engagement Plan, and Title I Program. This assessment includes metrics so the school can evaluate the effectiveness of parent and family engagement policy initiatives and the level of responsiveness to parent and family concerns. This assessment initiative helps the school identify barriers to greater parent and family participation. The school uses the findings of this assessment initiative to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement and to revise, if necessary, this Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Further, these metrics may be used as a measure in the performance evaluations of the school, principals, and staff. Examples of metrics include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Responses to, and the results of, the annual Parent Satisfaction Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Increase or decrease in the number of parents and family members involved in school activities <input type="checkbox"/> Percent of signed School-Parent Compacts/Commitment to Excellence Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at parent-teacher conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops and learning experiences offered for parents and family members
<p>1116 (c) (4) (A) The school shall provide parents of Title I children timely information on Title I programs.</p>	<p>In order to build meaningful, consistent, and effective communication between the home and the school, parents and family members of Title I children are provided timely information regarding the school programs in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Fall Title I Parent and Family Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Spring Parent and Family SIP Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> The Parent and Student Handbook <input type="checkbox"/> Regular school and classroom newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> The annual school calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Special event and reminder notices <input type="checkbox"/> Report cards <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-teacher conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Parent and Family Nights <input type="checkbox"/> School assemblies/ceremonies (parents invited) <input type="checkbox"/> The School-Parent Compact/Commitment to Excellence Contract
<p>1116 (c) (4) (B) The school shall provide parents of Title I children a description and explanation of the curriculum used at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure progress, and the achievement levels of challenging State academic standards students are expected to meet.</p>	<p>Parents of Title I children are provided a description and explanation about the school’s curriculum, assessments, and proficiency level expectations. Efforts are made to assist parents of Title I children in understanding challenging State academic standards and the achievement levels established for students, the school curriculum, and school expectations and assessment results. This is accomplished by scheduling regular parent and family meetings throughout the school year.</p>

<p>1116 (c) (4) (C) The school shall provide parents of participating Title I students opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions, and to participate as appropriate, in decisions relating to their child’s education, and to respond to any suggestions as soon as practicably possible.</p>	<p>Parents and family members have opportunities to share suggestions, participate in decision making on issues relating to their child’s education, and respond to any suggestions as soon as possible in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Fall Title I Parent and Family Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Spring Parent and Family SIP Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Parent and Family Learning Events <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings with the principal as needed and or upon request
<p>1116 (c) (5) The school shall ensure that if the schoolwide program plan is not satisfactory to parents of participating students, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local education agency.</p>	<p>At least one parent representative participates on the School Improvement Planning Committee and is included in the school’s comprehensive needs assessment process. Parents and family members have the opportunity to attend the annual Spring Parent and Family SIP Meeting and submit comments about the school improvement plan and goals via a survey or directly to school administration. Any comments from parents on the plan are submitted to the local education agency by the school in conjunction with submission of the school’s improvement plan.</p>
<p>1116 (d) (1) The school shall jointly develop, with parents, a school-parent compact that outlines how the entire school staff, parents, and students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State’s high standards. This compact must describe the school’s responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children’s learning, volunteering in their child’s classroom, and participating in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extra-curricular time.</p>	<p>The School-Parent Compact/Commitment to Excellence Contract was developed with input from parents and family members. This contract describes how the parents, school staff, and students share the responsibility for improving student achievement. It is given to all parents prior to school opening and is presented to parents and family members annually for further development. Parent and family member input is collected through parent and family meetings and surveys.</p>
<p>1116 (d) (2) (A) The school-parent compact must address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through elementary parent/teacher conferences, at least annually, during which the compact will be discussed with parents as it relates to the individual child’s achievement.</p>	<p>The School-Parent Compact/Commitment to Excellence Contract is shared annually at parent-teacher conferences each fall. This is an opportunity for the parents and the teacher to share ways in which they can jointly support the child’s learning at home and school.</p>

<p>1116 (d) (2) (B) The school-parent compact must provide for frequent reports to parents on their child’s progress.</p>	<p>Student progress is reported to parents in several different ways at a variety of times throughout the school year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unit assessment results sent home with students <input type="checkbox"/> NWEA results given to parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences <input type="checkbox"/> M-STEP results given to parents annually <input type="checkbox"/> Report cards <input type="checkbox"/> myNHA is a tool parents can use at home to access student progress
<p>1116 (d) (2) (C) The school-parent compact must afford parents of children receiving Title I services, reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer, and participate in their child’s class, and observation of classroom activities.</p>	<p>Parents of all children including those receiving Title I services are encouraged to visit the school for volunteer training and information, participate in and/or observe their child’s classes, actively volunteer in the life of the school, and attend other meetings and events. In addition, the school encourages parents and family members to offer their ideas and suggestions to the school staff.</p>
<p>1116 (d) (2) (D) The school-parent compact must ensure regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language family members can understand.</p>	<p>Private meetings with parents are held to explain information as needed. Information is shared with parents in a language and format they can understand. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual staff for interpretation <input type="checkbox"/> Offering translators during parent meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Translation of documents
<p>1116 (e)(1) The school shall provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or LEA, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child’s progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.</p>	<p>The school provides assistance to parents of children served by the school or LEA, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of 1116 (e)(1), and how to monitor a child’s progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.</p>
<p>1116 (e) (2) The school shall provide materials and training to help parents work with their children at home to improve their children’s achievement.</p>	<p>The school provides materials and training to help parents and family members develop and use at-home skills that support their children’s academic achievement and social development. Parents and family members are given techniques and strategies that they may use to improve their children’s academic success and to assist their children in learning at home. A Parent Needs Assessment survey is conducted during a Parent and Family Night. Some of these activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Math games <input type="checkbox"/> Reading skills games <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Writing skills <input type="checkbox"/> District standards and assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Community resources <input type="checkbox"/> Helping with homework

<p>1116 (e) (3) The school shall educate staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of parents' contributions. Staff shall receive guidance in ways to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and to build relationships between the parents and the school.</p>	<p>The school educates principals, teachers, student services personnel, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, regarding the value and utility of parental contribution, ways to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, ways to implement and coordinate parent and family programs, and ways to build ties between parents and family members and the school.</p>
<p>1116 (e) (4) The school shall coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.</p>	<p>The school coordinates and integrates, to a feasible and appropriate extent, parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs to encourage parents and family members to fully participate in the education of their children.</p>
<p>1116 (e) (5) The school shall ensure information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is shared with parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents can understand.</p>	<p>Information is shared with parents in a language and format they can understand. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual staff for interpretation <input type="checkbox"/> Offering translators during parent meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Translation of documents <input type="checkbox"/> Private meetings with parents to explain information as needed
<p>1116 (e) (14) The school shall provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.</p>	<p>Parents are provided with other reasonable support such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Room with community resources listed and computer access <input type="checkbox"/> Parent and Family Learning Events based on parent survey results <input type="checkbox"/> Voice of Parent results used for decision making regarding school safety and student behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Translation of documents
<p>1116 (f) The school shall provide full opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.</p>	<p>Staff provide opportunities for full parent and family participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual staff or translators are available for interpretation and translation of important documents for limited English proficient parents and families of migratory children <input type="checkbox"/> School administration will meet with families who have limited English proficiency, families with members who have disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, and migratory families to provide information regarding support available to them <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Wheel chair accessible campus

Parental Partnership: Visitor and Volunteer Guidelines

Visitors and volunteers are expected to review and honor the following guidelines while visiting or volunteering for the school. Violation of these guidelines endangers the safety of students and their right to an education. Those not abiding by these guidelines may be barred from the building and/or prevented from participating in future volunteer opportunities. Please contact the school's office for information on becoming a volunteer.

General

1. Potential volunteers are required to complete the appropriate level of background check before a volunteer assignment begins. Parents and guardians may complete the online Volunteer Authorization and Release form on the parents' form site to begin the background check process. Individuals who do not have access to the parents' form site may obtain a Volunteer Authorization and Release form in the school office.
2. All visitors and volunteers must be processed through the electronic visitor management system, using their driver's license and must wear a form of identification provided by the school. They may also be required to submit to a criminal background check.
3. All visitors and volunteers must sign both in and out in the school office. They may not walk directly to any classroom unless given permission by the office staff.
4. All visitors and volunteers must reinforce and demonstrate the school's Moral Focus Philosophy.
5. The distribution of literature, without prior approval from the classroom teacher or the principal, is prohibited.
6. Visitors and volunteers must abide by staff instructions, asking for clarification if necessary.
7. Corporal punishment is prohibited. As an alternative, the Student Code of Conduct disciplinary procedures are to be followed by school personnel or the classroom teacher.
8. The school is a public school with a Board policy of neutrality regarding religion. Visitors and volunteers may neither show preference for any one religion over any other religion nor share their personal religious views with students.
9. Appropriate dress is required at all times.
10. Smoking, tobacco, and alcohol use are prohibited anywhere on school property, in all indoor facilities, and in the presence of students.

Classrooms

1. The teacher is ultimately responsible for the students and activities in his/her classroom.
2. Volunteers should enter classrooms quietly and wait for a break in the activity before communicating with the teacher and students.
3. Student infractions must be addressed by the classroom teacher.
4. Classroom issues regarding students are confidential. Visitors and volunteers may not talk with others about the learning or disciplinary needs of any child other than their own.
5. Classroom visitors are allowed for a limited time and must have the principal's permission.

Field Trips

1. Volunteer drivers must provide a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, and a sufficient number of seat belts to transport their assigned students. Volunteer drivers, overnight chaperones, and anyone in attendance of a field trip may be required to submit to a criminal background check.
2. Volunteers should follow all instructions provided by the teacher or school.
3. Smoking is prohibited in the presence of students.

4. Volunteer drivers must drive directly to the event and return directly to school (or pre-approved location) immediately after the activity. "Side trips" are prohibited.
5. Volunteer drivers should leave radios off and avoid playing music.
6. Volunteers should behave appropriately when participating on field trips.

Field trips are a privilege, not a right, and participation is determined at the teachers' and administrators' discretion.

General School Procedures

Transportation

Students must live over 1.5 miles from school to receive bus transportation. Students who live in the surrounding suburbs can receive transportation, but parents are responsible to call their bus service to arrange bus transportation for their child(ren).

Drivers and Carpools

Many parents form carpools. A list of parents interested in carpooling may be available in the school office.

With so many parents driving to school, significant traffic congestion can occur on a daily basis. Parents are asked to be patient and to plan on some delays, particularly during inclement weather.

Parking Lots

Between 8:10 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and 3:45 p.m., we ask that no cars pull into the front lot, but only use the side lot along Ford Drive. This allows only busses only to use the front lot for loading and unloading students in a safe environment.

When you pull into the front lot for school business or child pick up/drop off, please do not park or idle in front of the school or in a handicap spot (unless you have a visual handicap pass for your vehicle).

Bicycles

Riding bicycles to and from school is strongly discouraged due to safety reasons. If it is necessary for a student to ride a bicycle to school, he/she must park and lock the bicycle before school begins and leave it untouched until school is dismissed. The school does not assume responsibility for damage or theft of bicycles. The student should register his/her bike with the police department and must wear a bicycle helmet.

Walkers

Students who walk to and from school should go directly home following dismissal. Failing to do so may cause undue worry for parents and staff members. A walker is defined as a student who walks off of school grounds to meet his/her parent off school grounds or at their home.

Meals

All students receive a 30-minute lunch period. A nutritious lunch, including milk, may be purchased at school, or students may bring sack lunches from home. Fast food lunches may not be brought into the classrooms. Breakfast is also offered prior to the start of school.

Your student's school is participating in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a Federal program which offers free meals to all enrolled students. Parents should complete a Household Income Eligibility Form as part of the program participation. These forms are available in the school's front office. The Household Income Eligibility Form determines the funding your student's school will receive to provide supplemental student support services. Incomplete forms may result in the elimination of these school services.

Snacks

A snack period may be offered at the discretion of the teacher. Students must bring their own snacks from home as they are not provided by the school. During the snack time, students must be in their seats. They may talk quietly with those sitting near them. Snacks should be nutritional (e.g., fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers). Candy, pop/soda, and sweets are not acceptable.

Recess

Students typically need and want a time during the day to engage in self-directed activity. Recess is provided for a breath of fresh air, a moment of solitude, a private conversation, or a game. As in the classroom, the supervising adult is the authority during recess. When playing games, students are encouraged to include anyone interested in participating. Games that are abusive or demeaning are not permitted. All students are to remain in the designated recess area. Students may not use playground equipment while waiting for school to begin, waiting for rides, or following dismissal.

Holiday Celebrations

Birthdays

Any food items brought in for a student's birthday must be store bought. Please check with your child's teacher to arrange a time to bring in your store bought baked goods.

Halloween

Halloween is not celebrated at the school. Consequently, costumes are not worn to school.

Christmas/Winter Holiday

Classes may have a small party at the end of the last day before the Christmas/winter holiday.

St. Valentine's Day

Students in grades K-4 are encouraged to celebrate St. Valentine's Day by making homemade valentines for their classmates. A class list will be supplied by the teacher for parents' convenience. Students bringing valentines must give one to each of their classmates. Students in grades 5-8 make special valentines at school that are shared with veterans, senior citizens, hospitalized children, or members of the armed services.

Field Trips

When students travel away from school, they are subject to the same rules, regulations, and appropriate politeness observed at the school. As in the classroom, the teacher will judge behavior as acceptable or unacceptable. Misbehavior or disregard of school policies can result in denial of field trip privileges. Signed permission slips must be on file with the teacher for each student on each field trip.

Lost and Found

The lost and found is located in the main office. Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of the school year.

Personal Items

The school will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. We expect students to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education at home. Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for school, or interfering with students' educational focus will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a

staff member until the parents retrieve them. The school shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

Students shall not possess cell phones, PDAs, iPods, MP3 players, video equipment, cameras, gaming devices, and electronic devices during the instructional day at school or school-related events. Subject to the Search and Seizure Practices and Procedures, the possession of such electronic devices during those restricted times constitutes the consent to search for and confiscate the device(s) by school personnel. Confiscated devices may be picked up on electronics pick-up day. Electronic pick-up days will be scheduled for Thursdays at 4:15 p.m. and may only be returned to an adult.

Coaches and personnel in charge of extracurricular activities may make exceptions to this rule upon obtaining the principal's permission.

Any exceptions to this general rule sought by parents for specific health or safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the principal. The principal's determination is final.

Emergency School Procedures

In the case of severe weather (e.g., major snowstorm, ice storm, dangerous wind chills, heavy fog), the principal will notify local radio and TV stations regarding the decision to close school or delay its opening. A phone message will also be sent out to each family through our SchoolMessenger calling system. If the Syracuse City School District is delayed or canceled due to weather conditions, then the school Southside Academy Charter School will also be delayed or cancelled.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning

If school is already in session when the watch or warning is issued, the school stays open. The staff takes safety precautions.

Tornado Watch

Students remain in school, and the staff takes safety precautions. Students are released to parents or other designated adults upon request.

Tornado Warning

All students and staff members remain in the building and take shelter in designated areas. Students may be detained beyond the usual dismissal time. Students are released to parents or other designated adults upon request.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills are held throughout the year. Safe areas inside and outside the building are designated for each classroom.

Tobacco Use

The school is a non-smoking facility. Any form of smoking and tobacco use are prohibited anywhere on school property, in all indoor facilities, and in the presence of students.

Payments Made to School

Checks written to the school that are returned for insufficient funds are processed through a service called Payliance. If a check is returned, Payliance contacts the person who wrote the check to collect the check's face value plus a collection fee. If he/she cannot be contacted or

fails to respond properly, the check may be resubmitted to the bank with applicable collection fees.

Medical Information

To maintain a healthy learning environment, students are offered certain health services and are required to provide evidence of required immunizations.

Health Screenings

Our students receive special health services through the Health Department. These services include vision screening for students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, and 7.

Immunization Requirements

No student shall be permitted to remain in school for more than fourteen (14) days unless the student presents written evidence that he/she has been immunized by a method of immunization approved by the Department of Health or is in the process of being immunized. If a student is transferring from another state, an extension may be granted. Parents may request in writing a medical or religious exemption from immunization requirements (form available in the office). The minimum complete immunizations are:

Vaccines	Pre-K	Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2 and 3	Grades 4 and 5	Grades 6, 7 and 8
Diphtheria and Tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (DTaP/DTP/Tdap/Td)	4 doses	5 doses or 4 doses if the 4 th dose was received at 4 years or older or 3 doses if 7 years or older and the series was started at 1 year or older		3 doses
Diphtheria and Tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine booster (Tdap)	Not applicable			1 dose
Polio vaccine (IPV/OPV)	3 doses	4 doses or 3 doses if the 3 rd dose was received at 4 years or older	3 doses	4 doses or 3 doses if the 3 rd dose was received at 4 years or older
Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR)	1 dose	2 doses		
Hepatitis B vaccine	3 doses	3 doses		
Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine	1 dose	2 doses	1 dose	2 doses

Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY)	Not applicable	grades 7 and 8: 1 dose
Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine (Hib)	1 to 4 doses	Not applicable
Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine (PCV)	1 to 4 doses	Not applicable

Children in a prekindergarten setting should be age-appropriately immunized. The number of doses depends on the schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). For grades Pre-k through 8, intervals between doses of vaccine should be in accordance with the ACIP-recommended immunization schedule for persons 0 through 18 years of age. (Exception: intervals between doses of polio vaccine DO NOT need to be reviewed for grades 4 and 5.) Doses received before the minimum age or intervals are not valid and do not count toward the number of doses listed below.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the name of a group of viruses that includes more than 100 different strains or types. More than 30 of these viruses are sexually transmitted. Most people who become infected with HPV will not have any symptoms and will clear the infection on their own. Some of these viruses are called "high-risk" types and may lead to cancer. The virus lives in the skin or mucous membranes and usually causes no symptoms. There is no cure for HPV infection, although in many cases, the infection goes away on its own. The HPV vaccine is recommended for 11-12 year-old girls and can be given to girls as young as nine. The vaccine is also recommended for 13-26 year-old girls/women who have not yet received or completed the vaccine series. The vaccine is given through a series of three shots over a six month period. Parents are encouraged to talk with their child’s health care provider or local health department about HPV and immunization. More information is also available at the Center for Disease Control’s website: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv>.

Medication Administration

Only necessary medications that must be given during regular school hours will be administered.

All medications, whether prescribed or over-the-counter, require written permission from the custodial parent. They must complete the Medication Administration Permission form (one form per medication). The form must be renewed each school year or upon any change in medication or dosage.

Though we encourage a physician’s written permission in all cases, a physician signature is required under the following conditions:

- All medications (prescribed and non-prescribed)
- Any possession or use of an inhaler or epinephrine injector
- Any self-possession or self-administration of any medication

Parents must include any prescribed treatment or care plan. An emergency care plan from the physician is required for asthma and epinephrine medications.

Prescribed medication must be delivered to the school in the original container prepared and labeled by a pharmacy. The label must include the dosage and frequency of administration.

Over-the-counter medication must be in the original package and have the student's name affixed to the package.

The medication supplied to the school must be in the exact dosage prescribed, so the individual administering medications is not responsible for dividing or splitting pills. All medication must be picked up by the parent at the end of the school year or upon a student's withdrawal. Any medication not picked up will be discarded.

If a parent is accompanying his/her child on a field trip, the parent will be required to administer the child's medication.

Meningococcal Disease

Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth and is caused by bacteria. The bacteria are spread from person to person by direct contact with an infected person's nose or throat secretions. Illness often starts with a sudden fever, headache, stiff neck, a rash, and possibly nausea and vomiting. An infected person may become very sick within a few hours of the first symptoms and should seek medical care immediately. The disease could result in death or permanent disability.

There are two immunizations available: one for people who are 11-55 years old and another for people who are 2-10 or 55+ years old if certain medical conditions exist that put them at higher risk of contracting the disease.

Parents should talk with their child's health care provider or local health department about meningococcal disease and immunization.

Notifications

Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents should submit a written request to the school principal clearly identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. A school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parents of the time and place the records may be inspected.
- The right to seek an amendment of the student's education records that the parent believes are inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights of privacy. Parents should submit a written request to the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want amended and specifying its inaccuracy. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parents of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records. Hearing procedures will be provided to the parents when a hearing is requested.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The school does not need written consent to disclose a student's education records if the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions and the disclosure is to or for: (see 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99.31):
 1. School administrators, teachers, support staff, NHA personnel and other school officials which have a legitimate educational interest
 2. Persons or organizations with whom the school or NHA has outsourced services or functions and which have a legitimate educational interest (e.g., attorneys, auditors, medical consultants, special and supplemental education providers, therapists)
 3. Officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll or where the student is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment, and as long as a proper records release request is received by the sending school
 4. Certain federal and state officials and educational authorities (for audit, evaluation, reporting, or compliance purposes) or state and local authorities concerning the juvenile justice system in accordance with state statute
 5. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
 6. Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school or NHA to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests, administer student aid programs, or improve instruction
 7. Accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions
 8. Compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena after the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent of the order or subpoena
 9. Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Right to Know under Federal Law

Parents of students have the right to know the professional qualifications of the school's classroom teachers and the school must give this information to parents in a timely manner if they ask for it. Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- Whether the State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if they do, their qualifications

Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
 3. Sexual behavior or attitudes
 4. Anti-social, demeaning, illegal, or self-incriminating behavior
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close familial relationships
 6. Legally-recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
 7. Religious affiliations, beliefs, or practices of the student or parent
 8. Income, other than as required by law, to determine program eligibility
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law)
 3. Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others
- Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by a school to its students
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

The school protects student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The school will also both directly notify parents through U.S. Mail, e-mail, parent meetings, or the Parent and Student Handbook of the specific or approximate dates (if such events are planned and/or scheduled) of the above activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in them. *Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Boy Scouts of America

The school does not discriminate against any group officially affiliated with either the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within an open forum. The school does not deny such access or opportunity or discriminate for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or the oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or the youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

Gender Equity Policy (Title IX)

The school certifies compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C 1681 et seq. (Title IX), and its implementing regulation, at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. The school, as a recipient of federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education, is subject to Title IX and does not discriminate based on gender in employment or any educational program or activity it operates.

Complaints or grievances regarding discrimination based on gender should be delivered in writing to the principal of the school and should provide specific details regarding the event, the date of the event, and the parties involved. The complaint will be considered confidential and will be expeditiously investigated by the principal with the assistance of NHA legal counsel as necessary and appropriate.

Unsafe School Choice Option

A student attending a persistently dangerous school or a student who is a victim of a violent criminal offense on school property has the right to transfer to another safe school in the district, if his/her parent requests a transfer. If there is not another safe school in the district providing instruction at the student's grade level, the school shall contact neighboring districts to request that the student be permitted to transfer to a school in one of those districts.

Asbestos Management Plan

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires us to annually notify parents, students, staff members, and others who regularly occupy the school building of compliance

with AHERA. An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been developed for the school and is on file in the school office. Parents may schedule an appointment with the principal if they wish to review the AMP.

Pesticide Notification

The school aims to control pest populations and to reduce the use of active pesticides throughout the school by implementing an integrated pest management program. The health and safety of all persons within the school's facilities are of primary concern. In addition to providing parents with this annual notification, the school will notify parents in advance of individual pesticide applications of non-emergency applications of pesticides such as an insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide, other than a bait or gel formation, that is made to the school ground or building. Please note that notification is not given for the use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants, or antimicrobial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but parents will be notified following any such application. Advance notice will be posted on the front door and posted in a public, common area of the school other than the entrance. A parent can also request to be notified by letter postmarked at least 72 hours before the application is to take place. Please contact the school office if you wish to be notified by letter or wish to review the school's integrated pest management program or records. Your school will provide additional information regarding this.

Complaint Procedures

Any individual or group may bring a complaint to the board of trustees* of the school alleging a violation of the New York State Charter Schools Act, the charter school's charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the charter school. If the individual or group determines that the board of trustees has not adequately addressed the complaint, the complainant may present the complaint to the Board of Regents/State Education Department, which shall investigate and respond. Board of Regents Rule 8 NYCRR § 3.16 delegates to the Commissioner of Education the authority to receive, investigate, and respond to complaints, and issue appropriate remedial orders on behalf of the Board of Regents. The Commissioner's decision will be final.

National Heritage Academies' Parent Relations Department provides assistance to parents and the school by resolving concerns and assisting with parenting issues that influence children's education. The classroom teacher and principal should be the first line of communication. Parent Relations will work with parents and the school to bring about a satisfactory resolution. Parent Relations can be reached at 877-642-7471, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

*The board of trustees may be contacted by sending or personally delivering a written complaint to this address:

Southside Academy Charter School
Attn: Board President
2200 Onondaga Creek Road
Syracuse, NY 13207-2361

Southside Academy Charter School 2017-18 School Year

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

July 10-14 Content Leader Training
 July 24-27, NHA Leadership Summit, GR
 July 28, New Principal Training, GR
 14th-18th NTO
 21st-25th Staff PD
 28th-29th, 31st Staff PD; 30th Regional PD

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

1st Teacher Prep
 4th Labor Day; 5th Teacher Prep; 6th First Day of School

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

6th Staff PD
 9th Columbus Day

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

2nd PT Conferences
 7th Regional PD; 8th End of Q1; 10th Veterans Day
 22nd-24th Thanksgiving Break
 27th School Resumes

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

25th-January 1st Winter Break

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

1st New Year's Day; 2nd School Resumes
 12th Staff PD
 15th Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 25th End of Q2

February						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				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			

19th-23rd Mid Winter Break
 26th School Resumes

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

9th PT Conferences
 16th Regional PD
 20th-21st Principal's Meeting
 30th Good Friday

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

5th End of Q3
 11th NYS Gr. 3-8 ELA Assessments
 23rd-27th Spring Break
 30th School Resumes

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

1st NYS GR. 3-8 Math Assessments
 28th Memorial Day

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

22nd Last Day of School; End of 4th Quarter

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

4th of July

- Students Do Not Report/ Staff Report All Day
- Students Report Half Day/ Staff Report All Day
- Students/ Staff Do Not Report

Board Approved: 6/20/17

Last Update: 5/30/2017
 181 School Days
 8:15 am - 3:45 pm School Hours
 8:15 am - 11:30 am (half)
 1252 Instructional Hours

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE CONTRACT

To successfully challenge each child to achieve, parents, students, and teachers must work together, committed to the school’s high expectations and standards. Each parent, student, and teacher is asked to pledge his/her commitment by signing below:

Parent/Guardian Commitment: *I fully commit to my child’s education in the following ways:*

- I understand that my child is enrolled in this school so he/she has opportunities to achieve.
- I realize that the expectations and standards at this school are high and agree to support them.
- I understand and agree to be bound by all provisions outlined in the Parent and Student Handbook and acknowledge receipt of the Parent and Student Handbook by signing below.
- I will monitor my child’s attendance, homework completion, and read school correspondence.
- I will participate in parent-teacher conferences and volunteer for school activities when possible.
- I understand that my child must behave respectfully and responsibly to protect the safety, interest, and rights of others in the school. I will model appropriate behavior while in the school.

Please add any other commitment statements you would like to note:

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Student’s Commitment: *I fully commit to this school in the following ways:*

- I am enrolling in this school, because I want to achieve. I will put forth my best effort every single day.
- I agree with my school’s expectations, standards, and requirements, because I have high expectations for myself.
- I understand and agree to follow the Student Code of Conduct and Dress Code in the Parent and Student Handbook.
- I will attend school all day, every day, unless I have an excused absence.
- I will complete my homework, submit it on time, and contact my teacher about any questions.
- I will behave respectfully and responsibly to protect the safety, interests, and rights of others in the school. I will accept responsibility for my actions.

Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date
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Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date
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Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date
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Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date
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Teacher’s Commitment: *I fully commit to this school in the following ways:*

- I will provide each student opportunities to achieve.
- I will communicate with parents on a regular basis via personal contact, weekly newsletters, or progress reports and will make myself available to students and parents for any concerns they may have.
- I will display integrity and respect to students, parents, and staff members through my words and actions.
- I will protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom.

Teacher Signature	Teacher Printed Name	Date
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