

Achievement House

CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

# PARENT/GUARDIAN- STUDENT HANDBOOK



484-615-6200

[www.achievementcharter.com](http://www.achievementcharter.com)

[info@achievementcharter.com](mailto:info@achievementcharter.com)



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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## Board Officers

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*Teacher and Youth Pastor*

### **Bob Worn**

Vice President

*Human Resources Professional*

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*Controller, Carbochem Inc.*

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Secretary

*Adjunct Instructor at West Chester and Immaculata University*

## Board Members

### **Dr. Robert Maranto**

*University of Arkansas*

### **Dr. Lisabeth Sweeney**

*Educational Specialist, Curriculum Designer, and Charter School Advocate*

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## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING SCHEDULE

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All meetings will be held virtually. The public session begins at 7:00 p.m. and is preceded by a closed Executive Session beginning at 6:00 p.m. All interested parties are invited to attend the public session. Contact Sherri Gilligan at [sgilligan@achievementcharter.com](mailto:sgilligan@achievementcharter.com) for the link to attend any meeting.

- July 16, 2024
- August 20, 2024
- September 17, 2024
- October 15, 2024
- December 10, 2024
- January 21, 2025
- February 18, 2025
- March 18, 2025
- May 20, 2025
- June 17, 2025

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## AHCCS MISSION STATEMENT

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Achievement House Cyber Charter School students will experience an improved individual outcome, measured by academic achievement, in a personalized and rich learning environment that prepares them for success in a technology-driven world.

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## AHCCS VISION STATEMENT

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Every student is a VIP:

- **V**alued as an individual
- **I**nspired to innovate
- **P**repared for the future

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## SCHOOL MASCOT

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## NCAA COURSE APPROVAL

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As of October 2016, AHCCS offers NCAA-approved college preparatory, honors, and AP level courses for prospective student-athletes who are seeking NCAA initial-eligibility. NCAA schools require college-bound student-athletes to build a foundation of high school courses to prepare them for the academic expectations in college.

Certification of a prospective student-athlete is case-specific, and the Eligibility Center has the authority to determine in its sole discretion whether the prospective student-athlete has met all the criteria.

# 2024-25 SCHOOL CALENDAR

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: This calendar is not the same as your local school district's calendar\*\***

July 4—Independence Day Holiday  
July 16—Board Meeting  
August 12-15—New Teacher Training  
August 20—Board Meeting  
August 19-30 —Teacher Pre-Service  
September 2—Labor Day Holiday  
**September 3—First Day of School/Start of Quarter 1**  
September 4—9th Grade Back to School Night  
September 5—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
September 11—Back to School Night  
September 12—PTO Meeting  
September 17—Board Meeting  
September 19—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
**October 4 — Mid-Quarter**  
October 7-9—Assessment Testing  
October 14—Columbus Day Holiday/No School  
October 15—Board Meeting  
October 17—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
October 24—PTO Meeting  
October 25— In-Service Day/No School  
October 29—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
November 7—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
**November 8—End of Quarter 1**  
November 14—PTO Meeting  
November 11—Veterans Day Holiday/No School  
November 12—Teacher Workday  
November 21—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
November 28-December 2 —Thanksgiving/No School  
December 5—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
December 10—Board Meeting  
December 12—PTO Meeting  
December 19—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
**December 20—Mid-Quarter**  
December 23-January 1—Winter Break/No School  
January 2—School Begins for New Year  
January 9—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
January 20—Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday/No School  
January 21—Board Meeting

January 21—Board Meeting  
January 16—PTO Meeting  
January 23—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
**January 24—End of Quarter 2**  
January 27—Teacher Workday  
February 6—Half Day In-Service/AM Classes in Session  
February 6—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
February 13—PTO Meeting  
February 17—Presidents Day Holiday/No School  
February 18—Board Meeting  
February 20—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
**February 28—Mid-Quarter**  
March 6—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
March 12—Half Day In-Service/AM Classes in Session  
March 13—PTO Meeting  
March 18—Board Meeting  
March 20—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
**March 28— End of Quarter 3**  
March 31— Teacher Workday  
April 3—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
April 10—PTO Meeting  
April 24—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
April 16-April 21— Spring Break/No School  
April 22-May 9—PSSA Testing Window  
May 1—Parent/Guardian Orientation  
**May 2—Mid-Quarter**  
May 8—PTO Meeting  
May 12-23—Keystone Exam Testing Window  
May 20—Board Meeting  
May 22—Parent/Guardian Workshop  
May 23— Last Day of Work for Seniors  
May 26—Memorial Day Holiday/No School  
May 27—9th Grade Orientation  
**June 10—End of Quarter 4/Last Day of School**  
June 11-13—Teacher Work Day/Post-Service  
June 14—Graduation  
June 17—Board Meeting  
June 19—Juneteenth Holiday/Closed

# ACADEMIC INFORMATION

## Curriculum

AHCCS offers a robust, balanced curriculum that is designed to meet each student's academic needs. Our PA certified teachers are directly involved in creating course content that is aligned to PA Academic Standards. Teachers deliver this dynamic, custom curriculum to students through live virtual classes and independent online assignments. Students receive additional support from homeroom coaches, mentors, school counselors, and special education and ELL teachers. Flexible scheduling within each week enables students to meet academic requirements while also pursuing their individual interests.

The Board of Trustees for Achievement House Cyber Charter School affirms its rejection of racism and supports diversity and inclusion. With respect to the curriculum that will be taught by Achievement House, the Board has two objectives:

- To teach students how to think, not what to think.
- To present and assess the full complement of PA Core Standards.

## Promotion Requirements

Promotion from one grade to the next is based upon credits earned. Credits earned through summer programs may be acceptable if approved in advance by a school counselor. Parents/guardians will be informed on the fourth quarter report card whether or not a student has advanced or been retained. To be promoted, students must meet the minimum credit requirements, as confirmed by their counselor. The promotion of a high school student is determined by cumulative credits earned. Those requirements are as follows:

- Grade 9 to 10: Students must have earned at least 4.0 cumulative credits, to include 2.0 core course credits.
- Grade 10 to 11: Students must have earned at least 10.0 cumulative credits.
- Grade 11 to 12: Students must have earned at least 15.0 cumulative credits.

At all times, students in grades 9-11 must maintain a course schedule with sufficient credits to be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Students in grade 12 must maintain a course schedule with sufficient credits to qualify for June graduation (unless otherwise indicated in a student's Individualized Education Program). Students may not choose to repeat core academic courses, for credit, that have been previously completed with a passing grade.

## Instructional Schedule

Pennsylvania requires all public schools to offer a minimum of one hundred and eighty (180) days of instruction between July 1 and June 30. The school is required to provide 990 hours of instruction per year for grades 7-12. These hours may occur at any time during the day and on any day of the week between the first day of school, September 3, 2024 and the last day, June 10, 2025. At AHCCS, hours of instruction include student learning that occurs while attending live virtual classes (or viewing the recording of a live class), live help sessions, and working on class assignments independently. Content mastery fulfills the hourly requirements.

## Textbooks and Materials

Students will receive any course-applicable materials, to include paperbacks, supplies for music, art and science, access to our online textbooks, course-applicable subscriptions to online testing, libraries, and supplemental websites.

# ACADEMIC INFORMATION

## Academic Pacing

Within the Achievement House program, each student is encouraged to work at his or her own pace on assignments; however, students must adhere to the **weekly due dates** (defined below) for full credit to be earned. Teachers differentiate lessons and assignments to accommodate individual learners' access to course content. Students are required to show mastery of the course content per Pennsylvania standards before advancing to the next course level. Students are also expected to attend live virtual class OR watch the live virtual class recordings if attendance in class is missed. This approach results in a solid foundation of core knowledge essential for success in the next level.

**Suggested Due Dates:** All assignments will have suggested due dates to signify the date by which students should complete that assignment based on the teacher's recommendation. These suggested due dates will help students and parents/guardians organize the week's work by ensuring that students keep pace with the assigned work. It is recommended that students make every effort to complete all assignments by the suggested due date.

**Final Submission Dates:** All weekly assignments need to be submitted by Sunday night. Any incomplete work will be marked with a grade of zero to keep student grades accurate. Students will still be able to access any assignments posted during previous weeks. Any assignments completed after Sunday night will be considered late, and will be accepted and graded accordingly at the discretion of the teacher. Any incomplete work will be marked with a grade of zero to keep student grades accurate. Students will still be able to access any assignments posted during previous weeks **up until the mid-quarter or end of quarter deadline.**

## Diagnostic Testing

AHCCS's diagnostic tests measure student growth and achievement. The data provides information to assist in the placement of students and the need to accelerate or remediate students to ensure growth. These online tests will be given upon enrollment, and subsequently at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. Students must log in to a live class to have their test proctored.

## Standardized State Testing

Depending on grade-level and enrolled courses, students will be assigned to take mandatory PSSA and/or Keystone Exams. These exams must be proctored by AHCCS staff, in-person, and at a physical location, which will require families and students to make travel arrangements. Testing locations and schedules will be distributed and made available well in advance of the testing windows to allow for necessary planning. Below is the schedule for the PSSA and Keystone exams which will take place in Spring 2024. Testing attendance policies are indicated under "Attendance Policy" in "Policies and Procedures"

### *PSSA Exams*

All students in grades 7 and 8 will be required to take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exams. The PSSAs are standards-based assessments that measure student progress in the subject areas of Mathematics, English/Language Arts, and Science. All students in grades 7 and 8 are required to be assessed in Mathematics and English/Language Arts. Students in grade 8 are assessed additionally in Science.

### *Keystone Exams*

All students currently enrolled in an Algebra I, Biology, or Literature Keystone aligned course will be scheduled to take the correlating Keystone exam during the Spring testing window. Students must take all three (3) Keystone exams by the end of their 11th grade year for purposes of federal accountability. For this reason, students may consequently be scheduled to take Keystone exams even though they are not enrolled in a Keystone aligned course in the current academic year. Student performance on the Keystone exams acts as the accountability measure for Academic Performance at the high school level for the AHCCS School Performance Profile. Beginning with the graduating class of 2023, under Act 158, statewide graduation requirements are in effect and the Keystone Exams play a key role in meeting those requirements.



# ACADEMIC INFORMATION

## 2024-2025 PSSA/Keystone Exam Schedule

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Dates</i>
PSSA Exam Window	April 21 - May 9, 2025
Keystone Exam Spring Window	May 12-23, 2025

*\*Note: Information about alternate Keystone Exam testing windows will be communicated to eligible students at a later date.*

### Act 158

PA Act 158 is a statewide graduation requirement that allows students to show real-world preparedness by completing one of several designated pathways. AHCCS provides several pathways to meet this requirement:

- Scoring “Proficient” on all three Keystone exams: Algebra I, Biology, and Literature.
- Earning a target composite score on the three Keystone exams.
- Earning a target score on one of several approved standardized assessments other than keystones.
- Completing three evidence-based activities and/or assessments designated by AHCCS.

AHCCS will provide opportunities for students to fulfill an Act 158 approved pathway based on their career and academic goals. Families should be aware that Act 158 is mandatory for graduation and if a student does not meet a designated pathway, they will not be eligible for a diploma regardless of successful completion of all other graduation requirements.

Although some pathways no longer require students to achieve proficiency on the Keystone Exams to meet the statewide graduation requirements, students must still take the Keystone Exams as part of state and federal mandates.

### Special Education

Special education teachers at AHCCS work together individualizing the curriculum to meet the unique needs of each student. We provide a special education program in accordance with the current year’s federal and state regulations. All our special education teachers are highly qualified and certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Our special education department provides the following services:

- Development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and supporting special education documents, including specially designed instruction;
- Learning support in the form of IEP goal-based instruction in basic skills to support growth in reading, writing, math, and organization while supporting the students in their regular education classes;
- Transition planning and activities to support the students’ goals in the areas of post-secondary education, employment, independent living, and community agency supports;
- Assisting regular education teachers with modifying and presenting assignments in different modalities to ensure understanding and success for each student;
- Correspondence (via phone, chat, text, e-mail) with students on a weekly, daily, or as needed basis;
- Child Find procedures used to identify students who may qualify for special education services;
- Educational evaluations for all students who have previously been or are currently identified with special needs;
- Annual IEP meetings and reconvened IEP meetings as needed;

## STUDENT SUPPORT

- Quarterly IEP monitoring reports to parents/guardians indicating the student's progress toward achieving IEP goals and objectives;
- Speech, physical therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, assistive technology, or supplemental software programs as needed;
- Mentoring for parents/guardians on how to assist their child with academics and functional needs;
- Live interactive online learning sessions and technical support;
- 24-hour access to view student progress, grades, curriculum; and
- Parent/Guardian workshops, newsletters, and webinars on parent/guardian-selected topics;
- Three Tier Emotional Support Program & Services in the form of a social-emotional course; 21st Century Skills and small group and individual counseling based on individual needs;
- Systematic Guided Reading Instruction;
- Life Skills Support Program & Services to provide academic, career-based, and functional instruction that is individualized based on each student's measurable annual goals.

AHCCS follows Chapter 711 of the Pennsylvania Code and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regarding the discipline of all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities, and/or conduct injurious to themselves or others shall be disciplined in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEP), behavioral intervention plan, Title 22 Chapter 711 and relevant portions of Chapter 12 of the State Board of Education Regulations, IDEA 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and any other applicable federal or state law.

### **Chapter 15/504 Service Plan**

Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria for Special Education may nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a documented mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

### **English Language Development (ELD)**

Achievement House provides a rigorous, standards-based educational program for English Learners (ELs) of all levels. Our English Learners build and develop their linguistic proficiency in a program that is both intensive and flexible. Identified English Learners attend an ELD (English Language Development) course taught by a certified ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher and designed to promote the continual development of English language reading, speaking, writing and listening skills. Additionally, the ELD department collaborates closely with classroom teachers to ensure that academic curriculum is accessible so that your student can successfully meet standards and make gains in English language proficiency. Bilingual mentors and access to one-on-one help sessions further support students, ensuring positive outcomes for our English Learners.

Upon enrolling, non-native English-speaking students are evaluated for placement into the ELD program. Achievement House adheres to the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards and employs the WIDA Screener to accurately determine your student's English language proficiency. If it is determined that your student would benefit from ELD support, an individualized program is implemented to best help your student develop English language proficiency while achieving grade-level content standards.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

Four different sections of ELD support the needs of students. Newcomer EL (NEL) serves the needs of brand-new English learners acquiring basic English skills, Beginning EL (BEL) serves the needs of students in levels 1-2 (Entering and Beginning); Intermediate EL (IEL) serves the needs of students in levels 3-4 (Developing and Expanding); and Advanced EL (AEL) serves the needs of students in level 5 (Bridging).

Achievement House English Learners can truly achieve the proficiency and literacy to effectively communicate in English, excel in their academic courses, and realize their higher education and professional goals after graduation.

### **Services for Students Experiencing Homelessness**

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, Achievement House Cyber Charter School has designated Mrs. Shana Harris as the Homeless Liaison. Your child may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act if you are experiencing any of the following situations:

- Living in a shelter;
- Living in a motel or campground due to lack of an adequate alternative accommodation;
- Living in a car, park, abandoned building or bus/train station; or
- Doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship.

More information can be found at the National Center for Homeless Education website: <https://nche.ed.gov/>. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Harris at 484-748-1036 or [sharris@achievementcharter.com](mailto:sharris@achievementcharter.com) to find out what services and supports may be available to you.

### **Student Assistance Program**

#### *What is Student Assistance?*

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) at AHCCS is a comprehensive, school-based intervention program that involves prevention, identification and assessment, intervention, and postvention of issues and behaviors that impact student achievement and welfare, for example drug and alcohol use or extreme mental health concerns. The SAP team involves school staff who have been trained to work with and support any identified students and their families and help provide referrals to the community in which they reside.

#### *What is the Goal of the SAP?*

The SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community alcohol and drug and mental health agencies. SAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and make recommendations to assist the student and the parent/guardian. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP team will assist the parent/guardian and student so they may access services within the community. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

There are four phases to the student assistance process:

- Referral - Anyone can refer a student to SAP when they are concerned about someone's behavior -- any school staff, a student's friend, a family member or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the SAP team to ask for help. The SAP team contacts the parent/guardian for permission to proceed with the SAP process.

- Team Planning – The SAP team gathers objective information about the student’s performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent/guardian. The team meets with the parent/guardian to discuss the data collected and also meets with the student. Together, a plan is developed that includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student’s academic and personal success to include in-school and/or community-based services and activities.
- Intervention and Recommendations – The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities. The team might recommend a drug and alcohol or mental health assessment.
- Support and Follow-Up – The SAP team continues to work with and support the student and their family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

For further information about the SAP, please contact one of the members listed below. The Student Assistance Program members are:

Hannah Sapko, LSW, SAP Co-Coordinator,  
School Based Counselor  
Office Phone - 267-355-8186  
E-mail - [hsapko@achievementcharter.com](mailto:hsapko@achievementcharter.com)

Shana Harris, MSW, School Social Worker,  
SAP Co-Coordinator  
Office Phone-484-748-1036  
Email - [sharris@achievementcharter.com](mailto:sharris@achievementcharter.com)

- an AHCCS Annual Health Screening form dated after 7/1/2024.
- a Dental Examination form for all students entering 7th grade dated after 7/1/2023.
- a Physical Examination form for all students entering 11th grade dated after 7/1/2023.

<b>Student Health Requirements By Grade</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Enrolling</b>
<b>Medical Exam</b>					X		X
<b>Dental Exam</b>	X						X
<b>Growth Screening (Height/Weight)</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Vision Screening (Far &amp; Near)</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Hearing</b>	X				X		
<b>Scoliosis</b>	X						

## HEALTH INFORMATION

If your child does not receive the required vaccines due to a religious/ethical/moral objection, complete an immunization exemption form. If your child does not receive the required vaccines due to a medical reason, contact your health care provider for a medical exemption certificate.

Contact the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) to find a health care or vaccine provider in your area.

**Need a form?** Go to “The Parent/ Guardian Page” in Schoology, click on “Resources,” click on “Nurse’s Office” to find the required health forms and exemption form, if applicable. All forms may be returned by email to our school nurse, by mail to our school address or by fax to 610-458-1203.

For more information about our school health program contact our school nurse, Michelle Christie at [nurse@achievementcharter.com](mailto:nurse@achievementcharter.com) or 484-713-9162.




**DOES YOUR CHILD NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?**

All children and teens are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage.  
Call PCCY's Healthline now for free help to apply at 215-563-5848 x17.

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**¿NECESITA SU HIJO UN SEGURO MÉDICO?**

SPANISH Todos los niños y adolescentes son elegibles para la cobertura de Medicaid o CHIP. Llame a la línea de salud de PCCY ahora para ayuda gratuita para hacer la solicitud al 215-563-5848 x17.



**chip Strong**

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- Behavioral care
- Specialty care
- More

CHIP covers uninsured kids up to age 19 in Pennsylvania. It doesn't matter why your kids don't have health coverage right now; CHIP may be able to help. Most kids receive CHIP for free. Others can get the same benefits at a low cost.

CHIP is brought to you by leading health insurance companies who offer quality, comprehensive coverage.

There is no limit on income. If your income is below CHIP guidelines, your child may be enrolled in Medical Assistance.

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Paenrols Kids' Health Insurance Program  
We Cover All Kids.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Attendance Policy

### Purpose

Pennsylvania law requires regular attendance by all children enrolled in AHCCS. Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, students are required to attend school until age 18 or graduation, whichever occurs sooner. Students are required to complete 990 hours of instruction or instructional activities per academic year. The following attendance guidelines apply to all students. For the purpose of implementing this policy attendance is defined as a student logging into the AHCCS Learning Management System (LMS) every school day and submitting work in the majority of his/her classes every week. School days are defined by the Board approved calendar prior to the start of school each year. In addition to completing assigned coursework, students are required to report to designated testing sites, and complete all state mandated assessments as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

### Absences

A student will be considered absent for every school day that they have not logged into the LMS.

### *Lawful Excused Absences*

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school Attendance Coordinator via email or phone by the morning of any absence and may be required to provide AHCCS with written verification of the date of the absence and the reason for the absence upon the student's return to AHCCS. Students are required to make up any missed coursework and state mandated assessments if applicable. A medical related absence longer than three consecutive days may require an excuse from a doctor. Excused absences are defined as follows:

- Illness or Injury
- Medical or dental appointments
- Death in the immediate family
- Court or administrative proceedings
- Religious holidays and religious instruction\*
- Non-school sponsored educational tours and trips\*
- Tutorial work\*
- Urgent reasons\*\*

\*Prior approval from the Principal or Attendance Coordinator is required.

\*\*Urgent reasons will be reviewed case by case and deemed excused by the Principal or Attendance Coordinator.

*Submit excuse notes by calling 484-615-6260 or emailing [attendance@achievementcharter.com](mailto:attendance@achievementcharter.com)*

### *Unlawful Unexcused Absences*

Any absence that is not deemed lawfully excused will be documented as unexcused/illegal. The following reasons for absences are unexcused:

- Insufficient internet access
- Undocumented technical issues
- Non-school sponsored educational tours and trips that were not preapproved
- An absence in which no parent/guardian note was supplied within three days of the absence
- Any other reason not listed as lawfully excused

In accordance with Pennsylvania law, students who are not in attendance for ten unexcused consecutive school days will be dropped from school enrollment.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## *Truancy*

Attendance at AHCCS is a student's obligation and responsibility. Under PA law, "**truant**" is defined as having three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. "**Habitually truant**" is defined as having six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

Students who are deemed habitually truant will be placed on a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) which requires a conference between the student, family, and a school representative. This SAIP will be created collaboratively to:

- assist the student in improving attendance;
- enlist support of the parent(s)/guardian(s); and
- document the school's attempts to provide resources to promote the educational success of the student.

Procedure for habitually truant students:

- Students under fifteen (15) years of age:  
The school must refer the child to *either*: (1) a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or (2) the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act. Additionally, the school may file a citation against the parent/guardian of a habitually truant child under fifteen (15) in a magisterial district court.
- Students fifteen (15) years of age and older:  
The school must *either*: (1) refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; *or* (2) file a citation against the student or parent/guardian in a magisterial district court. If the child incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program or refuses to participate in an attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child.

NOTE: If your child has a disability -- meaning they have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504/Chapter 15 Plan -- and is truant or habitually truant, the school will bring together the IEP Team to discuss the truancy and how it impacts your child's educational program.

## *Absent from Testing*

Students that are required to participate in the state-mandated assessments including PSSA, PASA, Keystones, WIDA, and Project Based Assessments must do so in accordance with Chapter 4 of the PA Code (22 PA. CODE §§ 4).

- If a student does not attend the required days of testing, the testing administrator must mark this as an unexcused absence for each day missed. If a student is ill and not able to attend the first day of testing, they should attempt to attend the remaining days of their scheduled site. After 2 missed days the student must reschedule for another testing site. If a student misses 3 days, a doctor's note must be provided to substantiate the absences.
- If a student has not submitted a valid excuse, each subsequent day that a student does not attend testing will be marked as an unexcused absence. After 3 cumulative unexcused absences a student is considered truant. Should a student have 10 consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be removed from the active school rolls consistent with Chapter 11 (22 PA. CODE §§ 11).

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## *Definitions*

- **Keystone Exams:** High school students are required to take the Keystone exams by the end of their 11th grade year. The Keystone Exams consist of tests covering Algebra I, Biology, and Literature.
- **PSSAs:** All public school students enrolled in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are required to participate in the English Language Arts and Mathematics PSSA or the PASA. All public school students enrolled in grades 4 and 8 are required to participate in the Science PSSA.
- **WIDA Testing:** Any student that is designated as an English Language Learner as per their WIDA Aptitude exam results is required to take the state mandated WIDA ACCESS exam.

*To the extent that anything in this policy could be construed to conflict with the school's charter or applicable state and/or federal laws; the charter and/or applicable state and/or federal laws supersedes this policy.*

*References: Title 24, Pennsylvania School Code, Section 13-1327 and 13-1326; 22 PA. CODE §§ 4; 22 PA. CODE §§ 11; 24 PA. STAT. ANN. § 17-1715-A(9); 22 PA. CODE § 11.3*

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

While the school encourages Internet usage for constructive educational purposes, students may find ways to access other materials. The benefits of Internet access for students significantly exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents/guardians are responsible for enforcing standards that govern access and use of media and information resources by their children.

All use of the Internet and computer technology must be related to, or in support of, the educational goals of the student as stated by the school.

Use of the Internet and computer technology for any illegal activity, including but not limited to: profit purposes, lobbying, gambling, advertising, transmitting offensive materials, hate mail, discriminating remarks, obtaining obscene or pornographic material, is strictly forbidden. Use of AHCCS technology or the Internet for fraudulent or illegal copying, communication, taking or modification of material, in violation of all applicable laws, is prohibited. Such action or the illegal use of copyrighted software is prohibited and will be referred to the federal authorities for prosecution.

Students, parents/guardians or any third parties not under the school's direction are strictly forbidden from installing software received as part of the computer distributed to them by the school, on any other computer system. Such software shall not be loaned, given or otherwise used on any other computer.

Achievement House students are forbidden to give out their passwords to their school account or any other passwords provided by the school. The parent or legal guardian who is the primary facilitator of their child's education is the only exception to this rule.

Students are personally responsible for their actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. Students are advised never to access, keep or send anything they would not want their parents/guardians, mentors or teachers to see.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

With regard to privacy, computer storage areas may be treated like traditional school lockers. AHCCS administrators may review communications or files to maintain system integrity. This will ensure that students are using the computer system responsibly.

Students should not use profane, abusive or impolite language when communicating online. They should not access any materials that are in violation with school rules and policies. If a student encounters such material by accident, they should report it to their parents/guardians immediately. AHCCS expects students to observe the following rules of online behavior:

- Students will only access the Internet for educational purposes;
- Students will restrict their access to material deemed appropriate by staff and parents/guardians;
- Students will use appropriate conduct toward others;
- Students will observe and respect license and copyright agreements; and
- Students will keep passwords and personal information confidential (student names, telephone numbers, and addresses should not be revealed over the Internet).

Parents/guardians must monitor their students' compliance with these standards. Students who violate these standards may face a loss of Internet access, the loss of school-owned computer equipment, other disciplinary measures and/or legal action.

To assure compliance with safety laws requiring the use of Content Filtering Software as well as other proprietary tools such as lock-down browsers for the completion of assessments, students must use school-issued computers to complete their work.

To assure cost-effective shipping using tax-payer dollars, all hardware and school supplied resources will be shipped via UPS and not the U.S. Postal Service.

When students withdraw or graduate, school issued printers will not be retrieved if the cost of such retrieval and disposal exceeds the cost of a new printer.

## **Computer Equipment Agreement**

All AHCCS students are required to comply to our Computer Equipment Agreement. This contract shall serve to verify the terms of your acceptance, usage and return of all loaned computer equipment ("equipment") provided to you by Achievement House Cyber Charter School ("AHCCS"). To assure cost-effective shipping using tax-payer dollars, all hardware and school supplied resources will be shipped via UPS and not the U.S. post office.

Equipment is defined as the all-in-one computer, desktop, or laptop, plus monitor, mouse, keyboard, speakers, printer, headset, and all related cables and connectors that have been provided to you by AHCCS. All Equipment provided to you by AHCCS is purchased with tax payer dollars and is therefore public property. Our expectations and terms for equipment include:

- You will be expected to keep the packaging (boxes, foam etc.) in which the items were received for the return of the computer equipment.
- To assure compliance with safety laws requiring the use of Content Filtering Software as well as other proprietary tools such as lock-down browsers for the completion of assessments, students must use school-issued computers to complete their work. It is illegal to disable or remove this software. Attempting to disable or remove this software will not be tolerated and may render the computer inoperable.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- You cannot install or attempt to install any third-party software on the computer or modify the operating system in any way.
- A broken computer (hardware breakage) must be reported to the help desk (855)645-3362. The computer will be repaired and/or replaced as per the following fee schedule:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> breakage = free replacement
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> breakage = \$80 replacement fee
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> breakage = \$500 replacement fee
- You cannot make repairs to the computer on your own. You must call the help desk for any hardware or software issues. (855)645-3362
- You will return the equipment in working condition (less normal “wear and tear”) within 14 days of graduating or withdrawing from the school. **Failure to return the equipment will incur a \$500.00 replacement cost.** School issued printers will not be retrieved if the cost of such retrieval and disposal exceeds the cost of a new printer.
- Black printer ink may be requested quarterly by calling the Help Desk. We will not supply additional color ink, printer paper, or other consumable supplies.

It is the up to all Achievement House Cyber Charter School students and parents/guardians to understand their responsibility of said property.

### Internet Reimbursement Policy

Achievement House Cyber Charter School reimburses parents/guardians for Internet fees. Please note:

- We pay for Internet access only. We do not pay for bundled services such as telephone or TV. When services are bundled, AHCCS will determine a fair Internet reimbursement amount.
- We reimburse for the school year only.
- We reimburse for the summer months only if the student is enrolled in and completes summer school.

To receive reimbursement, families are required to submit a minimum of one bill per reimbursement period throughout the school year. At least one month’s bill should be submitted for each of the following periods:

- Period 1: September, October, & November
- Period 2: December, January, & February
- Period 3: March, April, May, & June

The bill submitted for a period may be from any of the months in that given period, (i.e. the first month in a period, middle month in a period, or the last month in a period). The reimbursement payment will be made three times in a year. It will be sent on the last day of each period: November 30th, February 28th, and June 30th.

### Change of Address

It is imperative that Achievement House Cyber Charter School is made aware of any changes of address, phone number, or primary email address as these are our main sources of communication. AHCCS must be notified as soon as a student moves. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to immediately provide two proofs of residence, as well as new enrollment form. To update your information, please contact Brittanie Strachko at [bstrachko@achievementcharter.com](mailto:bstrachko@achievementcharter.com) or 484-615-6201.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## **Drug, Alcohol, and Weapon Possession Policy**

Under Act 145, students are not to possess or use tobacco of any kind in a school building, or a school bus, or on school property at any time. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary actions, which may include but not be limited to suspension or expulsion, and any such violations will be reported to the police.

Possession and use are considered a summary offense. If found guilty of a summary offense, the student will be responsible to pay up to a \$50.00 fine plus court costs or serve in an adjudication alternative program. Disciplinary action at school will also take place, as per board policy.

Act 26 of 1995, Pennsylvania's Safe Schools Act, requires public schools to report to the Office of Safe Schools all incidents involving acts of violence, possession of a weapon, or the possession, use or sale of a controlled substance, alcohol or tobacco by any person on school property; at school-sponsored events; and on school transportation to and from school. It also requires schools to maintain updated summary reports of all incidents of violence; incidents involving possession of a weapon; and convictions or adjudications of delinquency for acts committed on school property. A statistical summary of these records shall be maintained and made accessible to the public for examination during regular business hours by public and nonpublic schools. The Act also requires school administrators to report the discovery of any weapon to local law-enforcement officials.

Some definitions used in this Act are: "weapons" shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. School administrators may recommend to the Board of School Directors modifications of the expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis; "office" shall mean the Office of Safe Schools; and "school property" shall mean any public school grounds, any school sponsored activity, online activity, or any conveyance providing transportation to a school entity or school sponsored activity.

## **School Copyright Policy**

### *Use of Copyrighted Materials*

The federal copyright laws restrict the use of copyrighted material to authorized users. Students and/or employees of Achievement House Cyber Charter School (the "School") who illegally use copyrighted material may be subject to prosecution. Furthermore, the illegal use of copyrighted material on School computers may put the School at legal risk. In an effort to avoid the illegal use of copyrighted material and in accordance with the School's commitment to academic integrity, the School hereby adopts the following policy regarding copyrighted materials.

Students and employees are prohibited from using graphics, texts, or other materials in a way that violates any copyright law. All materials in the School's courses are copyrighted and provided for use exclusively by enrolled students. Enrolled students may print or photocopy material from the School's website for their own use. Use by or distribution to others is prohibited unless expressly noted. Unauthorized copying or distribution may result in revoked access to course(s) and/or disciplinary action.

Users shall not upload, download, transmit, or post copyrighted software or copyrighted materials, materials protected by trade secrets or other protections using Achievement House Cyber Charter School's computer resources. This includes copyrighted graphics of cartoon characters or other materials that may appear to be non-copyright protected.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### School Plagiarism Policy

Achievement House Cyber Charter School (the "School") believes academic honesty and integrity are crucial qualities for every student to have. A student's academic honesty and integrity are highly valued and directly affect the School's public image. Plagiarism is a serious form of academic dishonesty that will not be tolerated by the School. The School hereby adopts this policy to clarify plagiarism and its potential consequences on students.

Students may not engage in any form of plagiarism for school work and may not use school resources to engage in any form of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another person or source as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is also required when material from another source stored in print, electronic, or other medium is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words.

A citation or footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted. However, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that is not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions or doubts about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the teacher.

Specific examples of plagiarism that will not be tolerated are:

- Having someone else write an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment (not just proofread it);
- Failure to acknowledge the source of borrowed words or ideas;
- Improper paraphrasing without citations;
- Failure to include a bibliography or other list of works that were consulted in the preparation of the assignment, such as every book, article, and/or information source used;
- Copying or rephrasing another student's work;
- Directly copying student aids (for example, Cliff Notes), critical sources, or reference materials in part or in whole without acknowledgment; and
- Indirect reproduction of student aids, such as Cliff Notes, Cole Notes, critical sources, or reference materials by rephrasing ideas borrowed from them without acknowledgment.

Student plagiarism may subject a student to discipline up to and including expulsion.



# STUDENT GUIDELINES

## Student Code of Conduct Excerpts

### Student Rights, Responsibilities and Expectations

Proper student behavior is achieved when each student develops the desire and the ability to live as a responsible citizen. Pennsylvania Department of Education's "Regulations and Guidelines on Student Rights and Responsibilities," and the Student Rights, Responsibilities and Expectation guidelines Achievement House Cyber Charter School has adopted are as follows:

- Student responsibilities include, but are not limited to, regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living;
- No student has the right to interfere with the education of his or her fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process; and
- Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.

It is the responsibility of the student to conform with the following:

- Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered or repealed in writing, it is in effect;
- Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein;
- Exercise proper care when using school equipment;
- Attend school daily and be on time for all classes and other school functions; and
- Check school announcements, emails and messages daily.

The following statements summarize student rights and responsibilities. They help explain the relationship between and among students at AHCCS. In exercising their rights, students shall not disrupt the educational process or force upon, endanger, or deny others their rights.

- Education
  - Right: Students have the right to a public education, unimpaired because of gender, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, disability, parenthood, marital status, economic status, personal characteristics, or any reason not related to their individual capacities.
  - Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to avoid actions or activities, individually or in groups, which shall interfere with a person's access to a public education.
- Learning Environment
  - Right: Students have the right to an orderly virtual classroom environment that will promote learning.
  - Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not disrupt the virtual classroom environment or school activities.
- Expression
  - Right: Students have the right to express themselves in speech, writing, or symbolism within the boundaries of the law and policies of the school.
  - Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to ensure that such expression does not materially and substantially interfere with the educational process, present serious health or safety hazards, damage public property, infringe on the rights of others, or violate the law or school policies.

# STUDENT GUIDELINES

- Religion
  - Right: Students have the right to their own religious beliefs.
  - Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to ensure that in exercising their own religious freedom, they do not violate other students' constitutional rights to religious freedom.
- Peaceful Assembly
  - Right: Students have the right to peaceful assembly.
  - Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to secure approval for using school facilities for assembly; to discuss with an administrator the appropriateness of the facility for the function; and to ensure that such assembly does not disrupt the educational process. Non-availability of adequate supervision shall constitute grounds for disapproval of such assembly.

## Student Misconduct

This section describes a broad range of misconduct acts that are prohibited in the school. Because the following sections listing acts of misconduct do not include all types of misconduct, the student who commits an act of misconduct not listed under the sections herein shall be subjected to the discretionary authority of the teacher and the CEO or designee.

All disciplinary actions for misconduct should include a conference between a teacher and school designee and the student, followed by notification to the parent(s) or guardian. The student, parent, or guardian who feels that the disciplinary action taken is unwarranted or excessive has the right to appeal to the CEO.

The range of actions is listed from the least severe to the most severe. Staff members shall consider all mitigating circumstances prior to disciplinary action and ensure due process for each student.

Whenever a student is subject to removal or expulsion from his/her current school, the parent/guardian will be furnished with all applicable due process and appeal rights that adhere to the proposed action.

## Rules of Conduct

Achievement House Cyber Charter School has high expectations for all students. In order for students to reach their potential, the school environment should be safe and orderly, and encourage the fullest possible educational development of each student. AHCCS will not tolerate any actions from the student that in any way interfere with the delivery of educational services, jeopardizes the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school family, or threaten the integrity and stability of the school itself.

These rules shall apply to any conduct: at any online or offline school activity, function or event, on or off school grounds, when the conduct may reasonably be expected to undermine the proper disciplinary authority of the school, the safety of students or staff, or disruption within the school.

### LEVEL I OFFENSES:

#### *Rule 1: Disruption*

Students are expected to act in a courteous and peaceful manner toward staff, visitors, and each other. A student may not act in any way that disrupts or disturbs any educational or school-related program or activity. Violations of this rule include, but are not limited to, disobedience, disrespect, lying/cheating, and violations of attendance policy.



# STUDENT GUIDELINES

## *Rule 2: Disruptive and/or Offensive Use of Language*

A student shall not curse or use vulgar, obscene, intentionally disruptive or offensive language. Students shall not send or pass on any offensive, sexually oriented, or threatening messages, pictures or symbols from any source.

## *Rule 3: Damage, Destruction or Theft of School or Private Property*

Students are expected to help each other to be healthy and responsible citizens. A student may not have, use, distribute, solicit or be under the influence of any unauthorized prescription or non-prescription medication, drug, or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, steroid, growth hormone, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant or look-alike substance of any kind. Possession of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and carried in the container supplied by a pharmacist showing the name of the student and proper dosage shall not be considered a violation of this rule where the supply carried by the student does not exceed the amount necessary for use during that school day. Non-prescription medications may only be possessed with a note from a parent or doctor. Non-prescription medications may only be possessed in the amount needed during the time in school for that day.

A second violation of this rule will be treated as a Level II offense which provides for expulsion, or transfer to an alternative school placement for substance abuse programming.

Distribution of any of the above substances, or possession under circumstances indicating intent to distribute is an aggravated offense under Rule 14.

## *Rule 4: Fighting*

Students are expected to refrain from physical confrontations. Two or more students who engage in a mutual confrontation involving intentional physical contact commit an offense under this rule. Each willing participant shall be subject to disciplinary action under this rule.

Where it is determined that any student or students were not willingly involved, only the responsible student(s) will be subject to discipline. See, also Rule 5 for unintended minor injuries. Rule 14 shall be applied where serious injury resulted or was likely to result regardless of whether the victim was a willing participant or not.

Where it is determined that a student is acting in reasonable self-defense, no disciplinary action will be pursued for that student. Reasonable self-defense shall be a defense only where the student had no opportunity to flee or otherwise avoid physical contact, and the force used was the minimum necessary to escape or avoid injury.

## *Rule 5: Reckless Conduct*

Students are not only responsible for harmful actions they intend, but they are also responsible for the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their reckless actions. A student may not act in a manner, which ignores the health, safety or welfare of any member of the school community by placing them in danger of injury or pain.

Reckless conduct that risks serious injury or death, or serious property damage as described in Rules 3 and 4, will be treated as an aggravated offense under Rule 14.

# STUDENT GUIDELINES

## *Rule 6: Tobacco Products and Paraphernalia*

Students are expected to help keep their schools a safe and healthy place. A student may not possess, distribute, solicit or use any tobacco product. Possession, distribution or use of cigarette lighters matches, vaping devices, rolling papers, pipes, or other such paraphernalia is also prohibited.

## *Rule 7: Possession of Drugs or Alcohol*

Violation of Act 145 of Pennsylvania School Code

Students are expected to help each other to be healthy and responsible citizens. A student may not have, use, distribute, solicit or be under the influence of any unauthorized prescription or non-prescription medication, drug, or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, steroid, growth hormone, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant or look-alike substance of any kind.

Non-prescription medications may only be possessed in the amount needed during the time in school for that day. A second violation of this rule will be treated as a Level II offense which provides for expulsion. Distribution of any of the above substances, or possession under circumstances indicating intent to distribute, is an aggravated offense under Rule 14.

## *Rule 8: Academic Dishonesty/Abuse of Computer or Internet*

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their work. Forgery of papers, reports, tests or notes or any other forms of cheating and/or copying the work of another student or plagiarism from library, publication, or internet sources is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action as well as loss of academic credit.

Students are expected to respect the computer privileges given to them. All students must keep their passwords to themselves. It is against this rule to use another person's passwords or accounts. It is also against this rule to break into ("hack") other files or systems, to download copy-righted material, or to conduct a non-school sanctioned business enterprise using the school computer network. Students shall not go into any sites on the Internet, which contain sexually explicit material. Additional rules on computer use are listed in the School's Acceptable Use Policy.

## APPROVED CORRECTIVE ACTION - LEVEL I VIOLATIONS (Minimum to Maximum)

For any violation of a Level I offense, a student may face one or more the following corrective actions:

- Meeting between the mentor and/or teacher and the student to discuss the student's behavior and expectations for improving his or her behavior;
- Meeting between the student and school principal or CEO;
- Notice to parents/guardians informing them of the student's behavior;
- Supervised mediation between the students involved;
- Meeting with case worker or probation officer, where applicable and appropriate; and
- Suspension.

## LEVEL II OFFENSES:

### *Rule 9: Repeated School Violations*

A student shall not continue to break any of Rules 1 through 8. Nor may a student repeatedly fail to follow directions given by any school staff member while the student is under school supervision. A student who continues to violate any of these rules after the school staff has attempted reasonable interventions to address the student's behaviors is subject to suspension or expulsion provided for Level II offenses.

# STUDENT GUIDELINES

## *Rule 10: Harassment*

No student shall engage in verbal or physical activity, which they should reasonably expect to have the effect of harassing, threatening the safety or maliciously damaging the reputation of any student or staff member. Harassment or threats, for the purpose of this rule, includes a course of conduct or a single aggravated incident. Harassment includes, among other things:

- An aggravated incident is one which would reasonably put a victim in fear for his/her safety or well-being;
- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual relations, sexual comments, sexually-oriented gestures, sounds, remarks or comments about a student or staff member or visitor's sexuality or sexual experience;
- Offensive expressions concerning a person's race, sex, religion, disability or national origin;
- Efforts to intimidate bully or ridicule. (See Rules 11 and 14 for offenses involving other serious forms of sexual or physical misconduct); and
- Threats include any attempt, by physical menace or verbal intimidation or taunt, to put a member of the school community in fear of injury, pain or social ridicule. The intentional posting on networks of the addresses or telephone numbers of fellow students or other members of the school community is a violation of this rule.

This rule includes spoken and written messages including on any bulletin board, flyer or notice; or computer networks; or displayed on a student's personal belongings.

Threats to bomb, kill, injure or use dangerous or deadly weapons will be treated as an aggravated offense under Rule 14.

## *Rule 11: Indecent Assault or Indecent Exposure*

All students must keep their hands and bodies to themselves at all times. No student may touch the sexual parts of another person with any parts of his/her own body or an object, or encourage another person to touch him/her in a sexual part of the body. No student may show the sexual parts of his/her body to other persons in a way that would offend them or in an effort to excite them. (See Rule 14 for forcible or voluntary sexual acts).

## *Rule 12: Assault on School Personnel*

A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury or pain to any school employee or student employee acting in the scope of his/her employment for the school. See Rule 5 for reckless conduct and Rule 14 for assaults that may potentially result in serious injury or that are in retaliation for participation in any official school related function.

## *Rule 13: Possession of a Weapon*

Violation of Act 26 of the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act Students shall not possess on their person, in their belongings, or in any storage space provided by the school, any tool, instrument, implement or weapon capable of causing serious injury or death. Such weapons include, but are not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nuchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, stun guns, BB guns, starter pistols, harmful biological or toxic substances, explosives, fireworks with the potential to injure or devices which may cause a fire, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

## STUDENT GUIDELINES

The possession, use or attempted uses of a weapon or another object not traditionally viewed as a weapon in a manner which causes or risks injury will be treated as an aggravated offense under rule 14.

Note: Students may not bring compasses or sharp bladed or pointed scissors to school facilities. If these or similar sharp tools are needed for a lesson, they will be provided by the teacher for the limited period of the lesson. Students are also prohibited from bringing look-alike weapons to school and must comply with the provisions of the School's Weapons Policy. The CEO or head of school is required, under the Public School Code, to take the following steps when a student is found in violation of Rule 13:

- The student shall be detained;
- Any incident involving possession of a weapon will be reported to police immediately;
- The parents/guardian shall be notified immediately;
- The student shall be suspended;
- A Serious Incident Report will be filed; and
- Expulsion will be recommended pursuant to Pennsylvania's Safe Schools Act.

The Serious Incident Report filed for incidents involving students found to be in possession of weapons shall include:

- The circumstances of the possession and discovery of the weapon(s);
- The action of the police in response to the call for their assistance;
- The action taken by the school including contacts with the student's parent or guardian, and the filing of a report; and
- A picture or facsimile of the weapon.

Such incidents will also be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For more information, please see the "Drug, Alcohol and Weapon Possession Policies" on page 48.

### *Rule 14: Aggravated Offenses*

A student shall not engage in, or attempt to engage in, any conduct, which endangers the health, safety or welfare of any member of the school community, including but not limited to:

- Attacks on any staff member, which results in injury, or places the person in danger of serious injury, or involves the use or attempted use of a weapon (including mace, pepper spray or laser pointer);
- Selling or distributing any of the substances set forth in Rule 7 (drugs, alcohol or look-alike substances) or possessing these items in sufficiently large quantities, or under circumstances which would indicate that they are not for personal use;
- Setting any fire that potentially risks injury to any person or damage to any property;
- Sexual acts: 1) forcible acts, as to the offender, or, 2) voluntary acts, as to each student;
- Rob, steal or threaten someone to give money or property;
- Assault on another student or other non-employee which results in serious injury or involves the use or attempted use of a weapon (including mace, pepper spray, or laser pointer);
- Damage to school property which disrupts, impairs or prevents the school from carrying out any of its programs;
- Retaliation against a school employee, witness or hearing officer for their participation in any investigation, academic or disciplinary proceeding where the student's action takes the form of assault, threats of bodily injury or death, telephone harassment or stalking or substantial property damage;

## STUDENT GUIDELINES

- Threats relating to the planting of bombs or other explosive devices, the use of any other weapon, including biological or toxic substances, or to kill or seriously injure any member of the school community; and
- The conduct of illegal activities via the School's network or on school property. "School Property" shall mean any public school grounds, any school sponsored activity, online activity, or any conveyance providing transportation to a school entity or school sponsored activity.

### APPROVED CORRECTIVE ACTION - LEVEL II VIOLATIONS

For any violation of a Level II offense, a student may face 1 or more the following corrective actions:

- **Due Process** - The Pennsylvania Code gives charter schools the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules regarding the conduct of students, which rules must be fair and reasonable, which is defined as using a rational means to accomplish a legitimate school purpose. The charter school must publish and distribute the Code of Conduct to students and parents/guardians and may make copies of the Code of Conduct available on the school's web site. Student discipline must be based on applicable provisions within the Student Code of Conduct.
- **Suspension** - The Pennsylvania Code defines suspension as exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Suspensions may be given by the principal of the school. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened. The Pennsylvania Code further requires that the parents/guardians be notified immediately, in writing, when the student is suspended. When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and the parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements set forth in the Pennsylvania Code. The school shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten school day period. Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while suspended and shall be permitted to complete assignments within the guidelines established by the school board.
- **Expulsion** - The Pennsylvania Code defines expulsion as exclusion from school by the board of trustees for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the board of school directors in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except, if it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student expelled from AHCCS will be referred back to their district of residence. Students who are less than 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and they must be provided an education.

# STUDENT GUIDELINES

- Informal Hearing - The Pennsylvania Code explains the informal and formal hearing requirements. The Pennsylvania Code makes it clear that the purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents or guardian to meet with the CEO to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided. The following due process requirements are to be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
  - Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardian and to the student;
  - Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given;
  - A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing;
  - A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf; and
  - The school shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.
- Formal Hearing - The Pennsylvania Code states that education is a statutory right, and students must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing, which is a fundamental element of due process. Therefore, a formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This formal hearing may be held before the board of school directors or an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board. Where the hearing is conducted by a committee of the board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire school board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements are to be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
  - Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardian by certified mail;
  - At least 3 days-notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given;
  - The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent/guardian requests a public hearing;
  - The student has the right to be represented by counsel;
  - The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses;
  - The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined; The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf;
  - A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder.
  - The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript;
  - The proceeding must be held within 15 school days of the notification of the charges unless mutually agreed to by both parties; and
  - Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

## **Disciplinary Records**

All official disciplinary records for incidents involving the possession of a weapon or acts of violence shall remain in the student's permanent record, and must be transferred with the student to any school to which the student enrolls.



# STUDENT GUIDELINES

## Harassment and Bullying

Students have the right to education in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Harassment occurs when a student threatens, intimidates, annoys, alarms, causes substantial emotional distress, demands a sexual favor, or creates a hostile environment for another based on the other's gender, age, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status or beliefs. Discrimination occurs when a rule or established practice confers privileges on or denies privileges to a particular class of persons based on race, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status or beliefs.

If a student believes they are the victim of harassment or discrimination, they shall report the alleged harassment or discrimination to the principal or to another administrator if the principal is the accused. Any student who believes they are the victim of harassment or discrimination may likewise make a complaint to the Board of Trustees in accordance with the Complaint Policy established by the Board. The School and/or the Board of Trustees will undertake to investigate the student's complaint thoroughly and completely, and will maintain confidentiality to the extent allowed by federal, state or local law and the policies established by the Board of Trustees.

Nothing in this Handbook shall be construed to discourage or prohibit a student who feels they have been the subject of criminal activity or a criminal offense from contacting the police or other appropriate authority to the extent anything in this Code could be construed to conflict with federal and/or state law, the federal and/ or state law applies.

### *Definition of Harassment*

The term harassment includes but is not limited to slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, or handicap/disability.

Ethnic harassment includes the use of any derogatory word, phrase or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an offensive environment. Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, sexual flirtation, advances, touching, or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading words to describe an individual; jokes, pin-ups, calendars, objects, graffiti, vulgar statements, abusive language, innuendos, references to sexual activities, overt sexual conduct, or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with someone's ability to work or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

Students shall report harassment complaints to their teacher, counselor, nurse, or the school principal. The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be AHCCS's policy to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyber bullying in any form are not tolerated.

# STUDENT GUIDELINES

All forms of bullying and cyber bullying by AHCCS students are hereby prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying or cyber bullying in violation of this Policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline. Students who have been bullied or cyber bullied shall promptly report such incidents to any staff member. Complaints of bullying or cyber bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified. Neither reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of the submission of a complaint. AHCCS shall annually inform students that bullying or cyber bullying of students will not be tolerated.

## *Definition of Bullying*

Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Access to the internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and curriculum courses, as well as exchange messages with other internet users throughout the world. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet contains items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive. Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs) which has the effect of:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

Bullying is unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the School, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline. The term "bullying" and "cyber bullying" shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

## **Guidelines for Dress and Appearance**

The responsibility for the appearance of the students of Achievement House Cyber Charter School rests with the parents/guardians and the students themselves. They have the obligation to ensure that such student's dress is not destructive to school property, complies with all safety and health codes/rules, and does not interfere with or lend itself to causing a distraction from the normal functioning of the educational process.

- Students should refrain from wearing any clothing that is so revealing that it would call undue attention to the wearer.
- Students will not be permitted to wear any clothing that has writing or images that are sexually suggestive, vulgar, profane, obscene, or advertise drugs, alcohol, or tobacco



# STUDENT GUIDELINES

- products, or display insignias related to hate groups or gangs.
- Any clothing that displays disrespectful symbols or references towards individuals, groups of individuals, religion, race, or ethnic origin is unacceptable and cannot be worn.
  - In classes or class activities where student health and safety are a concern, students may be required to remove piercings or jewelry, and/or wear hair restraints, protective clothing, protective footwear, and/or protective eyewear.
  - Consistent with current weapons policy, there shall be no chains worn or possessed, other than those designed as jewelry.

NOTE: These guidelines will be enforced during state testing, school-sponsored events, field trips, and educational or extracurricular activities, and in any physical location where these events take place. In case of doubt in any matter pertaining to these guidelines, dress or appearance, administration will make the final decision if action will be taken.

## Guidelines for Student Images

Achievement House Cyber Charter School allows each student the option to post profile pictures on his/her AHCCS accounts. If a student chooses to post a profile photo or image, such pictures must adhere to the dress code policy. Students are not permitted to post any pictures that are sexually suggestive or depict violent content, profanity, or obscene gestures.

NOTE: Profile pictures will be reviewed by administration. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the removal of the picture and/or termination of student privilege to post future pictures.

## National Honor Society

The National Honor Society (NHS) is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Character (and Citizenship for NJHS). The NHS's guiding principal is to honor high-achieving students who possess a strong sense of individual growth, not only through academics but civic responsibility as well.

### *Membership Qualifications:*

- Students must be advancing into their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year or later to be considered for NHS membership.
- Achievement House Cyber Charter School must be the "school of record" for the student at all times during the selection process. Students must remain with AHCCS in order to maintain membership in the chapter. Any students who change their "school of record" will be transferred to that school's chapter and be subject to their membership requirements.
- Students must have and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (unweighted) and be in good standing in order to be considered for membership in the NHS. Students must not miss more than two NHS meetings per school year.

### *Steps to Becoming a Member:*

- Eligible students will receive an invitation to become a member of the NHS each year.
- Each student who would like to be considered must submit the NHS Essay and Policy Form, along with a 300 word essay on a provided topic. Forms are available on the LSS Family Center website.

## BEYOND ACADEMICS

- Each student must submit one letter of recommendation from non-family members. We prefer that at least one reference comes from a current or former AHCCS Teacher. The Character Reference Forms can be provided by the club advisor. The club advisor can also provide a due date when all paperwork must be received in order to be considered for membership.
- Students will be notified by letter of their acceptance or denial to the National Honor Society.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

PA Code 24 P.S. § 17-1719-A (14) requires that students be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities offered by their home school district provided that they are not offered by AHCCS.

Students must comply with the policies and meet the specific eligibility criteria set forth by that home school district. Student athletes must also satisfy eligibility requirements established by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. Whenever possible, AHCCS will assist students and parents/guardians to secure the opportunity to participate in the extracurricular activities for which they are eligible.

Achievement House Cyber Charter School offers a variety of virtual clubs that students can join. Each club provides the opportunity for students to communicate with each other outside of the classroom and establish friendships and common goals.

### **Field Trips**

The Board of Trustees acknowledges that field trips are an educationally important component of a student's educational program. When properly planned and implemented, field trips serve to do the following:

- Enhance and supplement the school curriculum;
- Provide opportunities for learning outside of the day-to-day class;
- Promote and stimulate student interests;
- Combine what is taught with real-world experiences;
- Teach students to relate what they are taught in class to the world around them; and
- Add new elements to the student's learning experience.

The Board of Trustees defines a "field trip" as any trip by pupils away from the daily location of instruction, under the supervision of a teacher, which is an integral part of an approved course of study and conducted for the purpose of affording a first-hand educational experience not available in the classroom.

The Board shall consider field trips which have been included in Board pre-approved course descriptions to have been approved by the Board in advance. All field trips not listed in the course descriptions must be individually approved by the principal after the principal has received and reviewed a field trip request form. The principal is directed to inform the Board of planned field trips. Board approval is required for those field trips which take students out of state and those which are planned to take children overnight or longer.

If, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, circumstances in the community or world warrant, or if the Board is directed by federal, state, or local officials to do so, the Board reserves the right to cancel or direct the principal to cancel the trip and any money that may have been lost through cancellation may be the responsibility of the family of the student.

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## BEYOND ACADEMICS

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Neither the school nor any school representative nor any representative of the organization sponsoring the trip will be responsible for any loss resulting from the cancellation of the trip if the Board exercised this discretion.

Staff members and students on field trips remain under the supervision and responsibility of this Board and are subject to its rules and regulations, including those rules outlined in the school's code of conduct. The Board does not endorse, support or assume responsibility in any way for any staff member who takes students on trips not approved by the Board or principal. Such trips must not violate the Board's policies. No staff member may solicit students for such trips without administrative, or where appropriate, Board permission.

The principal shall prepare procedures for the operation of a field trip which shall ensure that:

- The safety and well-being of students shall be protected at all times;
- Parental permission is sought and obtained before any student may participate in a field trip and the proper releases and forms are completed by parents/guardians and students;
- The principal approves the purpose, itinerary, and duration of each proposed trip;
- Each field trip is properly planned, integrated with the curriculum, and followed up by appropriate activities which enhance its usefulness;
- The effectiveness of field trip activities is monitored and continually evaluated;
- Teachers, with the approval of the principal, are allowed a considerable degree of flexibility and innovation in planning field trips;
- Appropriate transportation may be secured for specific field trips. No students shall be transported in staff vehicles or otherwise driven to or from the field trip by staff; and
- Appropriate chaperones are obtained and have appropriate child abuse and criminal history clearances on file at school. No field trip will be approved unless it contributes to the achievement of specified instructional objectives.

### **Transportation**

Students will provide their own transportation to and from all AHCCS field trips and extracurricular activities, unless advertised otherwise.

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## SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN COMPACT

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### **A Home and School Collaboration**

The Achievement House Cyber Charter School, and the parents/guardians of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), agree that this compact outlines how the parents/guardians and the entire school staff, will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school, parents and guardians will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards. Please review this School-Parent/Guardian Compact with their child. This School-Parent/Guardian Compact is in effect during school year 2024-25.

### **School Responsibilities**

The Achievement House Cyber Charter School will:

(Continued on next page)

# SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN COMPACT

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective online learning environment that enables our students to meet the State's and AHCCS's student academic standards.
- Provide opportunities for parent/guardian-teacher conferences at parent's request.
- Provide parents/guardians access to reports on their children's progress by providing instructions on how to access student grades, complete reports, and logs; Report cards are mailed quarterly.
- Provide parents/guardians reasonable access to staff through the AHCCS Staff Directory, parent/guardian email, phone, texting, and weekly online educational sessions.
- Provide parents and guardians with opportunities to log into the parent guardian portal to view classroom announcements and assignments and allowing them to observe beside their student during live classes.
- Involve parents and guardians in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Parent & Family Engagement Policy during the online Parent Guardian Info Circle workshops.
- Involve parents and guardians in the joint development of any school wide program plan including the development of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- Hold an annual meeting to inform parents and guardians of the school's participation in Title 1, Part A programs, and to explain Title 1, Part A, Title 2 and Title 4 programs and encourage them to attend.
- Post the school's Health and Safety plan onto our website.

## **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

The Parent/Guardian will support their child's learning in the following ways:

- Monitor attendance and ensure that assignments are completed daily.
- Monitor student's online behavior.
- Monitor amount of time their child spends watching television, playing video games, and social media participation.
- Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to their child's education and serve on parent guardian committees to the extent possible.
- Promote positive use of child's extracurricular time.
- Attend applicable online educational sessions or view recordings whenever possible.
- Stay informed and promptly read and reply to information about their child's education such as reading announcements, reviewing parent/guardian email, replying to phone calls and keeping household contact information updated.

## **Student Responsibilities**

The student will share the responsibility to improve academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. The student will agree to:

- Log in every day, complete assignments on time, and give their best effort on every assignment. Then, log out.
- Reach out to teachers when help is needed through live classes, the Drop-In Center, phone, text or email.
- Take MAPs testing when required.
- Attend and take achievement tests required by Pennsylvania.
- Communicate with parent/guardian about announcements received by the school.

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# SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN COMPACT

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*For more information please contact: Stefani Frank, Compliance Officer at  
sfrank@achievementcharter.com.*

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## Board of Trustees Resolution

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WHEREAS the Board of Trustees of Achievement House Cyber Charter School desires to comply with applicable state and federal laws and exercise its authority to promulgate policies for Achievement House Cyber Charter School;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Achievement House Cyber Charter School adopts the following policy:

### **TITLE I DISTRICT WIDE & SCHOOL PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

#### **PART I. General Expectations**

1. The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents/guardians in all its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent under section 1116 (a)(2)(A) of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Those programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents/guardians of participating children. (Discussions take place during PTO Meetings. Examples include PTO meetings themselves, virtual and in person meetups, parent/guardian workshops, fundraisers, school choice week events, etc.)
2. Consistent under section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental and family engagement policy meets the requirements under section ESSA 1116 (b)(1), and each include, as a component, a School-Parent Compact consistent under section ESSA 1116 (d)(2)(A-D). (This document is reviewed with our Charter Choices representative annually to ensure we are meeting all guidelines year to year).
3. The school district will incorporate a District Wide Parent & Family Engagement Policy into its LEA plan. (This document is reviewed during the September and April parent/guardian workshops, is posted on The Parent Guardian Schoology Group, our website, and the student handbook).
4. In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental and family engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and school will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, parents/guardians with disabilities, and parents/guardians of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section ESSA 1116(7)(f) in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, and in a language parents/guardians understand. (Our school has an EL mentor, ESL Program Specialist, multiple staff members that speak Spanish, documents translated for native speakers, especially special education documents, and a notice on the Parent Guardian Schoology Group on who to contact in the event they need any of those documents translated to their native language).
5. If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, is not satisfactory to the parents/guardians of participating children, the school district will submit any parent/guardian comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education. (This document is reviewed during the September and April parent/guardian workshops, is posted on The Parent Guardian Schoology Group, our website, and the student handbook so parents/guardians can submit comments at any point during the school year).

## — TITLE I DISTRICT WIDE & SCHOOL PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY —

6. The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition ESSA (d)(1): (all of the following are done through monthly PTO Meetings and parent guardian orientations)
  - a. *Parental involvement means the participation of parents/guardians in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring parents/guardians play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
  - b. *Parents/guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*
  - c. *Parents/guardians are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child(ren);*
  - d. *Carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1116 of the ESSA.*
7. If the school receives \$500,000 or more in Title I funds (and transfers) and is required to set aside 1%, funds shall be used to carry out activities and strategies consistent with this policy, including not less than one of the following:
  - a. Providing professional development for personnel regarding parent/guardian and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents/guardians and family members.
  - b. Supporting programs that reach parents/guardians and family members at home, in the community, and at school.
  - c. Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent/guardian and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents/guardians and family members.
  - d. Engaging in any other activities and strategies that the school determines are appropriate and consistent with this policy.
8. The school district will involve the parents/guardians of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent/guardian and family engagement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the school.

### **PART II. Description of how the school will implement the required Title I District Wide Parental Involvement Policy components:**

1. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will take the following actions to involve parents/guardians in the joint development of its school parental and family engagement plan under section ESSA 1116 (d)(2)(A-D):
  - a. Hold an annual Parent/Guardian Title I meeting to inform parents/guardians of their participation in Title I, Title I engagement requirements, and their right to be involved under section ESSA 1116 (c)(1).
  - b. Review and revise the School-Parent Compact with parents/guardians and school staff annually.
  - c. Provide all parents/guardians with a copy of the Title I District Wide & School Parent and Family Engagement Policy each year.
  - d. Have parents/guardians participate in an annual parent/guardian survey.
2. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will take the following actions to involve parents/guardians in the process of school review and improvement under section ESSA 1116 (A):
  - a. Develop a Parent Teacher Organization under section ESSA 1116 (a)(2)(F).
  - b. Annually meet with school staff and the Parent Teacher Organization to review and update the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and School-Parent Compact under section ESSA 1116 (a)(20)(D).



## TITLE I DISTRICT WIDE AND SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- c. Review the End of the Year Parent and Family Engagement Survey (EYS) results with school staff and the Parent Teacher Organization in order to use the results to revise academic and parental programs.
  - d. Review the End of the Year Parent and Family Survey (EYS) results with school staff and the Parent Teacher Organization in order to use the results to revise, if necessary, the Parent & Family Engagement Policy under section ESSA 1116 (a)(2)(E).
3. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance under section ESSA 1116 (a)(2)(B):
  - a. Work with the Federal Programs and Student Achievement departments to ensure the school is providing necessary learning tools and educational programs in accordance with guidelines under section ESSA 1116 (6)(e)(1).
  - b. Conduct meetings between parents/guardians, administration, and staff for professional development needs and training to provide the most effective teaching tools and resources to increase student achievement. Discussion to include PSSA, Keystone, and local assessment data and results under section ESSA 1116 (6)(e)(1).
4. Achievement House Cyber Charter School, to the extent feasible, will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in Part A with parent and family engagement strategies under the following other programs: Special and General Education Parental Training Workshops, Innovation Career Academy, and Post-Secondary Transitions under section ESSA 1116 (6)(e)(3):
  - a. Inviting program members to participate in parent/guardian meetings held during the school year.
  - b. Inviting program members to participate in professional development activities.
  - c. Organizing and participating in joint transition-related training of school staff and other development programs.
  - d. Conducting meetings involving parents/guardians and programs participants to discuss development and assessments needs of individual children under section ESSA 1116 (c)(4)(6).
  - e. Applying Title I funds to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent/guardian involvement activities, including transportation, childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents/guardians to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
5. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents/guardians, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy for the purpose of quality improvement. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents/guardians in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents/guardians who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school will use the findings of the evaluation about its this Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents/guardians) its Parent and Family Engagement Policy under section ESSA 1116 (A-D).

# TITLE I DISTRICT WIDE AND SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- a. Work with the Parent Teacher Organization.
  - b. The program/policy will be evaluated initially by Federal Programs, Senior Administrators, and student achievement on meeting the needs of all students with concentrations in the areas of reading, mathematics, and Language Arts.
  - c. The program/policy evaluation findings will be shared with parents/guardians via meetings and other means of communication in order to work collectively to update and improve policies and programs as needed.
6. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will build the school's and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents/guardians and to support a partnership among the school, parents/guardians, and community in order to improve student academic achievement following activities under section ESSA 1116 (3)(D), specifically described below:
- a. The school with the assistance of Title I, Part A will provide assistance to parents/guardians of children served by the school district or school as appropriate in understanding and undertaking the actions described below:
    1. The State's academic content standards
    2. The State's student academic achievement standards
    3. The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
    4. How to monitor student progress, under section ESSA 1116 (6)(e)(1)
    5. How to work with educators:
      - a. Provide assistance to Title I parents/guardians as appropriate in understanding standards, state, and local assessments, the requirements of Part A, monitoring a child's progress, and working with educators by conducting monthly workshops at various locations including online alternatives during multiple windows of time.
      - b. Provide parents/guardians with PDE and Department of Education websites specific to academic standards, assessments and Title I Part A.
      - c. Organize and participate in joint transition-related training of school staff and other development programs.
      - d. Conduct meetings involving parents/guardians and programs to discuss development and the assessments needs of individual students including description and explanation of curriculum, form of academic assessment to measure progress under section ESSA 1116 (c)(4)B).
  - b. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will provide materials and training to help parents/guardians work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement such as literacy training and using technology as appropriate in order to foster parental involvement by:
    1. Providing parents/guardians with a current copy of the School Parent/Guardian Handbook.
    2. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinating and integrating parent/guardian involvement programs and activities with home instruction programs, and training to support needs of children.
    3. Having parent/guardian activities at a variety of times throughout the day to meet the needs of parents/guardians under section ESSA 1116 (c)(2).
  - c. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principal, and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate, and work with parents/guardians as equal partners. We will work with parents/guardians as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents/guardians and in the implementation and coordination of parent/guardian programs while building ties between parents/guardians and school under section ESSA 1116 (3)(D) by:



# TITLE I DISTRICT WIDE AND SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

1. Annual Parent Title I meetings to inform parents/guardians of their participation in Title I, the Title I involvement requirements, and their rights under section ESSA 1116 (c)(4)(B).
  2. Holding additional meetings devoted specifically to providing an understanding of academic standards, assessment, enrichment and remediation for parents/guardians to support their children under section ESSA 1116 (c)(4)(C).
  3. Communicate updates and changes to federal and state policies, assessments, and mandates of ESEA to parents/guardians under section ESSA 1116 (6)(e)(4).
  4. Jointly with parents/guardians, review the School-Parent Compact outlining how parents/guardians, the entire school staff, and students share in the responsibility for improved student achievement under section ESSA 1116 (d)(2)(A-D).
  5. Staff Professional Development.
- d. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement with other processes such as the Parent/Guardian Resource Room and Parent Teacher Organization to encourage and support parents/guardians in more fully participating in the education of their children by:
1. Inviting program members to participate in parent meetings held during the school year.
  2. Inviting program members to participate in professional development activities.
  3. Organizing and participating in joint transition-related training of school staff and other developmental programs.
  4. Conducting meetings involving parents/guardians and programs for participants to discuss the development and assessment needs of individual students.
- e. Achievement House Cyber Charter School will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents/guardians of participating students in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request to the extent practicable and in a language the parents can understand and best practices to increase engagement of all parents under section ESSA 1116 (6) (e)(5) and (3)(D):
1. Emails
  2. Mailings
  3. Postings on LEA website
  4. Telephone call reminders
  5. Texts

## **PART III. Discretionary Title I District Wide and School Parental Involvement Policy Components:**

1. Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement;
2. Establishing a school wide Parent Teacher Organization to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title 1, Part A programs under ESSA 1116 (2) (F);
3. Providing other reasonable support for parental and family engagement activities as parents may request.

## **PART IV. Adoption**

1. This Title I District Wide and School Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed and agreed on with parents of students participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by parent/guardian and staff meetings and parent/guardian surveys.
2. This policy was reviewed and updated by Achievement House Cyber Charter School on July 24, 2024 and will be in effect for the period of one year. This policy will be placed on the school website so that all parents/guardians of participating Title I, Part A children have access to it.

# PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

## **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

AHCCS is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, marital status or handicap in its activities, program or employment practices as required by State & Federal Law. AHCCS will not discriminate against protected students with disabilities.

AHCCS will provide each student with a disability enrolled in the school, without cost to the student or family, those related accommodations which are needed to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extra-curricular activities without discrimination and to the maximum extent of the student's ability.

For information regarding civil rights, grievance procedures, or students with disabilities, please contact our office at: Achievement House Cyber Charter School, 102 Pickering Way, Second Floor, Exton, PA, 19341.

## **Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The PPRA affords parents/guardians certain rights regarding our collection and use of information for marketing purposes and certain physical exams. These include the right to consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:

- Political affiliation or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the students or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Additionally, parents/guardians have the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- 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 a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Finally, parents/guardians have the right to inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

## PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

These rights transfer from the parents/guardians to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

### **Annual Public Notice of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act FERPA, a federal law, affords parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age (eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are briefly summarized below and are explained more fully in the Board's Student Records Policy which is on file at the school and is available upon request:

- 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/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school Principal, or appropriate school official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected;
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents/guardians or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school Principal and clearly identify the part of the record they wish to change, specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student will be notified of the right to a hearing;
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official may include a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll; and
- 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. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:
  - Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-0001

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

# PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

## *Directory Information*

Directory information means information contained in the educational record of a student, which is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, so that it may be disclosed without prior parental consent, unless you have advised AHCCS to the contrary in accordance with Achievement House Cyber Charter school procedures. The primary purpose of the directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school-related publications or notices.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS CONTROL.

## **Programs for Eligible or Protected Students with Disabilities**

In compliance with state and federal laws, notice is hereby given by Achievement House Cyber Charter School that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students). If your child is identified by the school as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction. If you believe that your school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess the needs of the child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon written request. Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to the Principal. In compliance with state and federal law, Achievement House Cyber Charter School will provide to each student with a disability without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a student with disabilities, the child must be school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for students with disabilities are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs. For further information on the rights of parents and children, provision of services, evaluation and screening (including purpose, time and location), and rights to due process procedures, you may contact in writing the Director of Special Education or the Principal.

*Confidentiality: All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The school has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, destruction and disclosure to third parties of this information. For information about these policies and procedures, as well as rights of confidentiality and access to educational records, contact the Principal.*

## **Child Find and Screening**

### *Public Awareness and Outreach*

Public Awareness - The CEO or his or her designee shall ensure that the following public awareness activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend AHCCS:

## PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

- Directly or through Chester County Intermediate Unit, publish once annually a written notice, in a newspaper or other media with circulation adequate to notify parents throughout AHCCS, of child identification activities, of AHCCS and other public special education services and programs, of the manner in which to request services and programs, and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal law;
- Post conspicuously on the Internet home page of AHCCS the information described above;
- Display conspicuously in every AHCCS building printed circulars or pamphlets containing information about the screening procedures within AHCCS.

Outreach - The CEO or his or her designee shall ensure that the following outreach activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend AHCCS:

- Directly or through Chester County Intermediate Unit, offer parent/guardian and family training or information activities and publicize the availability of such activities to all parents;
- Directly or through Chester County Intermediate Unity, provide to physicians, hospitals, mental health professionals, daycare providers, and County agency personnel training or other information concerning the types of special education programs and services available in and through AHCCS and the manner in which parents can access those services; and
- Directly or through Chester County Intermediate Unit, provide periodic training to regular education staff of AHCCS and, by invitations, of AHCCS concerning the identification and evaluation of, and provision of special education programs and services to, students with disabilities.

### *Screening*

Screening System - The CEO or his or her designee shall establish a system of screening to accomplish the following, and whenever practical, the system thus established shall use existing supports, services, and processes:

- Identify and provide peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum;
- Conduct hearing and vision screening in accordance with section 1402 of the Public School Code of 1949, 24 P.S. & 14-1402, for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education; and
- Identify students who may need special education services and programs.

Pre-evaluation Screening - The pre-evaluation screening process described in this policy shall include:

- For students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student's functioning in the curriculum including curriculum-based or performance-based assessment;
- For students with behavioral concerns, a systematic observation of the student's behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty;
- An intervention based on the results of the assessments conducted;
- An assessment of the student's response to the intervention;
- A determination of whether or not the assessed difficulties of the student are the result of a lack of instruction or limited English proficiency;
- A determination of whether or not the student's needs exceed the functional capacity of the regular education program, without special education programs and services, to maintain the student at an instructional level appropriate to the level and pace of instruction provided in that program;