



Scholar & Family Handbook

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit"
-Aristotle

5601 E. Capitol St. SE
Washington, D.C., 20019
Phone: (202) 559-6138
Fax: (202) 618-9396
Email: info@dcscholars.org
[Visit us online at www.dcscholars.org](http://www.dcscholars.org)

Scholars Today...Leaders Tomorrow

Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement

DC Scholars prepares students for the PATH to college and provides them with the foundation of life skills required to become productive members of their community.

Vision Statement

DC Scholars exists to close the achievement gap in Washington, DC and to contribute to national efforts to eradicate educational inequity.

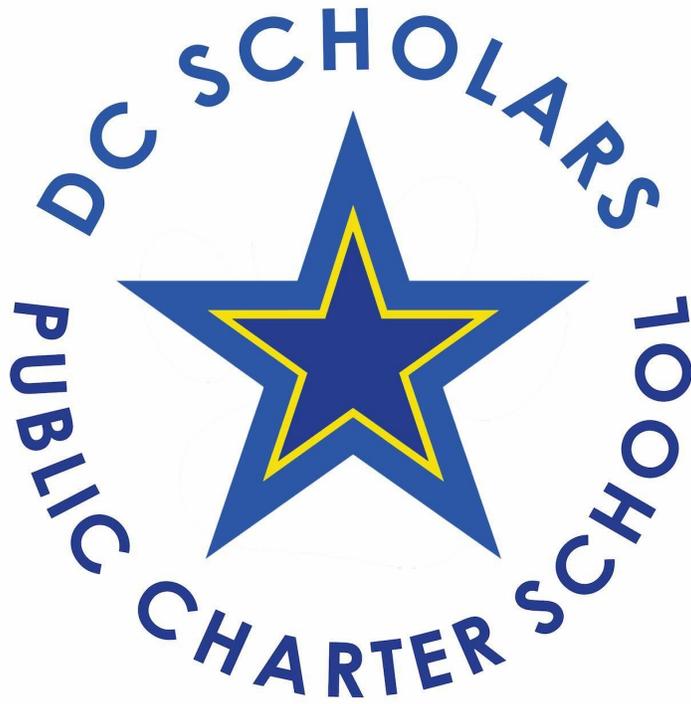
DC Scholars provides traditionally underserved inner-city students with a meaningful, high-quality educational experience allowing them to:

- 1) achieve at the same level as their suburban student counterparts
- 2) attend and succeed in college
- 3) become lifelong learners and tomorrow's leaders.

Table of Contents

Family Engagement	4-7
Families and School Leader Communication	5
Family Path Values	6
Parent Advisory Council	7
On-going Family Communication	7
School Day	8-13
Schedule	9
Arrival/Dismissal	10
Before & Aftercare / Activities	12
Closures and Delays, Birthday Policy	12
Breakfast and Lunch	13
Uniform Policy	14-16
School Policies	17-27
Attendance	18
School Visitors	21
Code of Conduct	22
School Security	23
Parent Meetings	23
Volunteers	23
Electronic Devices	24
School Field Trips	24
Drug Free Environment	24
School Emergencies	25
School Computer and Internet Use Policy	25
Harassment Policy Statement	25
Complaint Resolution Policy	26
School Records Retention Policy & Withdrawal	27
Early Childhood Specific Policies	28-31
Academic Structures & Supports	32-35
Our Teaching Philosophy	33
School-Wide Goals	33
Assessment and Data	33
Homework	33
Promotion-Retention Policy	33
Absent Work Policy	35
Special Education Policies & Structures	36-43
Behavioral Structures & Supports	44-56
Discipline Policy & Due Process	47
Health and Wellness	57-68
School Nurse	58
Medications in School	59
Scholar Immunizations & Wellness	59
Local Wellness Policy	61
Communication	69-70
To Families	70
Parent Representation on the Board of Trustees	70
Contacting the School	70
Appendices	71-92
A. Computing and Internet Acceptable Use Policy	72
B. Harassment Policy Statement and Grievance Policy	76
C. Grading Policy	79
D. Notification of Rights under FERPA	81
E. Notification of Rights under PPRA	83
F. Information on Title I	85
G. Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program Educational Rights Public Notice	86
H. Non-Discrimination Notice	88
I. Board of Trustees Open Meeting Policy	89
J. DCSPCS Handbook Family Partnership Agreement	91

Family Engagement



At DC Scholars Public Charter School (DCSPCS), we believe that families are essential partners in our scholars' success. We believe that through collaboration, on-going communication, and strong relationships we develop a support system that encourages their success and puts them on the PATH to high school, college, and beyond.

As a community school, we believe that our focus should not only be on academics, but that we must also support scholars' emotional, social, and physical growth to improve overall student learning. We partner with social services, youth development organizations, and community activists to improve our scholars' educational experiences and learning environments. We adjust our curriculum to exhibit cultural competence, emphasize real-world learning, and encourage problem-solving.

Our commitment to partner with families is driven by three key priorities:

- building trusting relationships
- maintaining proactive ongoing communication
- ensuring academic success

We encourage families to express any questions or concerns to school leaders as they arise. It's best to communicate with school leaders via [email](#). If you have specific questions regarding classroom practices should be communicated to your scholar's homeroom teacher. Teachers can receive communication via Class Dojo. During arrival and dismissal leaders and teachers may be available for quick chats; however longer conversations should be scheduled in advance. For general questions or concerns families can email info@dcscholars.org at any time. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response.

At times, teachers and leaders may request to meet with a family. If this need arises, we ask that you do your best to honor the request. If you receive a call from the school during the day, it may be an urgent matter so we ask that you answer or return the call as soon as possible.

Relationships with families are extremely important to us. We understand that you trust us with your scholar every day. Our leaders, teachers, and staff have values that uphold our commitment to providing you and your scholar with a high quality, caring, and trusting environment. In turn, as partners we ask our families to uphold our **DC Scholars Family PATH Values**.

DC Scholars PATH Family Values

Our Families...	
Professional Be respectful and maintain positive communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage in respectful interactions with all scholars, families, and staff ● Ensure scholars arrive on time every day in uniform ● Believe in upholding expectations for our scholars and learning environment.
Active Involved and participate in school academic, social, and community events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend quarterly Parent/Teacher academic conferences ● Participate or volunteer when available ● Engages in school wide/community events
Thoughtful Value, supports, and encourages the school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adhere to all school policies ● Encourage & support other families ● Serve as a DC Scholars role model for others ● Contribute and give feedback ● Are community-oriented and help others whenever possible
Hardworking Ensures academic success of their scholar by supporting learning at home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist and support scholars with learning at home ● Complete daily reading log with scholar ● Review & sign weekly Target Thursday report

Parent Advisory Council

As a Title I School, DC Scholars is required to have a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to regularly consult with parents regarding the use of Title I funds in the school. The overall goal is to ensure parents are involved in school life, and to support active partnership with other members of the school community. Regular meetings will be held, at a time that is convenient for parents.

Ongoing Communication

Class Dojo

Parents and students can view progress at home from their own accounts!



It is **mandatory** that **ALL** families are connected to Class Dojo. Families will receive a unique code for each of their enrolled scholars. Through this system, families will receive all school communications, track scholar's daily progress, and communicate with homeroom teachers.

Academic Conferences

In order to ensure academic success, it is critical that families are up to date on the progress of scholars throughout the year. We will host academic conferences for all grades on a quarterly basis. It is expected that all families make every effort to attend conferences or if unable to make it, schedule a convenient time with the scholar's homeroom teacher.

Robocalls

Robocalls are made to keep families aware of school closures, emergencies, important events or updates, and for any day a scholar misses. Please ensure that all phone numbers and email addresses are up to date with the Main Office.

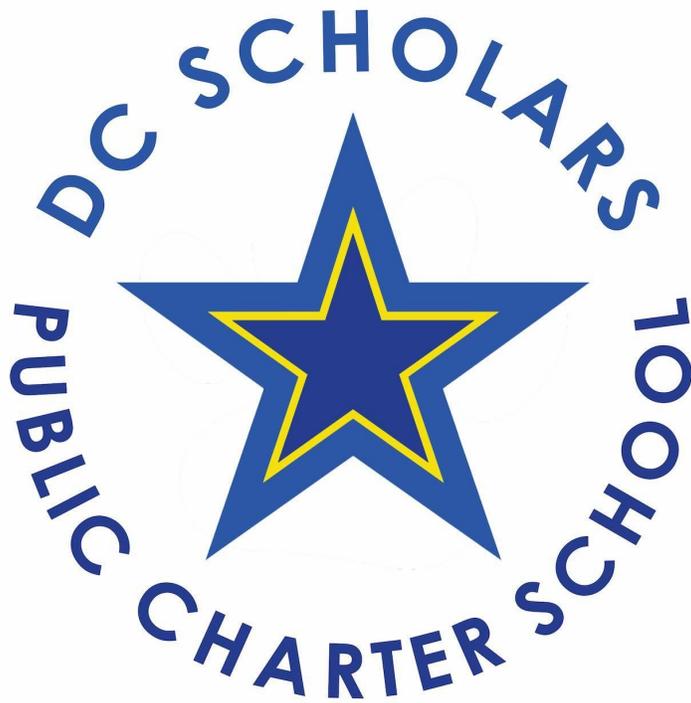
Website

www.dcscholars.org

Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

Follow us @DCScholarsPCS

SCHOOL DAY



School Day

8:00 am - 8:30 am	Hot Breakfast	Breakfast is served in the classroom from 8:00 am to 8:30 am. Breakfast is not served after 8:30 am.
8:20 am	Class Begins	Class starts at 8:20 am for all scholars . Scholars who have not entered the building by 8:30 am will be marked tardy. After 8:30 am , parents will not be able to walk scholars to class. Pre-School through K scholars will be escorted to class by a staff member.
9:00 am	For safety reasons, all PS-4th grade scholars entering the building after 9:00am must be accompanied by an adult (with the exception of 3rd and 4th grade scholars who are approved to walk home unattended). The accompanying adult must sign-in the scholar at the Security desk.	
10:00 am	Scholars entering the building after 10:00 am <u>must</u> have a letter from a doctor excusing their tardiness or a pre-approved request from the parent to the school before the scholar is out explaining why the scholar will be tardy. Scholars without documentation are not allowed to enter the building after 10:00 am.	
2:45 pm – 3:30 pm	Main Office Closure	In the event of an early dismissal, the adult picking up the scholar must do so prior to 2:45pm. The main office is closed from 2:45pm-3:15pm in order to help prepare and assist with dismissal. In case of an emergency, please follow all instructions listed on the main entrance door.
3:30 pm	Late Pickup begins	Scholars must be either off school property or in an approved adult supervised activity by 3:30 pm. Child Protective Services will be contacted for scholars who have not been picked up by 4:30pm (see below for details).
3:15 - 5:30 pm	Aftercare	Aftercare is a separate program that parents must opt into. Please see program directors for further information.

Morning Arrival for Scholars

Parents and families of all DC Scholars Public Charter School (DCSPCS) scholars are responsible for making sure scholars arrive to school each day on time. In order to ensure that scholars have a positive start to the school day, scholars are asked to arrive to school at 8:00 am. At 8:00 am, we will greet each scholar at the door. From there, scholars will report to their classroom for a free, healthy breakfast. Preschool through Kindergarten parents are permitted to walk scholars to class before the 8:30 am bell rings, which indicates instruction has begun. 1st – 8th grade parents are permitted to walk scholars to their assigned entrance, and those scholars will then walk themselves to class. After 8:30 am, all parents must sign in at the security desk if they need to speak with teachers or staff. For information on scheduling a meeting with a teacher during arrival time, please see the Parent Meetings section of this handbook. Any preschool through Kindergarten scholar who arrives after 8:30 am will be escorted by an adult staff member to class.

Dismissal for Scholars

Regular Dismissal

DC Scholars Public Charter School dismisses at 3:15 pm. Students must be picked up no later than 3:30 pm. If your child has not been picked up by 3:30 pm and we are unable to reach you or an emergency contact, we may notify Child and Family Services. **Please make sure that you call the Main Office (202-559-6138) in the event of an emergency.**

If parents or guardians wish for their older elementary scholars (grades 3 & 4) to walk home from school, the school must have a signed permission slip on file at the Main Office.

Rideshare (Lyft, Uber, etc.)

At no time is a staff member permitted or responsible for escorting a scholar to and/or from any type of Rideshare program.

Late Pick-Up

DCSPCS makes strong efforts to ensure all scholars are dismissed safely. We understand that occasionally family emergencies may arise preventing you from picking up a scholar on time. However, scholars that are consistently picked up late may be subject to interventions and consequences. DCSPCS will take the following actions for scholars PS-4th that are picked up late:

- School staff will attempt to contact a scholar's parent/guardian if they are left on the premises after 3:30pm.
- Scholars will not be dismissed to anyone other than the parent/guardian or an adult listed on the scholar's emergency contact. Please note: staff are not permitted to escort scholars out of the building for any ride-share services.
- The parent/guardian who picks up the scholars must sign the scholar out and will receive a copy of the late pick-up notice, including time the following day.
- If a parent/guardian declines to sign out the scholar, the leadership team member on duty may fill it out and placed in your scholar's record.
- If a scholar is still on campus more than an hour after dismissal and the scholar's parent/guardian, or emergency contact was not able to be contacted, we must

assume the family has suffered an emergency. The Principal or school appointed designee may then contact CFSA, or the police department.

- If a scholar is consistently picked-up late, the following tiered intervention will be used

Late Pick-up (each occurrence)	Parent/Guardian must complete the electronic late pick-up form before leaving school with scholar.
Recurring Late Pick-Up (4 occurrences)	Parent/Guardian must attend a meeting with a school leader to review late pick up data and create an action plan.
Habitual Late Pick-Up (5-9 occurrences)	Parent/Guardian will receive a letter stating the time/date to meet with School Administrator and sign an agreement to pick-up scholar on time.
Chronic Late Pick-up (10 or more occurrences)	Scholar is subject to ineligibility for school trips, activities, and other school related events and DCSPCS may contact CFSA.

Parents will be asked to meet with the School Administrator if a scholar is repeatedly picked up late. All parents picking up students after 3:30 pm will need to sign out scholars from the late classroom. Families who pick up scholars more than three times a month from the late room may be subject to fines, revocation of field trip or school event privileges for the scholar, and other penalties.

Parent Communications with Student Regarding Dismissal

The Main Office will not be able to communicate information or instructions from parents to students regarding what they should do at dismissal unless there is an emergency. For example, if a parent calls the Main Office during the school day to request that their scholar walk home instead of going to after care, the Main Office cannot guarantee that the information will reach the scholar in time. Parents must communicate all information regarding what their scholars should do at dismissal either directly to the teacher during morning arrival, provide a written note, or a Dojo message. No exceptions.

Early Dismissal

We strongly discourage early dismissal, as it cuts into the time we have to instruct your scholars. Please note that early dismissal is not allowed under the following circumstances:

- After 2:45 pm on a normal dismissal day;
- When scholars are transitioning in hallways;
- Preparing for dismissal;
- During a Fire Drill or Emergency Drill procedure

If a scholar needs to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian must call ahead and state the time and reason for the early dismissal, come to the Main Office to pick up their child, and sign them out with a member of our Main Office staff.

Before & After Care/Activities

All-Stars Before & After Care Program

After-school programs at DCSPCS reflect our mission to prepare scholars to attend and succeed academically in middle school, high school, and college. We strive to provide scholars with a foundation of life skills required to become productive members of their communities. Aftercare allows scholars to receive additional academic support if needed, and/or extracurricular experiences that will contribute to their positive growth and development. Aftercare is an optional program. In order for scholars to remain on campus after the designated dismissal time, scholars must be enrolled in an approved after-school activity.

After-school sign up information is generally released in early August. All policies and procedures of the afterschool program are outlined in the All-Stars Program handbook. For more information, please visit our website or email afterschool@dcscholars.org.

Activities/Clubs/Athletics

Scholars interested in joining any after-school activities, club, or athletic program must have a completed registration form on file. All participants will be required to attend a mandatory information session. All participants must abide by all policies and procedures outlined in the handbook. For more information, please email nwiley@dcscholars.org.

School Closures and Delays

Delays

- If District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) opens 2 hours late, DCSPCS will open at 10:00 am.

Emergency School Closings

- If DCPS is closed, DCSPCS will more than likely be closed.
- If DCPS is open, DCSPCS is most likely open, but reserves the right to close if the safety of families or staff is at risk.
- DCSPCS reserves the right to open, close, delay an opening, or close early **when DCPS does not**. When there is inclement weather, in addition to reviewing DCPS decision, DCSPCS will review other neighboring charters and school districts. A decision will be made no later than 5:00 A.M. Parents/Guardians will be notified of any school closures or changes via robocall, email, and Class Dojo.

Birthday Policy

In order to protect our academic day, all birthday celebrations must take place in the last 30 minutes of the day (2:30-3:00pm) for elementary scholars and during middle school lunch period for all middle school scholars. Please communicate planned celebrations to homeroom/advisory teachers at least 24-48 hours in advance. All birthday celebrations must adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1 store-bought cupcake per child (**no peanut ingredients**)
- Balloons, food, candy, juice, table cloths, etc. are **not** allowed.

Breakfast & Lunch

FOOD POLICY

We are committed to making sure we are serving our scholars healthy food options. One of the ways that we ensure healthy options is through our food service provider, Revolution Foods. Scholars will receive a healthy breakfast and lunch daily.

Lunch Policy

If you choose to send your child to school with lunch, here are some of the approved items:

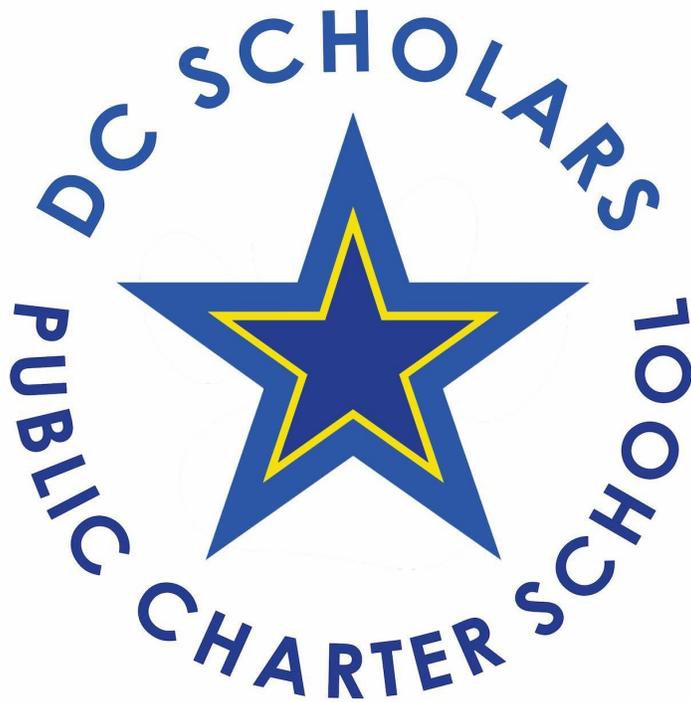
- Crackers
- Pretzels
- Jell-O/Pudding
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Fruit Snacks
- Cereal
- Goldfish
- Cheese
- Fruit Juice
- Bottled Water
- Apple Sauce
- Sandwiches

Scholars that choose to bring a lunch to school must have meals ready to eat. Scholars and teachers don't have access to heat any outside food. Additionally, scholars are not permitted to order food via Rideshare programs (UberEats, Doordash, etc.)

Please support us by not sending the following items to school for lunch or snack:

- Candy
- Soda
- Cakes, donuts, etc.

UNIFORM POLICY



School Uniforms

In order to maintain a focus on learning and build a sense of “team and family,” scholars are required to be in full uniform during the entire time they are in the school building. The DCSPCS uniform consists of khaki bottoms (see table below for options), belt (for 3rd-8th graders), and uniform top (color determined by grade-level).

Uniform shirts are not sold in the Main Office. They can only be purchased online at the following link: bit.ly/DCSPCSUniforms. Uniforms are shipped directly to your home. U

Families should contact Customer Service regarding returns or exchanges. They can be reached at sales@theincredibledesigns.com, or by phone at (202) 669-4867. The school is not responsible for any uniform sales, returns, or exchanges.

If a scholar arrives to school out of uniform, families will be notified by phone call and a letter home. If you need uniform assistance at any time throughout the year, please email Nicole Wiley, our Community Manager at nwiley@dcscholars.org or reach out to your scholar’s homeroom teacher.

DC Scholars Public Charter School Uniform Policy

Articles of Clothing
<p>At DC Scholars Public Charter School, students in grades PS – 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must ARRIVE TO SCHOOL in uniform and remain in uniform during school hours and while attending school field trips or other school-sponsored events, unless otherwise noted.
Shirts
<p>Shirts must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCSPCS official Long or short-sleeve t-shirts (PS-2); long or short-sleeved, DCSPCS official logo <u>collared</u> polos (3-8)
Sweaters/Sweatshirts
<p>Sweaters/Sweatshirts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be with the official DCSPCS logo. (Purchased online) • Scholars are not permitted to wear any other outerwear such as jean jackets, hoodies, etc. during the school day.
Pants
<p>Pants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be plain, solid <u>tan/ khaki</u> uniform-style only.
Skirts/ Jumpers
<p>Skirts/ Jumpers must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain, solid <u>tan/ khaki</u> uniform-style skirts or jumpers.
Shoes/ Boots/ Sneakers
<p>Shoes/ Boots/ Sneakers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover the heel and the toes. • Be covered by pant legs (when applicable). • Boots higher than the ankle can only be worn under pants. <p>The following are NOT PERMITTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip flops, Croc-style shoes, slides or sling-backs, sandals of any kind, clogs or slippers.

- Any shoe that reveals the heel or toe.

Jewelry

Jewelry must be:

- Modest in design.

The following is NOT PERMITTED:

- Jewelry that is distracting from the learning environment.

Purses, Bags, and Hats

Students are NOT permitted to carry purses, handbags, and hats during the school day. Do-rags and scarves may not be worn in the building.

Coats, Jackets, and Hoodies

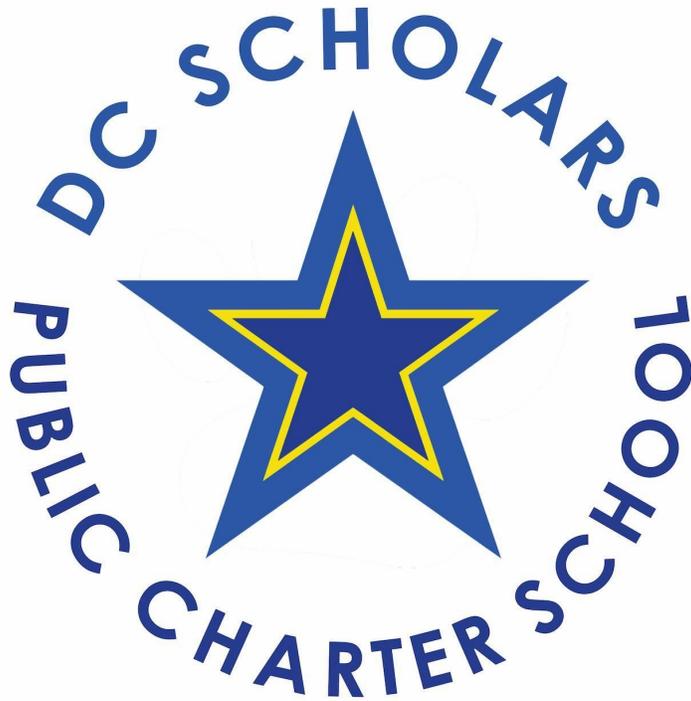
Coats, Jackets, and Hoodies are NOT to be worn in the building at any time unless entering or exiting the building. Students may be required to remove coats prior to entering the building for uniform inspection.

Religious Consideration

At DC Scholars Public Charter Schools, we:

- Believe that students may dress in headgear or other garments for religious purposes.
- Require the parent/ guardian to submit a written request to the respective School Director preferably at the beginning of the year, to obtain written consent for this religious consideration.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES



Scholar Attendance

Attending school is a critical part of your child's development. Daily attendance is the first step in ensuring academic success; this includes arriving on time and remaining in school for the entire day. All absences "Excused" or "Unexcused" are considered absences. A scholar is marked absent any day s/he does not attend school. Additionally, scholars must be present for 80% of the day school day to be considered present in school.

DCSPCS considers unexcused absences from school to be a serious matter. Not only does it impede the progress of your child, it wastes valuable resources allocated for your child's education. *We will strictly enforce our attendance policies so that we can be in the best position to raise our scholars' achievement.*

DCSPCS reserves the right to use attendance and/or tardy infractions as qualification requirements to field trips and participation in after school activities and athletics.

Scholars that are absent from school are not permitted to:

1. Be on school property
2. Participate in school activities
3. Attend school activities during regular hours and/or after school activities.

Suspensions are considered absences. Student absences due to suspensions are treated the same as excused absences.

Parents and families will receive a weekly letter or report indicating the number of tardies, excused, and unexcused absences that their scholar has accrued. Families are expected to carefully review this report and to submit any corrections and documentation to the Main Office **within 5 business days. This is required by DC Law – no exceptions.**

Punctuality/Tardy

A strong start is an important part of our day. Scholars miss valuable learning time if s/he is tardy. School starts at 8:20 am. A scholar is marked tardy if they arrive after 8:30 am. Chronic tardiness may cause your child to be retained in his or her current grade.

- If a PS through 4th grade scholar arrives after 9:00 am, s/he must be accompanied in the building by a parent/guardian.
- If a scholar arrive after 10:00 am, s/he must have proper documentation (medical appointments, court appearance).

Extended Absences

Please inform your child's teacher of any extended absences as soon as you are aware of them. If a long-term absence from school due to medical or other valid reasons is required, please contact the appropriate School Director. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation in a manner suitable to all.

Chronic Absences/Truancy

<p>Each unexcused Absence</p>	<p>After each unexcused absence the parent/guardian of the student will receive an automatic call or email to notify them of the unexcused absence.</p>
<p>5 unexcused absences</p>	<p>Once a scholar has 5 unexcused absences, a written letter will be sent home with an In-school intervention plan suggesting a family intervention meeting.</p>
<p>7 unexcused absences</p>	<p>Once a scholar has 7 unexcused absences, a school administrator will send home a written letter, a follow up to the intervention meeting, and an Attendance Plan for daily attendance accountability.</p> <p>If the parent/guardian is unable or unwilling to participate in a family intervention meeting at school, DCSPCS may conduct a home visit to ensure the safety of the scholar.</p>
<p>10 unexcused absences</p>	<p>Once a scholar has 10 unexcused absences, a school administrator will send home a written letter, outlining guidelines described in the Attendance Plan.</p> <p>DCSPCS is required by law to automatically report the scholar as truant to D.C. Child and Family Services (CFSA).</p>
<p>15 unexcused absences</p>	<p>Once a scholar has 15 unexcused absences, the School Principal will send home a written letter, outlining guidelines described in the Attendance Plan.</p> <p>DCSPCS is required by law to automatically report the scholar as truant to D.C. Child and Family Services (CFSA).</p>
<p>17 cumulative absences</p>	<p>Scholars may be recommended for retention regardless of excused or unexcused absences.</p>
<p>20 cumulative absences</p>	<p>DCSPCS is required by law to automatically report the scholar as truant to D.C. Child and Family Services (CFSA).</p> <p>DC Scholars Public Charter School reserves the right to unenroll or retain any student with 20 or more full-day, consecutive, unexcused absences, as per the School Attendance Clarification Amendment Act of 2015, which can be found at http://lims.dccouncil.us/Legislation/B21-0508?FromSearchResults=true.</p>

Attendance home visits can be conducted at the discretion of the school when a situation warrants. At the home visit, a meeting will be scheduled to address attendance.

Excused Absences Documentation

All tardies, absences, and early dismissals will be reported as unexcused unless the school receives the following official documentation:

- Doctor's note specifying the excused day(s)
- School-approved activity
- Notification of a religious holiday
- Notification of a family funeral (i.e. obituary, program, service announcement) – the child will be excused only for the day of the funeral unless extenuating circumstances apply
- Parent note indicating there is a family emergency – emergencies include house fires, house floods, or incidents of violence in the home (when possibly provide any legal documentation such as police reports or insurance claims)
- Court documents mandating a court appearance
- An official, approved notice signed by DCSPCS' School Director

Documentation must be provided within 5 days of the absence – **no exceptions**. Please see the front office if you have any questions. DCSPCS will accept two handwritten letters per quarter for an excused absence.

Retention

Scholars who miss more than 17 days of school (excused or unexcused) may be recommended for retention in their current grade level, regardless of academic performance.

Unenrollment

For scholars with excessive absences, failure to improve attendance may result in unenrollment.

- PreS and PreK scholars, age 4 and younger, who miss more than 20 cumulative days during the school year may be unenrolled.
- Scholars in grades K through 8th or PreS and PreK scholars age 5 and older who miss 20 or more consecutive days during the school year may be unenrolled.

Early Dismissal & Appointments

Early dismissals (dismissal before the end of the school day) are unexcused, unless one of the reasons above applies. **Early dismissals must take place prior to 2:45 pm.**

All early dismissals are made from the main office. Scholars may not receive a call or text to be released, nor a message to the scholar's teacher via Class Dojo. Please try to arrange doctor visits or other appointments after school or on days when school is closed. Chronic early dismissals negatively impact the academic school day. Early dismissal information may be used for retention purposes.

Make-Up work Upon Return to School

Upon returning to school, scholars must provide the main office with official documentation (i.e. doctor's letter) for the absence. The office will then provide a pass, to be signed by the scholar's teachers, excusing or accepting any made-up work. At the end of the day the pass must be turned into the attendance counselor and kept in a file with the excuse notes.

School Visitors

Visitors, Meetings & Volunteers

All visitors between 8:30 am and 2:45 pm, including parents, **must** sign in at the Security Desk and be given a visitor pass before going elsewhere in the building. Due to our focus on academic and behavioral excellence, we ask that parents and other visitors not congregate in hallways, or do anything that may disrupt instruction or discipline.

DCSPCS Staff, Family, and Visitors Code of Conduct

A shared sense of responsibility toward our community helps to ensure that the highest level of learning takes place for our scholars. The following guidelines have been established to help maximize academic growth, minimize distractions while at school, protect scholars and staff, and maintain the highest level of safety at all times. Careful attention to these DC Scholars Family and Guest norms allows us to accomplish our educational mission together.

All DCSPCS Community Members – scholars, family members, staff, and guests – are expected to act in a civil manner at all times, both on school property and at any time they are participating in a DCSPCS event. This expectation extends to appropriate language (no cursing or inappropriate content), positive demeanor, and respectable attire.

By upholding and maintaining our **Family PATH Values**, scholars are given a prime example of what positive and appropriate behavior looks like from productive citizens in the community, as well as the opportunity to attend a place of knowledge that is safe and secure.

Rude or disruptive behavior and unsafe or irresponsible activity are directly contradictory to the values of our community and provide a poor example for our scholars.

Any visitors, including parents or guardians, who engage in disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior towards any scholar or staff member while on school property can be removed or permanently barred from the building. We also reserve the right to call the police or file a restraining order. Disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior includes:

- Endangering the physical safety of another by the use or threat of force
- Engaging in behavior that disrupts classroom activity or endangers or threatens to endanger the health, safety, or welfare of others
- Intoxication or the detection and/or scent of illegal drug use
- Failure to model and support DCSPCS family values
- Interrupting a class while in session
- Refusing to leave a classroom when asked to do so by the teacher
- Cursing, screaming, or being rude to any DCSPCS staff member or scholar
- Speaking disrespectfully
- Using profanity or raising of one's voice
- Making threats of bodily harm, violence, or any type of terrorism, bombing, shooting, or murder
- Refusing to identify oneself to DCSPCS staff members
- Failure to comply with staff instructions
- Trespassing on school property while school is not in session

School Security

DCSPCS has contracted security services for the 2019-2020 school year. The security team is responsible for:

- checking in guests at our main entrance;
- monitoring visitors and incidents via our security cameras;
- acting as support with arrival and dismissal; and
- providing logistical support in the case of a school-based emergency.

Security services last for the duration of the school day, until the end of our Afterschool/Aftercare program at 7:00 pm.

Guards are not armed and do NOT interact with scholars. School-based leaders or their designees are the sole interventionists for our scholars.

Parent Meetings

We encourage our parents and families to have frequent contact with their scholars' teachers. To minimize interruptions to classroom instruction, parents will not be allowed to meet with teachers during instructional times. Teachers are happy to schedule - in **advance** - times to meet before or after school, where possible. Feel free to email teachers as necessary to schedule an appointment. Teachers and administrators need at least 24 hours notice before a meeting can be scheduled. Your teacher or administrator will confirm your appointment with a response.

Volunteers

DCSPCS welcomes parents as visitors as well as partners. We are always grateful for volunteers who can spend time with us during the day. This can be rewarding not only for the children, but for you as well. We recognize that not all parents have the time to spend helping out during the day. We are grateful for any time you can give us. Please call the office in advance to plan volunteering days. Volunteers may be required to undergo fingerprinting and other security measures prior to starting volunteer activities.

Electronic Devices

Scholars in grades 3 through 8 may possess a cell phone on school property for emergency use only. No other electronic devices beyond cell phones are permitted. In order to protect our instructional integrity, **all** cell phones must be turned OFF prior to entering the building. In grades 3 through 4, it is turned in to the homeroom teacher. In grades 5 through 8, cell phones must be off and placed in the scholar's locker. **If any electronic device is not turned in and is visible or making noise during school hours, it will be confiscated and held in the Dean's Office until a parent/guardian picks it up.** After a 3rd infraction, scholars may forfeit the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school.

Whether turned in or not, the school assumes NO responsibility for any electronic devices brought into the building. Any devices that are lost, stolen, broken, or otherwise damaged or abused while on school property or during school-sponsored events are the sole responsibility of the scholar and his/her family. No exceptions.

School Field Trips

As a part of enrollment, all families complete a universal field trip permission slip. We will provide notifications in advance when and where field trips are scheduled. Family chaperones are permitted, but all chaperones have to be cleared through a background check by the Main Office, and they must sign a chaperone agreement before being permitted to accompany scholars on trips.

DC Scholars Public Charter School reserves the right to exclude scholars and their parent/guardian from any field trip based on student behavior and/or attendance. In addition, there may be other considerations for field trips, including but not limited to excessive tardiness. This specific information will be communicated by the teacher or administrator proctoring the trip. You will be notified in advance of the day of the field trip if your scholar is not eligible to participate or for safety concerns may be asked to chaperone. At times, field trips have to be paid in advance. If a participating scholar engages in an infraction that disqualifies their eligibility, a refund may or may not be available.

Drug Free Environment

Scholars and families who attend DCSPCS, participate in DCSPCS programs and events, and/or visit DCSPCS while under the influence of drugs or alcohol present a safety hazard to themselves and the DCSPCS community. Moreover, the presence of drugs or alcohol in the school limits our ability to perform at the highest levels and provide the best possible educational service. Accordingly, DCSPCS is committed to maintaining a drug free environment. The following conduct is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion/removal from premises:

- Possession, transfer, sale, distribution, use or solicitation of illegal drugs on DCSPCS property (including the parking lot and adjacent areas);
- Possession (in unopened containers) or use of alcohol on DCSPCS property (including adjacent areas) or during working hours;
- Visiting the school or participating in any school related programs under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including the scent or detection of illegal drugs;

- Visiting the school or participating in any school related programs with a detectable amount of any illegal drug or its metabolites in the scholar or parent's body; and
- Abuse of prescribed drugs: Prescribed drugs will be allowed only when taken in accordance with a physician's prescription, and where such use will not adversely affect the ability of an individual to properly and safely perform his or her duties. Any scholar or parent who is taking prescription drugs that may affect his/her ability to behave properly and safely should inform the School Leader before or immediately upon entering the school. Abuse of prescribed drugs will not be tolerated and will be treated in the same fashion as use of illegal drugs.

DCSPCS further reserves the right to take any and all appropriate and lawful actions necessary to enforce this drug- and alcohol-free environment policy including, but not limited to, the inspection of DCSPCS-issued lockers, desks or other suspected areas of concealment, as well as a scholar's or parent's personal items. DCSPCS reserves the right to alter, eliminate, or otherwise change any policy, without notice, at any time.

School Emergencies

Please notify the Operations Manager immediately if an emergency occurs. Emergencies include, but are not limited to, all accidents, medical situations, bomb threats, other threats of violence, or the smell of smoke. If the Operations Manager is unavailable, contact the nearest DCSPCS Leadership Team member. In the event of an emergency, parents and families will be notified via text, phone call, and/or email. Please make sure you have accurate contact information on file with the Main Office at all times to ensure we are able to reach you.

School Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

DCSPCS provides its employees and scholars ("users") with access to computing equipment, systems, and local network functions such as email and the Internet. Through this policy, DCSPCS intends to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

For the full description, see Appendix A.

Harassment Policy Statement

DCSPCS strives to provide a safe, positive learning environment for scholars. Therefore, harassment in any form is not tolerated. DCSPCS prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of scholars and third parties by all scholars and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the school. DCSPCS encourages scholars and third parties who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents to the designated employees. For the full description, see Appendix B.

Complaint Resolution Policy

Families may occasionally need to raise a problem or concern with DC Scholars staff or organization. If this case arises, please thoroughly review and follow the steps outlined below:

Step 1: Check the Scholar & Family Handbook

- a. As an initial step, please refer to the DC Scholars Scholar & Family Handbook to determine if it includes information on how to proceed with your concern or issue.

Step 2: Communicate with Campus-Based Staff

- a. If you cannot find the answer in the handbook feel free to send an email to info@dcscholars.org, email your child's teacher, or a school leader. . Please allow 24 hours for a response.

Step 3: Contact Campus-Based Leadership

- a. If you need further assistance after speaking with the teacher or staff member, please contact your scholar's School Director via email or phone.

Step IV: Communicate with Head of School

- a. After meeting with your scholar's School Director, if you feel your concern or issue was not addressed appropriately, please contact Nicole Bryan, Interim Head of School via email at nbryan@dcscholars.org.

If a scholar or parent believes that he/she has been subjected to conduct that violates the Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination or any misconduct by any DCSPCS scholar, employee, vendor, parent, or other business contact, the individual is encouraged to immediately report the incident using the complaint process.

For purposes of this policy, a scholar can be represented by him/herself and/or his/her legal parent or guardian. Parents are defined as the legal guardian of a DCSPCS Scholar.

For the full description of both the Grievance and Harassment Policy Statements, including the complaint process, see Appendix B.

Scholar Records Retention Policy

In Accordance with section 2606.1 of the DCMR, a scholar's cumulative record folder must be maintained, and it may only be destroyed 80 years following the scholar's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from DCSPCS. Additionally, records that meet the above-mentioned criteria can be made available, upon written request from a parent (or the scholar after his/her 18th birthday), within a reasonable amount of time.

While scholars are enrolled in DCSPCS, the School Leader or his or her designee periodically reviews and destroys misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained in the cumulative record folder, provided that the adult scholar and his or her parent are notified in writing and are given an opportunity to receive the information or a copy of it prior to its destruction. A copy of the notice is then placed in the cumulative record folder.

Documents other than those in the cumulative record folder are scheduled to be destroyed five years after the scholar transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school system. However, documents related to suspensions must be destroyed at the end of the school year immediately following the conclusion of the suspension period, as required by § 2504.7 of the DCMR.

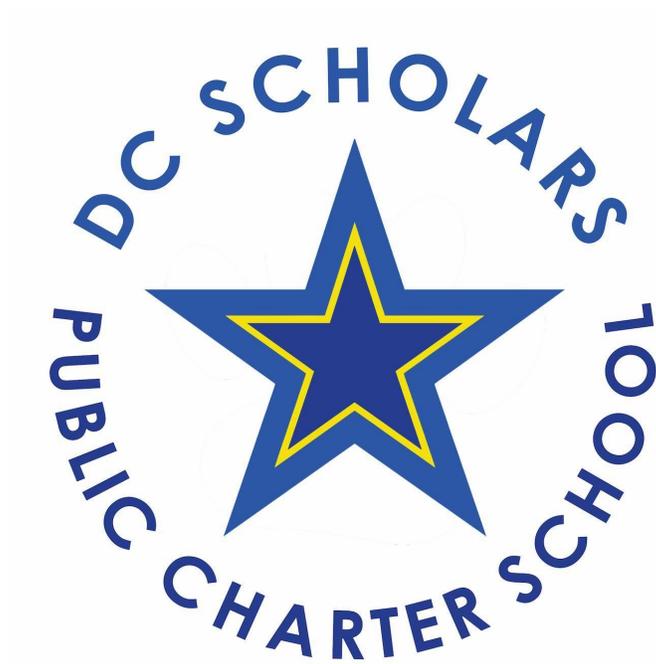
In cases of scholar transfers from one school to another (even to a private school), the DCSPCS practice is to transfer the original hard copy to the new school and retain a copy of the file for DCSPCS' own records.

Withdrawal

If a parent/guardian decides to withdraw a scholar from DCSPCS, he/she must go to the Main Office to complete a withdrawal form. Then, the parent/guardian must visit the new school and complete a records request. Records request should be sent to DCSPCS using the contact information below.

Email: info@dcscholars.org
Fax: 202-618-9396
Phone: 202-559-6138

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIFIC POLICIES



Early Childhood School Readiness Policy

We believe our early childhood scholars are getting a head start on their path to college by joining our school community at such a young age. DCSPCS defines school readiness as a child's ability to function in an age-appropriate manner in a school setting in the following ways:

- Expresses necessary needs and feelings;
- Follows directions given within a reasonable amount of time;
- Performs all necessary toileting needs independently (i.e. fully potty trained and does not require adult assistance in the restroom);
- Feeds themselves in an age appropriate manner;
- Dresses themselves in an age appropriate manner;
- Separates from parent with minimum levels of anxiety;
- Acts and reacts safely with peers and adults. Unsafe behavior in a classroom setting includes acts of physical harm to themselves, their peers, and their teachers; running away from school staff; and tantrums that exceed a reasonable duration of time and intensity; and
- Self-regulates by using age appropriate coping mechanisms (i.e. the ability to soothe self when angry, tired, or emotional).

Transition to DCSPCS

Prior to making a decision regarding school readiness, the school will identify any specific area(s) of concern for scholars during the first four weeks of school. For scholars with persistent transition concerns, teachers and parents will meet to discuss these areas of concern and develop a School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP) to address them. The SRAP will include the following items:

- Readiness concern(s);
- Readiness goal(s);
- Specific teacher and family actions to address concerns; and
- Dates and times for progress report meeting and final decision meeting.

Once the SRAP is underway, teachers and families will meet weekly to check in on the scholar's progress towards his/her readiness goal(s). If a child is not making progress or his/her behaviors intensify despite the plan, the child will be deemed not prepared to function appropriately within a DCSPCS early childhood classroom. A final parent meeting will be held at which point the school will recommend that the parent(s) continue to work on school readiness at home or at a childcare setting, rather than a school setting, for the remainder of the school year. Parent(s) will be encouraged to reapply for the following year when the child is prepared to function in an age-appropriate manner in a school setting.

Please note that school readiness decision is determined by the school director and is dependent upon the severity of the concern(s).

Morning Arrival Policy

Parents and families of all DC Scholars Public Charter School scholars are responsible for making sure scholars arrive to school each day on time and are picked up on time. To ensure that scholars have a positive start to the school day, scholars are asked to arrive to school no later than 8:20am. At 8:00am, we will greet each scholar at the door. From there, scholars will report to their classroom for a free, healthy breakfast. Preschool through Kindergarten parents are permitted to walk scholars to class before the 8:20 am bell rings, which indicates that instruction is starting. **Scholars that arrive after instruction has begun will receive a breakfast bar and walk with a staff member to their classroom. After 8:30am, all parents must report to the Main Office if they would like to speak with a scholar's teacher or school staff. Families are not permitted to walk a scholar to class after 8:30am.**

Early Childhood Toileting Policy

Scholars must be potty trained before beginning at DCSPCS. While we recognize that young scholars have accidents, we cannot spend valuable learning time changing clothes and attending to the individual bathroom needs of all scholars in a classroom. All preschool and prekindergarten classes take several bathroom breaks each day and have frequent opportunities to use the restroom at will during the day. However, as our scholars continue to grow and develop they may occasionally have an accident. For this reason, we require that all families send 2 changes of uniform clothes in a labeled Ziploc bag to school. One change of clothes will remain in your child's cubby and the other in his/her book bag. We do not provide extra clothes for scholars at school. If she has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, a family member will be called to bring the appropriate items.

Accidents should be a rare occurrence. Our scholars are given frequent bathroom breaks, and most classrooms have built-in bathrooms. Families of scholars with frequent accident challenges will be asked to meet with the school director to address the issue. **Scholars with several accidents (5 or more) in a month will be required to have additional assistance from a family member during a school day or stay at home to address those potty-training issues.**

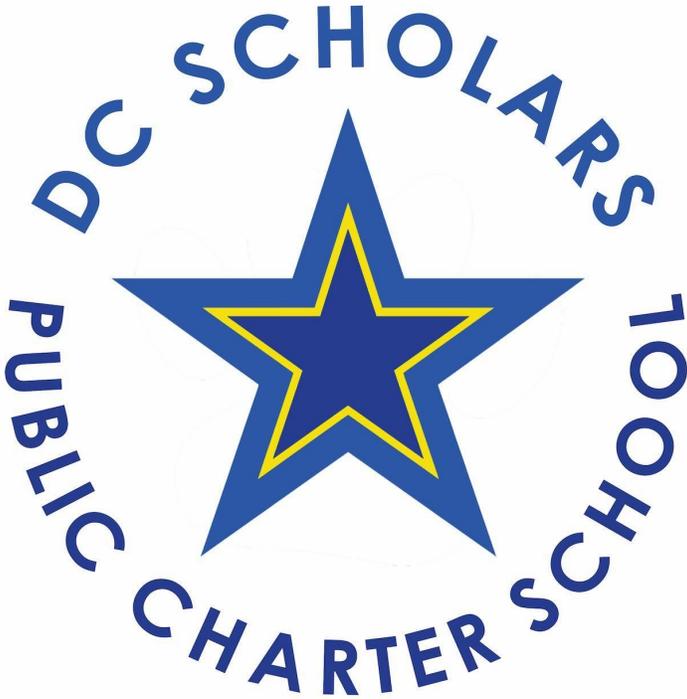
In the event of an accident, teachers will provide students with a change of clothes from their cubby/backpack and provide a bag for soiled clothes, body wipes and paper towels (if needed) and will direct students to put on their clean clothes and put bag of soiled clothes in their backpacks.

In the event that teachers need to help the youngest students change, it will be done in the following manner: while wearing gloves, teachers will help unbutton/button pants, remove shoes and socks, and pull down pants from the feet. **Teachers will not, at any time, touch any area of a student's body that would be covered by a bathing suit or close the bathroom stall door with a teacher and student inside.**

Appletree Partnership

DCSPCS is in partnership with AppleTree Institute. As part of the regular program, your child's teachers will assess your child's academic and social skills. AppleTree Institute reviews the data internally and with your child's teacher to improve instruction. De-identified data are also shared with staff, consultants, educators, and in educational reports. Within this partnership, AppleTree Institute reserves the right to photograph/videotape students, faculty, staff and facilities in connection with the activities of the school and to reproduce such images to promote, publicize, or explain the school or its activities. These images may appear in any of a variety of formats and media now available or that may be available in the future, including but not limited to print, broadcast, videotape, and electronic/on-line media. Parents who do not wish to have their child included in the above coverage should inform the principal in writing.

ACADEMIC STRUCTURES & SUPPORTS



Our Teaching Philosophy

At DC Scholars Public Charter School we believe that all children are capable of achieving at high levels. In order to ensure all students achieve, we hold ourselves and our students to the highest expectations and tailor our instruction to meet each student's individual needs. Our program is strongly shaped by the belief that frequent assessment drives instruction and allows teachers to target scholars' instructional needs, leading to the development of effective interventions and accelerated mastery of requisite skills. Our primary measure of success is scholar performance on the ANet and MAP assessments, F&P, and curriculum aligned, standards based assessments. The specific content of our courses varies by subject area and grade.

School-Wide Achievement Goals

At DC Scholars Public Charter School, our school-wide goals, which drive scholar achievement, are the following:

- **Grades PS-1:** All scholars will move at least 1.5 years of growth in Reading and Math.
- **Grades 2-8:** All scholars demonstrate more than a year of growth in Reading and Math as measured by F&P, Lexile, and MAP assessments

Assessments and Data

There are a number of assessments that scholars will take throughout the year. Scholar growth and achievement data will be communicated with parents at multiple times throughout the year via report cards and conferences and at the conclusion of summative assessments. For detailed information on the grading policy, see Appendix D.

Homework

Class time alone is not sufficient for scholars to master our content and skill objectives. It is essential that scholars continue their learning at home by reading independently and completing a reading log, and by completing written, standards-based homework. Assignments help scholars efficiently apply and reinforce their knowledge. Homework will be collected daily. The teacher may keep a visual homework tracker in the room so scholars are aware of their homework completion rate and for discussion at academic conferences.

All scholars are expected to complete approximately 30-60 minutes of literacy and math homework assignments each night. Parents and scholars are also asked to read nightly together for at least 20 minutes and complete the Independent Reading Log.

Promotion/Retention Policy

Scholar progress is continually shared with parents using Class Dojo, informal check-ins, SLCs, progress reports, and assessment score reports. Formal family teacher conferences are held three times a year at the end of the first three quarters. We encourage all parents to communicate with teachers frequently about their scholar's progress. Scholars who do not meet grade level expectations may be recommended for retention based upon the following criteria:

Attendance/Tardy

- Scholars who are absent from school for 17 days or more automatically qualify for retention.
- For the purposes of retention 4 tardies equals an unexcused absence.

Course Grades

- PreS-PreK: Non-applicable
- K-2: Scholars who receive a grade of 2 or below in math or literacy may be considered for retention.
- 3-8: Scholars who receive a final grade of D or below in math or literacy may be considered for retention.

Assessment and Growth

- PreK: Students are assessed 5 times a year using the Every Child Ready Assessment for literacy and math. Scholars are evaluated on a 4-tier color-coded system.

Instructional Intervention	Needs Support	On track	Accelerated
----------------------------	---------------	----------	-------------

- o Students who are not “On Track” (Green) by progress monitoring 3 in the following categories may be considered for retention.
 - Math: Rational counting, Quantification, Number symbols
 - Literacy: Rhyming, Name writing, Letter identification and sound
- K-8: Scholars are assessed using a variety of formal assessments. Baseline scores are established in the beginning of the fall semester and progress is measured at 2-3 additional points throughout the year.
 - o Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark (F&P) – 1:1 assessment of scholars’ instructional and independent reading levels
 - o Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) – assessment that compares scholars’ academic progress and growth compared to other students their age
 - o Other - the school uses additional assessments as determined by school leaders for progress monitoring, grade level equivalency, and standards mastery

F&P – At the end of 4 th grade, scholars are expected to read on a level S. Scholars reading on or below the level listed below will be considered for retention		MAP – Scholars who are in the bottom 25 th percentile will be considered for retention	Other - Determined at the discretion of school directors.
K	A		
1 st	C		
2 nd	G		
3 rd	K		
4 th	N		

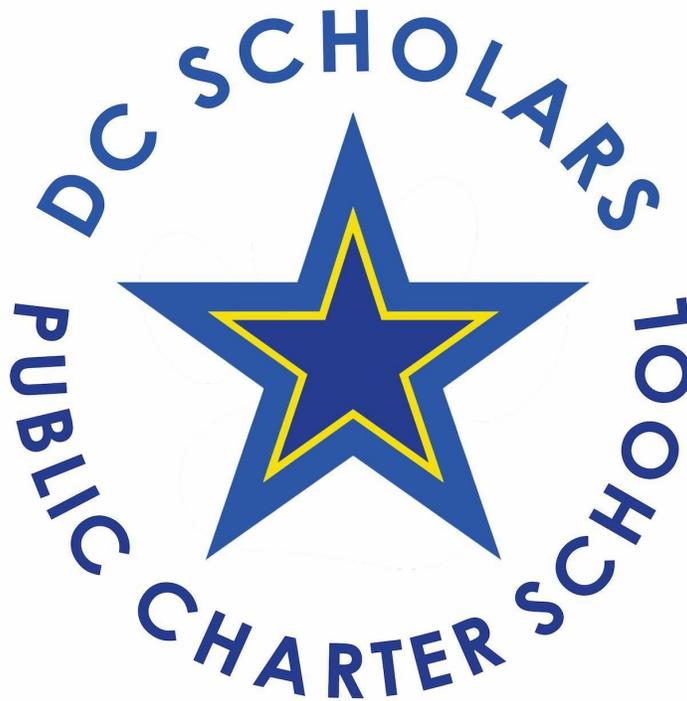
Retention Decision Process and Appeal

Homeroom teachers make retention recommendations to the school's academic leadership teams. The leadership teams review the student profile including attendance, achievement, growth, and social-emotional data before making a final judgment. Final decisions are made by the School Director. Decisions may be appealed via a written request to the Head of School.

Absent Work Policy: Making Up Work When Absent

Absences are highly discouraged at DCSPCS as missing instructional time seriously impacts scholar achievement. When a scholar is absent, they are required to complete the classwork and homework that they missed for the day. In the event that a scholar needs instruction in order to complete the work, that scholar should be encouraged to work out a time with his/her teacher individually to receive instruction. If a scholar is absent, parents are encouraged to ensure the scholar receives all of his/her missed work within 1 school day. A scholar will be given 1 day to complete missed assignments. In the event of an extended absence, parents are asked to speak with the School Director to discuss the absence. The School Director will then collaborate with the instructors to develop an appropriate plan for making up missed work and receiving missed instruction.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICIES & STRUCTURES



Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

DC Scholars Public Charter School ensures that all children with disabilities who enroll in the school have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes children with disabilities who are advancing from grade to grade. FAPE shall also be provided to children who have been suspended or expelled from school in accordance with Title 34 of Federal Regulations (34 CFR) 300.300 (a) and 300.121 (e). Special education and related services are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge. They meet the standards for the District of Columbia and are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets IDEA requirements of 34 CFR300.340-300.350.

Regulations also require that students with disabilities have opportunities to participate with other students in nonacademic settings such as meals, recess, and extracurricular activities, to the maximum extent appropriate. These students must also be considered for inclusion in extracurricular activities and school-sponsored events, such as student government, school sports events, and after-school clubs.

Child Find

Introduction

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), DC Scholars Public Charter School (DCSPCS) is responsible for conducting continuous efforts intended to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities enrolled in DCSPCS, including children with disabilities who are homeless, children who are in the custody of the District of Columbia Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) or committed to the District of Columbia Youth Rehabilitation Services Agency (DYRS), children who are making progress grade to grade, and highly mobile children, who are in need of special education and related services. These duties are called Child Find responsibilities. This policy establishes procedures for fulfilling Child Find responsibilities at DCSPCS and applies to all children enrolled in DCSPCS and all staff employed by DCSPCS. DCSPCS staff members are expected to know and act in accordance with the requirements and procedures established by this policy. DCSPCS trains staff on an annual basis to ensure staff understand and execute Child Find responsibilities. Staff receive training and support from the Student Support Team as-needed based on revisions to this policy and relevant changes to local or federal regulations.

Points of Contact

Parents are encouraged to speak with any members of the DCSPCS staff if they have concerns about their child. Parents and other stakeholders may choose to contact one of the following DCSPCS leadership team members to discuss Child Find, the referral process, and the availability of special education programming at DCSPCS:

Rebecca Brookings Director of Academic Support rbrooking@dcscholars.org	
Jessica Hiltabidel Elementary School Director jhiltabidel@dcscholars.org	Tanesha Dixon Middle School Director tdixon@dcscholars.org
Robert Earle Special Education Coordinator Elementary School Program rearle@dcscholars.org	Michele Gray Student Support Manager Middle School Program mgray@dcscholars.org

Parents and other stakeholders may also choose to contact their child's teacher(s) to discuss Child Find, the referral process, and the availability of special education programming at DCSPCS.

Target Populations

This policy and DC Scholars Child Find efforts apply to children who are enrolled in DCSPCS, including children who are:

- Homeless;
- In the custody of the District of Columbia Child and Family Services Agency;
- Committed to the District of Columbia Youth Rehabilitation Services Agency;
- Making progress grade to grade; and
- Highly mobile children.

DCSPCS only serves students in grades PreSchool through 8th grade. Although the Child Find Policy extends to students age 22 and younger, students in 8th grade are typically between 13 and 15 years old at the time of graduation. This policy extends to any student enrolled at DCSPCS regardless of age.

Outreach Efforts

To ensure the local and school communities are aware of the availability of special education and related services for eligible children with disabilities and the methods for requesting such services, DCSPCS provides public notice through a variety of methods:

- DCSPCS provides information to parents and the school community at school events such as parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school events, summer enrollment events. Information about the Child Find Policy is also located in the annual Scholar and Family Handbook, released in August.
- DCSPCS publishes information and relevant dates in school manuals, calendars, and on its website at www.dcscholars.org/dcspcs
- DCSPCS staff provides information to parents during quarterly parent-teacher conferences and upon request during any parent meeting.
- Brochures regarding special education services are available for parents and the public in at the main office. The Director of Student Support, Special Education Coordinator, and School Counselor also have copies of these materials available upon request.

- Members of the Special Education Team (including leaders, teachers, and related service providers) engage in weekly and monthly check-in meetings with staff members during which reminders about the special education Child Find process are provided.

Coordination With Non-Educational District Agencies

To ensure coordination with appropriate District agencies to facilitate the identification, location, and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in DCSPCS, DCSPCS maintains contacts with the following District agencies:

- District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Early Stages program;
- The Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA);
- Department of Behavioral Health (DBH);

DCSPCS conducts meetings with representatives of the above agencies on an as-needed basis to ensure open and cooperative lines of communication regarding DC Scholars Child Find, referral, and initial evaluation processes and procedures, as well as continuously updating agencies of changes in appropriate points of contact.

DCSPCS may engage with other entities responsible for administering various education, health, and social service programs to children from birth through age 22. Those agencies include but are not limited to: District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Healthcare Finance (DHCF), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), and the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS). Coordination with these programs and agencies occur on an as-needed basis

Parent Engagement

Parents may obtain information about the availability of special education and related services through this policy, information posted on our website (www.dcscholars.org/dcspcs), or by contacting members of the DCSPCS leadership team.

DCSPCS also maintains written materials for parents, which can be found at the Main Office. DCSPCS staff is required to provide information to parents upon request. Parents may also obtain information from the school during parent-teacher conferences.

Special Education Eligibility Process

The following section describes the Special Education Eligibility Process at DCSPCS. The stages of the eligibility process include referral, data review, consent for evaluations, and eligibility determination. The following section includes DCSPCS policies on the referral, data review, and consent phases of this process. This section also includes an overview of the timeline for this process.

Referral

A referral is documentation provided by the child's parent, or other referral source, which clearly states a request to initiate the Special Education Eligibility Process due to concerns about whether or not a child has a disability and may require special education services.

DCSPCS accepts referrals for initial evaluation from the following persons:

- A student's parent or legal guardian;
- The student, provided that educational rights have transferred to the student; and
- Employees of DC Scholars who have knowledge of the student.

For children under the age of six, DCSPCS also accepts referrals from:

- Pediatricians or other medical professionals, including physicians, hospitals, and other health providers;
- Child development facilities, including day care centers, child care centers, and early childhood programs;
- District agencies and programs, including IDEA Part C programs;
- Community and civic organizations; and
- Advocacy organizations.

Referrals should be made writing; however, oral referrals will also be accepted. Upon receiving an oral referral, a DCSPCS staff member must assist the referral source in documenting the oral referral in writing. Written documentation of an oral referral must be provided within three (3) business days of receipt.

Any DCSPCS staff member may be the recipient of a referral from a parent, a guardian with educational rights, or an external agency. All DCSPCS staff members must accept referrals. Should a staff member receives a referral, he or she must alert the Student Support Manager and/or Special Education Coordinator assigned to their program within 1 business day.

To assist with the referral process, DCSPCS maintains a standard referral form (see Appendix A and B) to assist parents and other referral sources in documenting their referral. This form can be obtained from any member of the DCSPCS Student Support Team. The Director of Student Support also maintains a digital file of this referral form.

Data Review

Upon receipt of a referral, DCSPCS shall conduct an analysis of existing data on the student to determine if additional assessments are necessary. Existing data that may be considered may include but is not limited to teacher observations, classroom assessments, schoolwide screenings and assessments, state assessments, student grades and records, parent reports, health records, or data from other interventions. The review of data will be input into the EasyIEP ("SEDS").

Consent for Evaluation

After DC Scholars has received a referral and conducted a data review, DCSPCS must make reasonable efforts to obtain parental consent for an initial evaluation, which includes attempting to contact the parent at least three (3) times on three (3) different dates using at

least two (2) modalities. DCSPCS will provide the parent of a child suspected of having a disability with information about the nature of any additionally required assessment.

Timeline

DCSPCS is required to obtain consent for initial evaluation within 30 days of receipt of a referral. DCSPCS is required to complete an initial evaluation and determine if a child is a child with a disability eligible for special education and related services under IDEA within 60 days of receipt of a consent for evaluation.

The 60-day requirement for completing evaluations does not apply if:

- The parent fails or refuses to respond to a request for consent for the evaluation;
- The parent of the child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation; or
- The child enrolls in another LEA prior to the determination of eligibility.

Screenings

DCSPCS implements a comprehensive screening process to determine if a child should be referred for an evaluation, the result of which is provided to the child’s parent. Screenings utilize assessments and tools that are generally applied across the entire student population. Parent consent is not required for DCSPCS to conduct a uniform, schoolwide screening. A screening conducted by a DCSPCS teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation does not constitute an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services and does not require parental consent.

DCSPCS screenings must not delay the initial evaluation of a student who may be a child with a disability in need of special education and related services.

Screenings at DCSPCS include but are not limited to the following assessments:

	Literacy	Math
PS-PK	Every Child Ready: Language and Literacy	Every Child Ready: Math
K-1	NWEA MAP: Reading Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment AIMSWEB	NWEA MAP: Math
2-4	NWEA MAP: Reading Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment	NWEA MAP: Math
5-8	NWEA MAP: Reading	NWEA MAP: Math

Response To Intervention

Response to Intervention programs at DCSPCS include the following steps: student data review, referral for additional support, ongoing progress monitoring, and parent engagement. This process is facilitated by teachers and school leaders at each grade level.

Response to Intervention programming for students may include but is not limited to the following strategies:

Academics

- Small Group instruction on grade level or below grade level topics
- A “double dose” of instruction using the grade level curriculum
- Increase in time and frequency on blended learning programs
- The use of research or evidence-based curricula
- After school tutoring

Social, Emotional, and Behavior

- Preferential Seating within the classroom
- Check-in/Check-Out system with staff member
- Student behavior contract
- Behavior Intervention Plans

Developmental (Speech, Fine Motor, etc.)

- Determined based on the needs of student

Response to Intervention supports may be delivered to a student by a general education teacher, an instructional aide, an intervention teacher, a student support teacher, a member of the leadership team, or a member of the support staff. All programming for students receiving intervention is determined by the student's team, which includes the parent, general education teacher, and a member of the grade level RTI team (leadership team member, grade level lead, school counselor, etc).

DCSPCS' Response to Intervention (RTI) efforts must not delay the initial evaluation of a student who may be a child with a disability in need of special education and related services. Students may be in the RTI process while in the Special Education Eligibility process concurrently.

Transition From Part C

Under IDEA, DCSPCS must ensure a smooth and effective transition for children transitioning from Part C early intervention services to Part B special education and related services. In furtherance of this responsibility, DCSPCS:

- Identifies incoming children that were served by Strong Start DC Early Intervention Program (DC EIP) prior to enrollment at DCSPCS, and participates in transition activities as appropriate at the request of DC EIP; and
- As applicable, regularly coordinates with DCPS Early Stages to ensure a smooth transition for students served by DCPS Early Stages prior to enrollment in DCSPCS.

When a child is transitioning from Part C to Part B services, DCSPCS participates in transition planning conferences as appropriate and ensures each child with a disability has an IEP developed and implemented by the child's third birthday.

Parent Procedural Safeguards And Rights

Parents' legal rights during the Child Find process are defined by IDEA and District of Columbia law. In the event of a disagreement, parents may pursue dispute resolution and due process rights, including mediation, due process complaints, or state complaints. Parents can learn more about their rights under IDEA by referring to the Part B Procedural Safeguards located on OSSE's website

<https://osse.dc.gov/publication/rights-parents-students-disabilities-idea-part-b-notice-procedural-safeguards> or by contacting the Director of Student Support or Special Education Coordinator to obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards.

Data Reporting

In accordance with District of Columbia law, DCSPCS counts and reports the number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services count annually on October 5 or the date set for the annual pupil count required by D.C. Official Code § 38-2906.

English Language Learners (ELL) Support

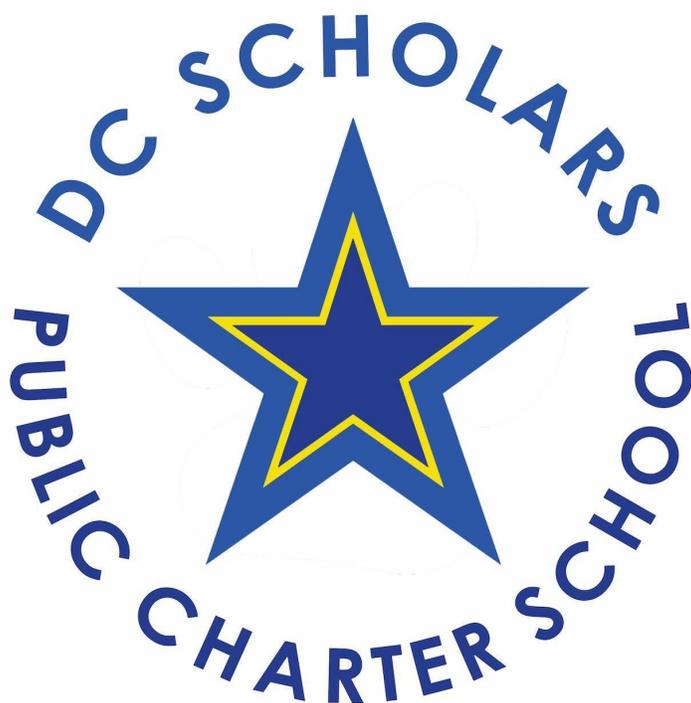
DCSPCS has developed its English Language Learning (ELL) program in accordance with the school's philosophy to provide a quality educational program for all scholars enrolled in DCSPCS, including providing for the education of scholars whose dominant language is not English. The purpose of this ELL plan is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible scholars so that they can attain the statewide academic standards and achieve academic success.

The purpose of our ELL program is to:

- Develop the language and literacy skills of non-native English speakers.
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum for scholars who are still developing cognitive academic language proficiency.

Our ELL team achieves these goals through identification of all scholars who speak a language other than English to see if they would benefit from ELL services, direct instruction, consultation with general education teachers, professional development for staff, and/or participation in the DC Scholars Student Support Team (SST).

BEHAVIORAL STRUCTURES & SUPPORTS



Culture Vision of Excellence

Our **PATH** values guide us in creating a safe, positive, and professional learning environment driven by high expectations, j-factor, strong systems and routines that maximize instructional time to foster a positive **culture of learning** for all.

Scholar PATH Values

The acronym PATH represents the four core values that we use to motivate and remind scholars of their PATH to college. The four values are **P**repared, **A**ttentive, **T**houghtful and **H**ardworking.



Scholar PATH Values	
Professional Be respectful and maintain positive communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on time and prepared when you come to school and class - bring homework, supplies, uniform, and the right attitude • Use appropriate tone, volume and affect • Be aware of your body – keep hands and feet to yourself; respecting the personal space of others
Attentive Be an active listener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track the speaker • Use silent signals to agree, disagree, build, etc and also provide verbal feedback to peers on their ideas • Stay on task and engaged in whole group, small group, and independent instruction the entire time
Thoughtful Think and communicate clearly and pay attention to others' feelings and perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and/or provide clear, precise, evidence-based responses • Use please, excuse me, thank you, sorry and you're welcome (PETSU) • Empathize – tell others when you can relate to their feelings or perspectives • Be community oriented and help others whenever possible
Hardworking Show self-confidence and self-discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persist – continue to work on a task even if it becomes difficult; show grit • Take a chance; engage in something new or different academically • Admit when you don't know – and ask for help • Have PRIDE - Personal Responsibility In Demonstrating Excellence

STAR Code

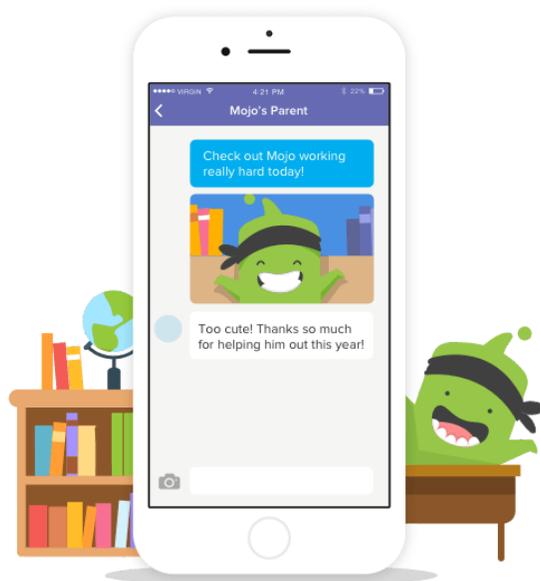
Scholars are asked to participate in class in a way that will foster learning, respect, and engagement. DCSPCS uses STAR as our primary learning position. When scholars are sitting in STAR, they send a signal that they are ready to learn.

Shine Like a STAR!	
S	Sit Up Straight Proper posture is expected at all times. Good posture also ensures scholars are alert during class and communicates respect for the speaker.
T	Track the Speaker Scholars should always have their eyes on the person speaking to them. Tracking is not only polite and respectful, but it also allows scholars to be the most engaged and actively listening.
A	Ask/Answer Questions Scholars are expected to be actively engaged in a lesson. Questions allow scholars to clear up any misconceptions and also advocate for themselves. Asking questions ensures that the scholar and his/her classmates master the lesson objectives.
R	Respectfully Agree/Disagree An important aspect of learning is dialogue and communication. We believe it's important for our scholars to engage in conversation respectfully while challenging each other's thoughts and opinions creating a high bar for classroom discourse.

Restorative Circle and Community Meeting (grade-level and school-wide meetings)

Scholars will participate in weekly restorative community circles where scholars are engaged in various social-emotional learning components. The circles will have a closing component on Fridays to reflect on the week and highlight good choices. Each month DC Scholars will host Community Meeting. This is a time for us to celebrate as a school community outstanding achievement and growth and acknowledge our Scholars/Teachers of the Month.

Rewards and Consequences



Class Dojo is a tool that teachers use to reinforce skills and habits in scholars as a discipline demonstration of PATH values necessary for success. This is a great resource for parents as well because it comes with parent codes that allow you to log in and check on how your scholar's day went with the click of a button. Once you set up an account you can check on your child through the Class Dojo website (www.classdojo.com) or the app for parents. You can also communicate with your child's teacher directly. **All parents are required to be connected to Dojo.** Class Dojo reports are printed every Thursday for families to review, sign, and return the following day.

PATH Trips

As a reward for meeting high expectations, scholars that exhibit and uphold our PATH values may be eligible to attend quarterly PATH trips. PATH trips are based on Class Dojo percentages which include attendance, homework, uniform, and adhering to our PATH values.

Discipline Policy

Academic excellence can only be achieved when there is a positive school and classroom culture that creates a positive learning environment. Safety, order, and scholar discipline are fundamental to learning at DCSPCS. While scholars need a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers, and proper materials, they must also have a secure environment in which to learn. Any time spent addressing scholar misbehavior is lost instructional time.

To help support clear expectations and school community, DCSPCS teachers and scholars are required to follow whole-school routines and procedures. It is our responsibility to maximize every second of our school day to provide our scholars with the knowledge and skills required to grant them access to limitless opportunity. We can achieve this by creating

an environment that serves as the strongest platform for scholar achievement. This platform is built and maintained through structure, attention to detail, systematized rewards and consequences, and a deep commitment and care for each and every scholar and our collective community.

At DCSPCS, we have high expectations for the kind of people our scholars will grow to be. We believe that scholars who demonstrate our PATH (Prepared/Professional, Attentive, Thoughtful, and Hardworking) core values will be empowered and prepared to enter and be successful in high school and on the path to college or a career. We believe that each scholar can reach high academic standards, enjoy learning, achieve success and contribute actively to his or her community.

In order to maintain a school culture that nurtures scholars to develop in such a manner, our school-wide behavior system is a prevention-based model, focused on modeling our core values, helping scholars reflect upon their behaviors (both positive and negative), and teaching them to make positive choices.

DCSPCS sets high expectations for scholar behavior. We explicitly teach scholars what we expect, provide multiple opportunities to demonstrate our core values, and reinforce positive behaviors. Every adult in the school models the core values for our scholars through his/her work habits, professionalism, and positive interactions. Our expectations for scholars are evident in the relationships we build with scholars, our partnerships with families, and the quality of instruction in our classrooms.

The DCSPCS behavior system includes a ladder of consequences and a progressive discipline model. Using these systems, scholars receive a consequence that matches the behavior with the consequences increasing if the behavior is repeated. Scholars will progress through the ladder of consequences as their behavior persists. Serious consequences such as suspension and expulsion are only reached after the ladder of consequences has been exhausted and if the school administrator determines that a student has willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily harm or emotional distress to another person. For examples, see Tier 3 and all Tier 4 offenses. In the event of either a suspension or expulsion, DCSPCS follows PCSB requirements with respect to due process and reporting.

Details of the tiered behavioral system are presented below

Tier 2 – Dean (Out of Class)		
Behavior(s)		
PS-K	1st-2nd	3rd-8th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Destruction of school property valued at less than \$500* ● Fighting (biting) w/intent to harm, Physical Aggression includes spitting, biting* ● Hitting a teacher* <p>*Buddy Classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refusal to complete reflection* ● Threat towards teacher * ● Refusal to go to a buddy classroom ● Fighting/hitting with intent to do harm ● Physical Aggression includes spitting, biting ● Destruction of school property valued at less than \$500 ● Leaving class without permission/out of location ● Throwing an object with intent to harm. <p>*Buddy Classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal aggression/threat towards teacher ● Refusal to complete reflection ● Destruction of school property valued at less than \$500 ● Leaving class without permission/Out of location ● Throwing an object with intent to harm ● Academic Dishonesty** (5th-8th)
Tier 3 – Admin		
Behavior(s)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sexual misconduct ● Physical Aggression including but not limited to fighting, spitting, and biting (grades 3rd-8th) ● Physical harm to staff (1st-8th) ● Theft of goods or money from school property ● Destruction of school property valued at \$500 or more ● Burglary of school, staff, or student property ● Gambling or possession of items related to gambling ● Elopement (from School) 		
Tier 4 – SD/HOS		
Behavior(s)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possessing, distributing, selling, giving, or loaning any controlled dangerous substance ● Possession of dangerous item (weapon, drugs, fire source) 		

The following Dean's Office procedures begin once a scholar reaches the end of the classroom-based ladder of consequences (Tiers 1 and 2 above):

1. Teacher completes Office Referral, indicating if the behavior was Tier 2 or 3 (see above for examples).
 - a. For Tier II and III referrals, the teacher must provide details about the behavior/incident, including any other scholars who were involved or witnessed the incident.

Note: Tier I infractions may result in a referral if they are persistent and causing severe disruption to the learning time of other scholars.

- b. Teacher contacts the Culture Team or Main Office to request the removal of the scholar.
2. Scholar arrives in the Dean's office and the following may occur:
 - a. Written reflection (scholar must write about why he/she made the choice he/she did)
 - b. Problem solving session (scholar engages in a structured conversation around the poor action with an opportunity for the scholar to outline the future choice he/she would make if faced with the same decision)
 - c. Restorative Conversation- apologize to the teacher or other students (verbal and written) in an authentic conversation to restore relationship.
 - d. Fresh start in class
3. Notification to parents
 - a. **Tier I** offenses, **the teacher** will notify the parent/guardian of infractions and referrals to the Dean's office (by 8PM that same day)
 - b. **Tier II** referral offenses, **the Dean** will notify the parent/guardian of infractions and referrals to the Dean's office.
 - c. **Tier III** offenses, **the Dean or School Administrator** will contact the parent/guardian to notify the adult of the referral and the consequence.
4. Scholar serves consequence. When consequence is served, scholar receives a Permit to Return to Class slip signed by the administrator.
5. Scholars serving a suspension will be required to attend a reinstatement meeting the day they return to school. The scholar's parent(s)/guardian(s) will also be invited to attend. This will ensure a scholar's preparedness to re-enter the school community.

Please note if a scholar commits a Tier 3 and/or 4 offense, DCSPCS may recommend the student for suspension or expulsion.

Note: Scholars with behavior plans as part of their IEPs will follow their IEP Behavior Plan in conjunction with the school-wide plan. See Procedures for Suspending and Expelling Scholars with Disabilities below.

Suspension and Expulsion Process

Introduction

The decision to recommend a student for suspension or expulsion will be made by a school administrator (e.g. School Director, Head of School, Executive Director, Dean or any other school administrator) independent of the student's teacher or other staff. **In recommending suspension or expulsion, the administrator will consider Code of Conduct violations, the severity of the infraction(s), the intent of the scholar's action, the scholar's previous infractions (if any), any existing or prior student Discipline contracts, and the scholar's age.** A scholar recommended for expulsion will (subject to certain conditions) have a Disciplinary Hearing to review the recommendation. The Discipline Review Panel (DRP) will make a final decision on the scholar's long-term suspension or expulsion, with the scholar having an opportunity to appeal.

Process

When the school receives a report that a scholar has committed an offense eligible for suspension or expulsion, an investigation into the offense will be conducted by a Dean or another school administrator. Scholars for whom suspension or expulsion is being considered after the investigation will be given notice and an opportunity to be heard before a final decision regarding suspension or expulsion is made. Investigation and hearing procedures are as follows:

Suspension

Scholars accused of a Tier 3 or 4 infraction will meet with the Dean or a School Administrator as part of a school-based investigation. The scholar will be notified of what he/she is accused of doing, including the information that the school has to believe that the scholar engaged in such behavior. The scholar will be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. After this meeting, the Dean or other administrator will determine if a suspension is appropriate. Scholars facing an out-of-school suspension (5 days or less) will be issued written notice to the parent or legal guardian detailing the length of, and reason for, the suspension. The Dean or other school administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the suspension via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Written notification may also be given to the scholar. Suspension decisions are final.

Expulsion

For scholars facing expulsion, a Dean or another school administrator will meet with the scholar and notify him/her of the infraction he/she is accused of, the information that the school has to believe that the scholar engaged in such behavior, and the disciplinary action being considered. The administrator will give the scholar an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior.

If disciplinary action is still under consideration after the scholar provides his/her explanation, the Dean or other administrator will conduct an investigation as appropriate into the circumstances of the scholar's behavior and any explanation provided by the scholar. At the Dean's or other administrator's discretion, the scholar may be suspended pending the results of this investigation and possible recommendation for further disciplinary action from

the Dean or other administrator. This investigation will be completed within 3 business days of notifying the scholar of his/her infraction(s).

After the meeting with the scholar and completion of the investigation, the Dean or other administrator will issue written notice to the parent/guardian if a recommendation for expulsion is made and the reason for this recommendation. This notice will explain the information that is being relied on as the basis for the recommendation. The Dean or other school administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the expulsion via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Any parent/ guardian meetings may occur by phone.

Within 10 school days of the recommendation for expulsion, a Discipline Hearing will be held if requested by a scholar's parent/guardian to make a final determination about the disciplinary action proposed.

Discipline Hearing

A scholar will have a Discipline Hearing at the request of a parent/guardian when:

S/he has been recommended for expulsion or violated an expellable offense.

The Discipline Review Panel (DRP) will be appointed by the Interim Head of School and will consist of three faculty/staff and/or Board members who do not have a direct conflict of interest with the scholar and are not involved in the incident being reviewed. The Board Chair may appoint any non-affiliated faculty/staff member to be on the DRP. The DRP serves as an impartial decision maker. DRP hearings are closed to the public. In making its decision, the Discipline Review Panel will review evidence presented at the hearing, any statements made on behalf of the school or scholar, the DCSPCS Code of Conduct, and records of the scholar's prior conduct and/or academic performance, if applicable. The decision of the DRP shall be made by a majority vote of the DRP.

During the hearing, the school administrator(s) will carry out the following procedures:

- A statement of the Code of Conduct violation and summary of the Discipline Hearing procedures.
- An explanation and review of the evidence or facts for which potential long-term suspension/expulsion is being considered. If video footage is available of the incident, the panel will view the footage.
- The scholar may be represented by his/her parent/guardian and one additional advocate.
- The scholar may present any information that he/she wants the Discipline Review Panel to consider. The panel may ask questions regarding the matter to anyone present at the hearing. An advocate may speak on the scholar's behalf. The scholar has the right not to speak on his/her own behalf. Neither the school's representative at the hearing nor the scholar nor his/her representative(s) will be given the opportunity for cross-examination during the hearing.

Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the hearing, the panel will make a recommendation regarding the consequence. The panel's recommendation will be effective immediately.

The scholar/family will be informed of the decision via phone within two (2) school days of the conclusion of the hearing and written notification will be mailed within three (3) school days of the decision. This notice will contain information regarding appeal procedures.

If a parent/guardian does not request a hearing or fails to attend the hearing at the scheduled date, time, and place, the right to a hearing will be waived.

If a parent/guardian does not request a hearing or fails to attend the hearing at the scheduled date, time and place, the student's right to a hearing will be waived. In such cases, the DRP will make a determination based on the evidence before it without a hearing.

Following the DRP's determination, the school will proceed to implement the ruling of the DRP. The findings from the hearing will be approved and take effect immediately. Appeals will not **be accepted from scholars who do not appear at the initial hearing.**

Discipline Panel Hearing Appeal

Any scholar who is expelled has the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of DCSPCS' Board of Trustees within five (5) school days of the written notice of expulsion, provided the student participated in the DRP hearing. The following process shall be implemented for all appeals.

1. An appeal hearing date will be set within seven (7) school days of the receipt of the scholar's Appeal request.
2. The appeal hearing date will occur within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the hearing being set.
3. Appeal hearings will be heard by three members of the Board of Trustees appointed by the Chair of the Board and constituted as the "Appeal Panel." A disinterested faculty/staff member or volunteer familiar with the school may replace one member of the Board of Trustees on the "Appeal Panel" at the discretion of the Board Chair.
4. The scholar may be represented by his/her parent/guardian and one additional adult advocate.
5. The scholar has the right to speak on his/her behalf at the Appeal Hearing. The scholar may choose not to speak at the Appeal Hearing.
6. The scholar may not return to DCSPCS and participate in school activities while an appeal is pending.
7. Appeal hearings are closed to the public.
8. If a parent/guardian fails to appear at the Appeal Hearing the right to appeal is waived, and the original disciplinary decision will stand.

In making its decision, the three-member Appeal Panel will:

1. Review all evidence and documentation from the DPR and any supporting documentation;
2. Review any statements heard at the DPR on behalf of the school or scholar;
3. Review the DCSPCS Code of Conduct;
4. Review the scholar's prior conduct and/or academic performance;
5. The panel may ask questions regarding the matter to anyone present at the hearing. One advocate may speak on the scholar's behalf. The scholar has the right not to speak on his/her own behalf. Neither the school's representative at the hearing nor the scholar nor his/her representative(s) will be given the opportunity for cross-examination during the appeal.

If the expulsion is overturned, the cumulative record of the student and any other school-maintained records will reflect that conclusion. If the Appeal Panel upholds the expulsion, the expulsion shall be imposed, and such decision will be final. **All decisions made by the Appeal Panel will be final and not subject to further appeal.**

Special Notes Regarding Audio/Video Recording of Discipline Review Panels and Appeal Hearings

All disciplinary hearings are closed to the public. They may not be recorded using a video or audio recording device under any circumstances, except as may be required to provide accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A written request to audio-record the hearing pursuant to these laws must be made to the student's Dean no less than 48 hours prior to the hearing.

Participation at School and School Related Activities and Re-Enrollment

Scholars who have been expelled from DCSPCS shall not be eligible to participate or attend any school functions. Scholars will not be eligible to re-enroll for subsequent school years. Expulsion is permanent.

Procedures for Suspending and Expelling Scholars with Disabilities

Subject to all applicable guidelines and requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the basis for disciplining, suspending or expelling scholars with disabilities shall be no different than the basis for such actions taken against scholars without disabilities. Reasonable accommodation of a scholar's disabilities shall not prevent the school from applying its discipline policy to scholars with disability when their behavior is not related to the disability.

A set of specific procedural requirements must be followed in the event a scholar requiring special education services engages in a behavior that warrants a disciplinary intervention, such as a suspension or expulsion. A scholar with a disability who violates a code of school conduct may be removed from his/her current placement to another appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting or suspension for up to 5 consecutive or 10 cumulative days (to the extent that those alternatives are applied to nondisabled scholars) without the need to conduct a manifestation determination.

At the point in time when a scholar will be excluded from school for more than 10 (cumulative) school days in a school year, a change in placement may occur. Prior to a change in placement, DC Scholars engages in several activities designed to address the behavior subject to disciplinary action, including a review of the scholar's IEP to determine if the misconduct is related to the manifestation of a child's disability.

When the disciplinary removal of a scholar leads to a change in placement, DC Scholars will:

- Immediately notify the parent of the decision to remove the scholar and provide the parent with a copy of the procedural safeguards notice.
- Within ten (10) school days of the disciplinary decision to remove a scholar with a disability from his or her current placement, DC Scholars, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team must review all relevant information in the scholar's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:
 - (a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
 - (b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of DC Scholars' failure to implement the IEP.

If the IEP team finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the scholar's disability, the team must either: (a) Conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA), unless DCSPCS had conducted an FBA prior to the disciplinary action, and develop and implement a behavior intervention plan (BIP); or (b) If there is a BIP in place, review the BIP and modify it as necessary to address the behavior, and immediately return the scholar to their educational placement, unless the parent and the IEP team agree to a change in placement as part of the modification of the BIP.

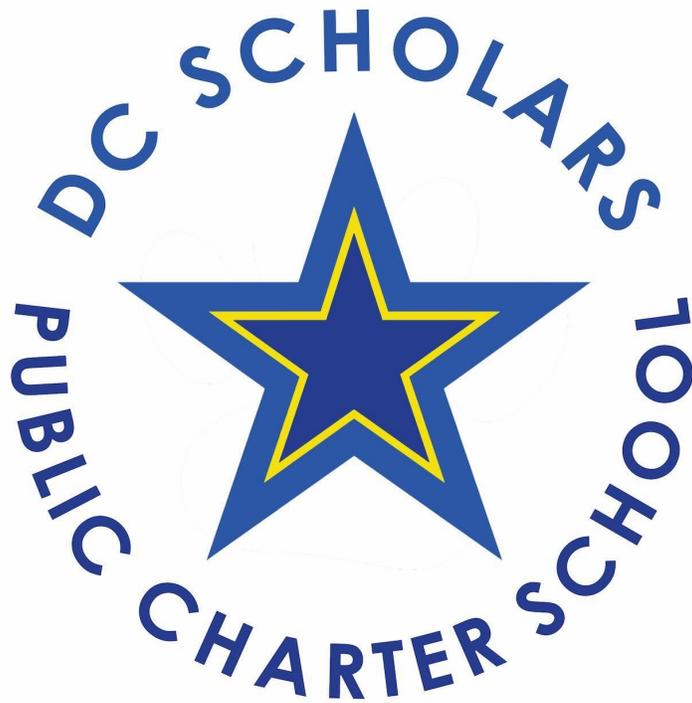
Parents can request more information about this process and a copy of the procedural safeguards by contacting the Director of Student Support or Special Education Coordinator at any time during the school year.

Scholar Rights

1. This policy sets forth guidelines by which scholar rights are to be determined consistent with applicable law.
2. The Board of Trustees has the authority and responsibility to establish reasonable rules and regulations for the conduct and deportment of scholars of this school. At the same time, no scholar shall be deprived of equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, due process, a presumption of innocence, and free expression and association in accordance with these guidelines.
3. In order for scholars to take advantage of the rights established here, they are held accountable to certain responsibilities, which include respect for the rights of others, obedience to properly constituted school authority, and compliance with the rules and regulations of this school.
4. A scholar who has reached the age of 18 years possesses the full rights of an adult and may authorize those school matters previously handled by his/her parents.

5. The School Director / Dean of Scholars shall observe the disciplinary procedures consistent with law and Board policy to ensure that scholar rights under varying conditions are properly respected.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS



School Nurse

Scholars who need emergency medical attention during school hours will be examined by the School Nurse. Scholars must have a pass from a teacher to be seen by the Nurse. If necessary, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the scholar from school. It is extremely important to keep each scholar's Emergency Contact Form updated with the correct information. Any scholar dismissed early because of a medical emergency must be signed out in the Main Office. Upon return to the school, the scholar must visit the nurse.

The nurse's office is strictly used for first-aid. It is not a clinic or physician's station; no scholar will be diagnosed or treated for illness. The school nurse is not responsible for treating accidents, injuries, burns, infections, etc. Such care and treatment is the responsibility of the parent. Parents are invited to call the school nurse to discuss any health-related issues they may have concerning their child.

Other Health Services

Through trained certified staff and outside agencies, services are provided free of charge for mandated state screenings, vision and hearing screenings, height and weight checks and dental clinic services. Referrals can be made by these services to provide further care.

Illness and Preventative Care

Since the health of a child will affect his/her learning, it is very important the scholars get adequate sleep and a good breakfast. To protect your scholar and prevent the spread of illness to other classmates, please do not send your scholar to school if s/he has any of the following symptoms within 12 hours of the start of school:

- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- Continuous coughing and sneezing
- Unexplained and/or contagious rash
- Thick dark yellow-greenish drainage from the nose
- Yellowish drainage from eye, crusted area (contagious conjunctivitis – Pink Eye)

Students with ringworm may return to school after 24 hours of treatment by a doctor.

Communicable Diseases

Please notify the school office IMMEDIATELY, if your child is diagnosed with any of the following illnesses:

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Pediculosis (lice)	Measles	Tetanus
Ringworm	Impetigo	Mumps	Encephalitis
Strep Throat	Fifth Disease (rash)	Rubella	HFM Disease
Diarrhea Type Diseases	Influenza	Pertussis	Meningitis
Chicken Pox	Pneumonia	Hepatitis	Tuberculosis

Medications in School

DC Scholars Public Charter School shall not be responsible for diagnosis and treatment of a scholar's illness. The practice of taking medication in the school is discouraged. Nevertheless, the administration of prescribed medication in accordance with the direction of a parent and/or family physician to a scholar during school hours will be permitted when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the scholar or the scholar would not be able to attend school if the medicine were not made available during school hours. At the end of the school year, all medications must be picked up by parents/guardians from the Nurse's Office. Any medicine not picked up by the last day of school will be discarded.

Parents who wish to have prescription medications given to their child during school hours must have on file a "Request for Administration of Medication" (Form MED-I). This form is available from both the nurse's office as well as the Main Office. The form must be filled out and signed by the child's doctor and the parent. The parent, not the child, should bring the medication to the school. Medication shall include, but not be limited to, all medicines prescribed by a physician, any patent drug, and non-prescription medications (OTC) (i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, Benadryl, Sudafed, decongestants, antihistamines, etc.).

Medication will be retained by the school only if it has been packaged and labeled by a Registered Pharmacist according to accepted pharmaceutical standards. The medication label must include: patient's name, pharmacy name, pharmacy address and phone, prescription number, prescription date (current), name of medication, dosage, form, and expiration date, instructions for administration, and name of prescribing health care provider. Medication must be packaged with a safety cap. Over the counter (non-prescription) medications must be in the original manufacturer's container with directions for use intact on the label or box.

If your child has any health problems or is taking prescription medication for any reason, even though it does not have to be given in school, it is important for you to inform the school. Many medications have side effects that the school staff can help you look for.

Medication may only be administered by a certified staff member who has completed the appropriate state training. Each school division has staff trained to administer medication when the school nurse is not available, including during field trips and after-school programming. DC Scholars also has school-wide procedures in place in the event of medical emergencies.

Scholar Immunizations

Immunization of Scholars

All scholars must be completely immunized or exempted before admission to any public, private, or parochial school in Washington, DC. The purpose of requiring immunization is to protect scholars from preventable communicable diseases and their medical and educational complications.

Immunization, Disease and Required Number of Doses

1. Diphtheria - 4 doses

2. Tetanus – 4 doses
3. Poliomyelitis - (Oral 3 doses / Inactivated 4 doses)
4. Measles (Rubella) - Two doses of live attenuated measles vaccine at twelve months of age or older and a second dose no sooner than 30 days after the first dose, or serological (blood test) evidence of immunity to measles.
5. Mumps - 1 dose (administered on or after the first birthday, or Physician's Verification of Disease)
6. German Measles (Rubella) – 1 dose (administered on or after the first birthday, or a history of rubella confirmed by blood test)
7. Hepatitis B – 3 doses
8. Varicella (Chicken Pox) - 1 dose on or after the first birthday or history of disease.
9. HPV – dose requirements vary

There are two immunization exemptions:

Religious Exemption - Scholars need not be immunized if the parent or guardian objects in writing to the immunization on religious/ethical grounds.

Medical Exemption - Scholars need not be immunized if a physician or their designee provides a written statement that immunization may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the physician determines that immunization is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the medical exemption ceases to be valid and the child must be immunized.

In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the scholar is exempt from the requirement to be immunized, that scholar will be excluded from school until a competent medical authority determines that the scholar may return.

Disposition of Immunization Records

When transferring from one school to another, the parent should request the Certificate of Immunization from the current school and take it to the new school. The Certificate of Immunization will go with the scholar when he/she transfers, graduates, withdraws, or otherwise leaves DCSPCS.

DC Scholars Public Charter School Local Wellness Policy

This Local Wellness Policy (LWP) outlines the LEA's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. This policy applies to all students, staff at DCSPCS. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

Local Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

DCSPCS will establish a Local Wellness Committee that meets at least two times per year to develop goals for and oversee implementation of school health and safety policies/programs, including periodic reviews and updates of this LWP.

The Local Wellness Committee will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., health education teachers, school health services staff (e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services), and mental health and social services staff (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists); school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal); school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators (SNAP-Ed).

Leadership

DCSPCS will designate a school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy. The designated official for oversight is our Operations Manager:

Name	Title / Relationship to the School or District	Email address	Role on Committee
Tiffany Green	School Operations Manager	tgreen@dcscholars.org	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness policy implementation

Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

DCSPCS will develop and maintain an implementation plan for implementing this LWP. This plan will delineate the roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school, and it will include information about who will be responsible for making what change, by how much, where and when,

as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

DCSPCS will use a variety of tools (see list below) to complete school-level assessments of implementation of this plan; based on the results; DCSPCS will create an action plan, implement the plan, and generate an annual report. DCSPCS will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of this LWP at the DCSPCS' main office and with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

Documentation maintained in these locations will include but is not limited to:

- this written LWP;
- documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- documentation of efforts to review and update the LWP; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the LEA uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Local Wellness Committee;
- documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- the most recent assessment on the implementation of the LWP; and
- assessment documents will be made available to the public.

DCSPCS will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The school will make this information available via the school website <http://www.dcscholars.org> and through DCSPCS-wide communications. This will include a summary of the DCSPCS's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the DCSPCS also will publicize the name and contact information of the school officials leading and coordinating the Local Wellness Committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the Committee.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, DCSPCS will conduct a Triennial Progress Assessment and develop a report that reviews each DCSPCS schools' compliance with this LWP. This assessment and report will include a full description of the progress made in attaining the goals of DCSPCS's LWP.

The positions/persons responsible for managing the triennial assessment and report is Sharonda Mann, Director of Finance and Operations, smann@dcscholars.org and Tiffany Green, Operations Manager, tgreen@dcscholars.org.

The above referenced individual(s) will monitor DCSPCS' compliance with this LWP and develop the triennial progress reports by utilizing, among other tools, the annual LEA self-evaluations described in the above section. DCSPCS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Establishing a Plan to Measure the Impact and Implementation of the Local Wellness Policy

DCSPCS will evaluate compliance and effectiveness of this LWP using existing data collection tools, such as, but not limited to:

- School Health Index;
- FITNESSGRAM data collection and analysis;
- OSSE Health and Physical Education student assessments;
- DC Healthy Schools Act School Health Profiles;

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention School Health Profiles;
- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System results;
- WellSAT 2.0; and
- USDA triennial administrative review.

Revisions and Updating the Local Wellness Policy

This LWP will be assessed and updated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment discussed above. The Local Wellness Committee will update or modify this LWP based on the results of DCSPCS' annual self-assessment, the USDA triennial administrative review, and on other variables, including if/when DCSPCS's health priorities change; the community's health needs change; the wellness goals are met; new health science arises, new technology emerges; and new federal or state guidance/standards are issued.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

DCSPCS is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the LWP. It will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Local Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the LWP through a variety of means appropriate for DCSPCS. DCSPCS will inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. DCSPCS will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to this LWP annually, at a minimum. DCSPCS will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports. Additionally, DCSPCS will disseminate this LWP to parents through posting it in the school office, on the school website, and through any parent-teacher organizations.

Nutrition

All DCSPCS schools are committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and fat-free or low-fat dairy, that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, have zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification), and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of students, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating habits to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

DCSPCS is committed to offering school meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other supplemental programs, that:

- are accessible to all students;
- are appealing and attractive to students;
- are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local and federal statutes and regulations;
- ensure all qualified students will become eligible for free lunch;
- provide at least 30 minutes for students to eat lunch and sufficient time during the lunch period for every student to pass through the service line;
- operate a Universal "Free for All" School Breakfast Program in the cafeteria; and
- promote healthy food and beverage choices by using Smarter Lunchroom techniques, such as the following:

- whole fruit options offered in attractive, accessible settings;
- sliced or cut fruit offered, especially for age-appropriate students;
- alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, vegetarian options, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas;
- student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas;
- placing white milk at the front of the coolers; and
- Menus will be posted on the LEA website or individual school website, and will include nutrient content and ingredients.
- accommodate students with special dietary needs

DCSPCS will strive to implement the following Farm to School activities:

- Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program;
- School hosts a school garden

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals](#).

Water

To promote hydration, free, potable drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. DCSPCS will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. Additionally, all water sources and container will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

[DCSPCS](#) is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools, are available [here](#).

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards and the DC Healthy Schools Act 2010.

Rewards

DCSPCS schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards, incentives, or prizes for academic performance or good behavior that do not meet the nutritional requirements above.

Third-Party Vendors

DCSPCS schools will not permit third-party vendors to sell food or beverages of any kind to students on school property from midnight on the day school begins to 90 minutes after the school day ends, in accordance with Healthy Schools Act and USDA Smart Snacks Standards.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day. DCSPCS will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas including the following: walk-a-thons, Jump Rope for Heart, and dance-a-thons. Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

DCSPCS is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. DCSPCS strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. It is DCSPCS' intent to protect and promote students' health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with this LWP.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container;
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors;
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, DCSPCS will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is in financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with the marketing policy);
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by DCSPCS;
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings; and
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons for a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

As DCSPCS' school nutrition services, athletics department, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by this LWP.

Nutrition Promotion

DCSPCS will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- implementing 10 or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#); and
- ensuring 100 percent of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that DCSPCS schools may use are available [here](#).

Ensuring Quality Nutrition Education, Health Education and Physical Education

DCSPCS aims to provide age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instruction in nutrition, health and physical education that help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to enjoy healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

Nutrition Education

DCSPCS will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing;
- includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff; and
- All health education teachers will provide opportunities for students to practice the skills taught through the health education curricula.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

DCSPCS will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Food safety
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast

Health Education

DCSPCS is dedicated to providing formal, structured health education, consisting of planned learning experiences that provide the opportunity to acquire information and the skills students need to make quality health decisions. As such, DCSPCS will provide students a comprehensive school health education that address a variety of topics such as alcohol and other drug use and abuse, healthy eating/nutrition, mental and emotional health, personal health and wellness, physical activity, safety and injury prevention, sexual health, tobacco use, and violence prevention. Health education curricula and instruction should address the [DC Health Education Standards](#) and incorporate the [characteristics of an effective health education curriculum](#). DCSPCS will provide health education that:

- is offered at least 75 minutes per week at each grade level, K-8, as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is incorporated into classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- incorporates an age-appropriate sequential health education curriculum that is consistent with District and national standards for health education;
- incorporates active learning strategies and activities that students find enjoyable and personally relevant;
- incorporates opportunities for students to practice or rehearse the skills needed to maintain and improve their health;
- incorporates a variety of culturally-appropriate activities and examples that reflect the community's cultural diversity;
- incorporates assignments or projects that encourage students to have interactions with family members and community organizations;
- requires the health instructors to participate at least once a year in professional development in health education; and
- requires professional development for all teachers in classroom management techniques in the past two years.

Additionally, in an effort to ensure reinforcement of health messages that are relevant for students and meet community needs, DCSPCS will base its health education program, at least in part, on the results of the Health and Physical Education Assessment and in collaboration with the community. DCSPCS will also seek to imbed health education as part of student visits with the school nurse, through posters or public service announcements, and through conversations with family and peers.

Improving Environmental Sustainability

DCSPCS will seek to improve its environmental sustainability and engage in sustainable agriculture practices through:

- contracting with food service vendors that utilize locally grown, locally processed and unprocessed foods from growers engaged in sustainable agriculture practices;
- school wide recycling programs; and
- sponsoring a school garden

Physical Education and Physical Activity

DCSPCS acknowledges the positive benefits of physical activity for student health and academic achievement. It is the goal of DCSPCS that students engage in the recommended 60 minutes per day of physical activity. Additionally, recognizing that physical education is a crucial and integral part of a child's education, we will provide opportunities to ensure that students engage in healthful levels of vigorous physical activity to promote and develop the students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

The components of DCSPCS' physical education program shall include a variety of kinesthetic activities, including team, individual, and cooperative sports and physical activities, as well as aesthetic movement forms, such as dance.

Students shall be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before-and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, cross-country running, basketball, soccer and cheerleading. DCSPCS will ensure that:

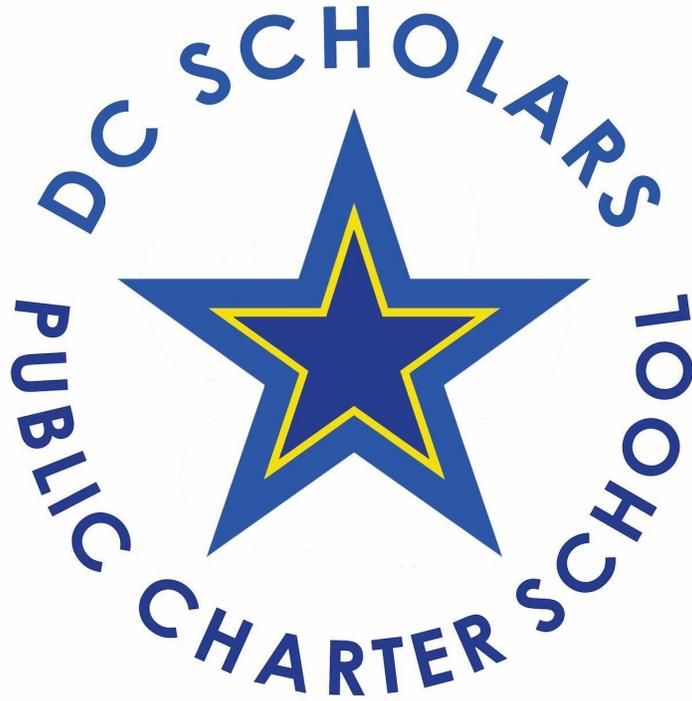
- students in grades K-5 receive at least 150 minutes per week of physical education, and students in grades 6-8 receive at least 225 minutes per week of physical education;
- physical education teachers shall develop and implement a curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health;
- 50 percent of physical education class time is devoted to actual physical activity;
- suitably adapted physical activity shall be provided as part of the individualized education plan (IEP) developed for students with disabilities;
- physical education staff shall appropriately limit the amount or type of physical exercise required of students during air pollution episodes, excessively hot weather, or other inclement conditions; and
- physical activity is neither required nor withheld as punishment.

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Physical Activity Recommendations:

DCSPCS Pre-K shall ensure that students receive 90 to 120 minutes of active play daily. These minutes shall consist of a combination of adult-led/structured active play and child-initiated/unstructured active play. DCSPCS will seek to offer active play outdoors, weather permitting. DCSPCS will ensure that:

- these active play minutes shall be achieved through recess, active transitions (marching, hopping, etc.), and classroom games that involve physical movement;
- recess shall be at least 60 minutes daily and scheduled in more than one block of time (e.g., three 20-minute sessions, two 30-minute sessions);
- as with physical education minutes, OSSE shall report to the mayor, DC Council, and Healthy Youth and School Commission (HYSC) annually regarding compliance with physical activity minutes for pre-K children in public and charter schools;
- these school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

COMMUNICATION



Communication and Families

School Communication to Families

We believe it is important to keep our families informed about various school wide events, happenings, key dates, and emergency situations. We use a variety of tactics to ensure information is distributed in a timely manner.

Our primary means of communication is via Class Dojo and your child's homework folder. We also send flyers for school-wide events to the email address we have on file. In the event of an emergency, we generally send out a Robocall so it is important that your contact information is up to date at all times with the Main Office.

Parent Representation on the DC Scholars Board of Trustees

At least two parents will serve as members of DCSPCS Public Charter School Board of Trustees. The parents must have a scholar currently enrolled in the school and will be asked to meet attendance requirements of all board members. Please contact the school if you are interested in becoming a board member.

Contacting the School

Main Office

Email: info@dcscholars.org

Phone: 202.559.6138

Fax: 202.618.9396

Nicole Bryan, Interim Head of School

Email: nbryan@dcscholars.org

Jessica Hiltabidel, Elementary School Director

Email: jhiltabidel@dcscholars.org

Tanisha Dixon, Middle School Director

Email: tdixon@dcscholars.org

Rebeccah Brooking, Director of Academic Support

Email: rbrooking@dcscholars.org

LeAngelo Emperor, Director of Culture & Family Engagement

Email: lemperor@dcscholars.org

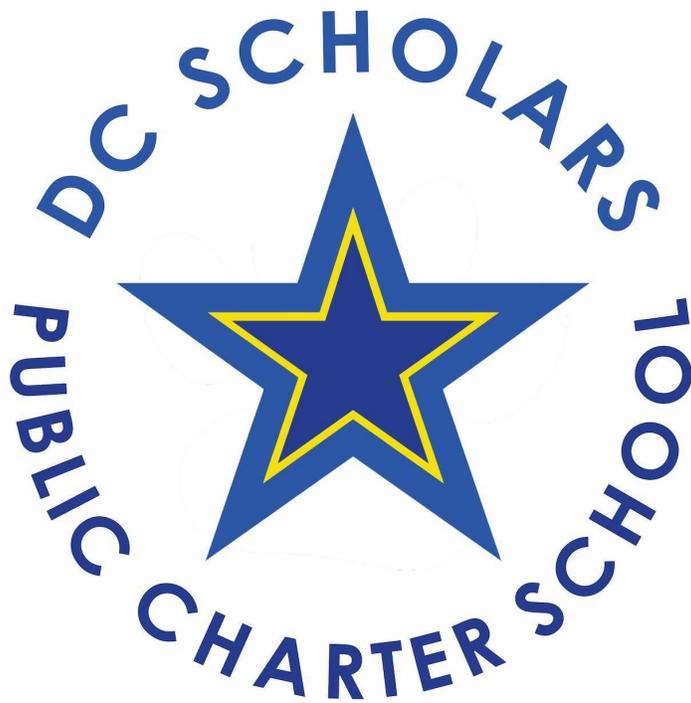
Sharneise Jones, Director of Early Childhood and Instruction, PS-PK

Email: shjones@dcscholars.org

Tiffany Green, Operations Manager

Email: tgreen@dcscholars.org

APPENDICES



Computing and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

DCSPCS is providing its scholars with access to computing equipment, systems and local network functions such as email and the Internet. Through this policy, DCSPCS intends to: (a) prevent scholar access over its computer network to (or transmission of) inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Definitions

A. Technology Protection Measure: The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. Obscene: as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. Child Pornography: as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors

B. Harmful to minors: The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to prurient interests including, but not limited to, nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

C. Sexual Act; Sexual Contact: the terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

D. Cyber bullying: is bullying through email, instant messaging (IMing), chat room exchanges, Web site posts, or digital messages or images sent to a cellular phone or personal digital assistant (PDA) (Kowalski et al. 2008).

Access Rights and Privileges

1. DCSPCS has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the use of equipment, resources, and materials that scholars may access or post through the DCSPCS IT network. Scholars are also expected to follow the rules set forth in DCSPCS' rules and regulations governing conduct, disciplinary code, and the law in their use of DCSPCS' equipment and network. This access has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. All access and rights are privileges granted by DCSPCS, and users should expect no privacy rights.
2. All DCSPCS scholars will have access to the Internet through DCSPCS' private network. Parents may specifically request that their children not be provided such access by notifying DCSPCS in writing.
3. Scholars may be permitted to access an external Internet email service or their personal email account for the purpose of legitimate instructional or school-based needs at the discretion of school staff.

Responsibilities

1. DC Scholars Public Charter School makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the technology access it is providing.
2. DC Scholars Public Charter School will not be responsible for any damages users suffer including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in services.
3. DC Scholars Public Charter School will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature or quality of information stored on district diskettes, hard drives, or servers; nor for the accuracy, nature or quality of information gathered through DC Scholars -provided technology access.
4. DC Scholars Public Charter School will not be responsible for personal property used to access DCSPCS computers or networks.
5. DC Scholars Public Charter School will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from DCSPCS -provided access to the internet.

Unacceptable Uses of the DCSPCS Private Network

1. Scholars may not use the DCSPCS private network to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography of any kind), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature).
2. Scholars may not post personal information on the Internet about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, work address, pictures or video bites, clips, etc.
3. Scholars may not agree to meet with someone they have met on the Internet without their parent's approval and participation.
4. Scholars may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any other computer system. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing," "snooping," or "electronic discovery."
5. Scholars may not deliberately disrupt or harm hardware or systems, interfere with computer or network performance, interfere with another's ability to use equipment and systems, or destroy data.
6. Scholars may not use the DC Scholars' private network to engage in illegal acts, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of person, accessing or sharing unauthorized copyrighted music, movies, and other intellectual property, etc.
7. Scholars may not utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or execute programs to facilitate the downloading or exchange of copyrighted or unauthorized music, movies, and other materials.
8. Scholars may not use the DC Scholars' private network to solicit information with the intent of using such information to cause personal harm or bodily injury to another or others.
9. Scholars may not post information that could endanger an individual, cause personal damage, or a danger of service disruption.
10. Scholars may not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
11. Scholars may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

12. Scholars may not indirectly or directly make connections that create "backdoors" to DCSPCS, other organizations, community groups, etc. that allow unauthorized access to DC Scholar's network.
13. Scholars may not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, hateful, threatening, or disrespectful language.
14. Scholars may not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
15. Scholars may not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person.
16. Scholars may not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.
17. Scholars may not forward or post chain letters or engage in "spamming". Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people. Scholars will not install or reproduce unauthorized or unlicensed software on DCSPCS resources.
18. Scholars may not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet or other resources.
19. Scholars may not use technology resources and Internet for private business activities or unreasonable personal use.
20. Scholars may not use DCSPCS' private network for political lobbying.
21. Scholars will not download files unless approved by their teacher.

System Security Obligations

1. Scholars are responsible for the use of their individual access account(s) and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account(s), including classmates, friends, or family. Under no conditions should a scholar provide his/her password to another person.
2. Attempts to log on to DCSPCS' private network or any other network as a system administrator are prohibited.
3. Any scholar user identified as a security risk or having a history of violating this or any other Acceptable Use Policy may be denied access to DCSPCS' private network.
4. Scholars will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following DCSPCS' virus protection procedures if they download software or share common file directory.
5. Scholars should immediately notify a teacher of any possible security problem.
6. Scholars will promptly disclose to their teacher or other appropriate school employee any message received that is inappropriate.

Filtering

As required by law and in recognition of the need to establish a safe and appropriate computing environment, DCSPCS will use filtering technology to prohibit access, to the degree possible, to objectionable or unsuitable content that might otherwise be accessible via the Internet.

Due Process

1. DC Scholars Public Charter School will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through DCSPCS' private network.

2. In the event there is an allegation that a scholar has violated the Computing and Acceptable Use Policy, the scholar will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the Scholar Hearing Process Policy. Disciplinary actions may be taken.
3. Employee violations of the Computing and Acceptable Use Policy will be handled in accordance with law, and DCSPCS' policies, as applicable.

Administration

1. The Interim Head of School has the responsibility and authority for the development, publication, implementation, and ongoing administration and enforcement of the processes and techniques required to protect DCSPCS' technology systems and services from unauthorized access, loss or misuse.
2. The Interim Head of School has the responsibility to establish a plan to ensure adequate supervision of scholars.
3. The Interim Head of School has the responsibility to interpret and enforce this policy.
4. The Interim Head of School will ensure that all scholars are educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and its chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.
 - A. DCSPCS will provide yearly instruction to scholars about online behavior. The curriculum will utilize resources from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Harassment Policy Statement and Grievance Policy

Policy Statement

DCSPCS strives to provide a safe, positive learning environment for scholars. Therefore, harassment in any form is not tolerated. DCSPCS prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of scholars and third parties by all scholars and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the school. DCSPCS encourages scholars and third parties who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents to the designated employees.

General Harassment and Discrimination

For purposes of this policy, harassment and discrimination shall consist of verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion when such conduct:

- is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a scholar's academic status;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual;
3. Such conduct deprives a scholar or educational aid, benefits, services or treatment; or
4. Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the scholar's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include but are not limited to sexual flirtations, 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; innuendoes; references to sexual activities; overt sexual conduct; or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a scholar's ability to work or learn or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

DC Scholars Public Charter School directs that complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly as described in the complaint process, and corrective action be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations.

Neither reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of harassment.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

Step 1—Reporting

A scholar or parent is encouraged to immediately report the incident in writing to the respective School Director. If the School Director is the subject of a complaint, the employee shall report the incident directly to the Head of School.

If either of these individuals are involved in the reported conduct, or, for some reason the scholar/parent feels uncomfortable about making a report to school appropriate School Director and/or the Head of School, the scholar/parent should make a report to the Board of Trustees.

DCSPCS will not retaliate, nor will it tolerate retaliation, against scholars/parents who complain in good faith about harassment or discrimination in the school. DCSPCS will investigate any such report as appropriate, and will provide a prompt, thorough, and objective investigation of any unlawful or prohibited discrimination. DCSPCS will take whatever corrective action is deemed necessary, including disciplining or discharging any individual who is believed to have violated these prohibitions against harassment, discrimination, misconduct, and retaliation.

Step 2 —Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint, the School Director shall immediately notify the Head of School. The Head of School or designee shall investigate the complaint.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused, and others with knowledge relative to the incident. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation.

The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal investigation of the incident is pending or has been concluded.

Step 3—Investigative Report

The Head of School, or another member of the school leadership team identified by the Head of School, shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint. The findings of the investigation shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, and the Head of School.

Step 4 —School Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of this policy, the Head of School shall take prompt, corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not recur. Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the Scholar and Family Handbook, school procedures, PCSB policies, as well as state and federal laws.

If it is concluded that an employee has knowingly made a false complaint under this policy, such employee shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Grievance Policy

DCSPCS is committed to providing the best possible conditions for all members of the school community including scholars, families, visitors, teachers, and administrators. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from school supervisors and administrators. DCSPCS strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all scholars, families, visitors, and employees. Everyone is expected to treat each other with mutual respect and follow the PATH values. If a scholar, parent/guardian, or visitor disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, or their treatment, he or she may express his or her concerns through the following problem resolution procedure. No person will be retaliated against or penalized formally or informally for voicing a complaint with DCSPCS in a reasonable, business-like manner or for participating in the investigation of a complaint pursuant to the grievance procedure.

A scholar, parent or guardian may initiate the grievance procedure to appeal any final decision of school personnel except as provided in section 1 below. Any person may initiate the grievance procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. This grievance procedure does not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law. *Note - This policy does not apply in the case of suspension or expulsion, retention, or in the case of alleged sexual harassment where the provisions those specific policies apply. See sections above*

1. Step I – Head of School Conference – A parent or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the Head of School to discuss the grievance and seek resolution. If a complaint of discrimination is being made against the Head of School, the written request can be submitted to the Chair of the DC Scholars Board of Trustees, who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint. The request shall state in detail the basis for the grievance, name the specific policy, rule or law believed to have been violated, and specify the relief being sought. The written complaint can be sent or delivered to 5601 E Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC 20019. The following additional guidelines shall be observed:
 - a. No grievance will be heard unless it has been filed in writing within thirty (30) calendar days after the act or condition giving rise to the grievance and such filing must state with particularity the basis for the grievance, the policy regulation and/or procedure, rule or law believed to have been violated, and the remedy sought.
 - b. The Head of School or designee shall initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation and grant a conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the written complaint.
 - c. The person making the complaint will be permitted to present any information, documents, or witnesses that he/she would like to be considered as part of this conference and investigation. All information related to the conference and investigation will remain confidential.
 - d. Within ten (10) school days of the conference, the Head of School or designee will respond to the complaint in writing summarizing the outcome of the investigation and any corrective or remedial action necessary.

Step II – Appeal to the Board of Directors – If the grievance is not resolved at Step I, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing to the Board Chair of DCSPCS. The written appeal can be sent to Bob Weinberg at rweinberg@bredhoff.com. Please direct all correspondence to the Board Chair of DC Scholars Public Charter School.

Grading Policy

Grade Weighting (K – 2)

K-2 students receive a standards-based report card where mastery is determined through the use of the following rubric:

Formative and Summative Assessments – 50%

- Interim Assessments (MAP/ANet Assessments)
- In class assessments

Classwork - 35%

Homework and Participation – 15%

Rating Scale	Support Needed	Developing	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Grades	1	2	3	4
	44.4% and lower	44.5% - 72.4%	72.5% - 84.4%	84.5% and higher

Grade Weighting (3 – 4)

Summative Assessments – 35%

- Interim Assessments (MAP/ANet Assessments)

Formative (In-class) Assessments – 15%

Examples include:

- Tests
- Projects
- Labs
- Essays

Classwork - 40%

Examples include:

- Quizzes
- Assignments

Homework and Participation – 10%

Grade Weighting (5 – 8)

Summative Assessments – 20%

- Interim Assessments (MAP/ANet Assessments)

Formative (In-class) Assessments – 20%

Examples include:

- Tests
- Projects
- Labs
- Essays

Classwork - 50%

Examples include:

- Assignments

Homework – 10%

- This is homework that has been graded for achievement, not for completion.

Grading Scale* (3-8)

	Score	GPA Scale
A	93 - 100	4.0
A-	90 - 92	3.7
B+	87 - 89	3.3
B	83 - 86	3.0
B-	80 - 82	2.7
C	73 - 79	2.0
D	70 - 72	1.0
F	0 - 69	0.0

*Note: K – 2 does not use this grading scale because they have a standards-based report card.

Academic Honors

Principal's List: Scholar has received a grade of "A" or "A-" in every course.

Honor Roll: Scholar has received a grade of "A", "A-", "B+", "B", or "B-" in every course.

Notification of Rights under FERPA

General Information

FERPA is a Federal law that applies to educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the U. S. Department of Education. The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department's regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

Under FERPA, schools must generally afford students who are 18 years or over, or attending a postsecondary institution:

- access to their education records;
- an opportunity to seek to have the records amended;
- some control over the disclosure of information from the records.

Access to Education Records

Schools are required by FERPA to:

- provide a student with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her education records within 45 days of the receipt of a request;
- provide a student with copies of education records or otherwise make the records available to the student if the student, for instance, lives outside of commuting distance of the school;
- redact the names and other personally identifiable information about other students that may be included in the student's education records.

Schools are not required by FERPA to:

- Create or maintain education records;
- Provide students with calendars, notices, or other information which does not generally contain information directly related to the student;
- Respond to questions about the student.

Amendment of Education Records

Under FERPA, a school must:

- Consider a request from a student to amend inaccurate or misleading information in the student's education records;
- Offer the student a hearing on the matter if it decides not to amend the records in accordance with the request;
- Offer the student a right to place a statement to be kept and disclosed with the record if as a result of the hearing the school still decides not to amend the record.

A school is not required to consider requests for amendment under FERPA that:

- Seek to change a grade or disciplinary decision;
- Seek to change the opinions or reflections of a school official or other person reflected in an education record.

Disclosure of Education Records

A school must:

- Have a student's consent prior to the disclosure of education records;
- Ensure that the consent is signed and dated and states the purpose of the disclosure.

A school MAY disclose education records without consent when:

- The disclosure is to school officials, who have been determined to have legitimate educational interests as set forth in the institution's annual notification of rights to students.
- A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel), or a person serving on the school board. A school

official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information (PII) from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- The student is seeking or intending to enroll in another school;
- The disclosure is to state or local educational authorities auditing or enforcing Federal or State supported education programs or enforcing Federal laws which relate to those programs;
- The disclosure is to the parents of a student who is a dependent for income tax purposes;
- The disclosure is in connection with determining eligibility, amounts, and terms for financial aid or enforcing the terms and conditions of financial aid;
- The disclosure is pursuant to a lawfully issued court order or subpoena; or
- The information disclosed has been appropriately designated as directory information by the school.
- Directory information at DC Scholars includes: student's name; mailing address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; grade level; enrollment status; dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors and awards received; and the most recent prior school attendance. Directory information also includes a student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems that cannot be used to access educational records without a PIN, password, etc.

If you do not want **DC Scholars PCS** to disclose any or all of the types of information designated above as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the DC Scholars PCS Interim Head of School in writing by September 6, 2019.

Annual Notification

A school must annually notify students in attendance that they may:

- Inspect and review their education records;
- Seek amendment of inaccurate or misleading information in their education records;
- Consent to most disclosures of personally identifiable information from education records.

The annual notice must also include:

- Information for a student to file a complaint of an alleged violation with the FPCO;
- A description of who is considered to be a school official and what is considered to be a legitimate educational interest so that information may be shared with that individual; and
- Information about who to contact to seek access or amendment of education records.

Means of notification:

- Can include student newspaper; calendar; student programs guide; rules handbook, or other means reasonable likely to inform students;
- Notification does not have to be made individually to students.

Complaints of Alleged Violations:

Complaints of alleged violations may be addressed to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

Complaints must:

- Be timely submitted, not later than 180 days from the date you learned of the circumstances of the alleged violation
- Contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, including:
 - Relevant dates, such as the date of a request or a disclosure and the date the student learned of the alleged violation;
 - Names and titles of those school officials and other third parties involved;
 - A specific description of the education record around which the alleged violation occurred;
 - A description of any contact with school officials regarding the matter, including dates and estimated times of telephone calls and/or copies of any correspondence exchanged between the student and the school regarding the matter;
 - The name and address of the school, school district, and superintendent of the district;
 - Any additional evidence that would be helpful in the consideration of the complaint.

Notification of Rights under Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

These include the right to:

- **Consent, before scholars are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole, or in part, by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):**
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the scholar or scholar's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the scholar or scholar's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the scholar or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- **Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a scholar out of:**
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a scholar, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from scholars for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- **Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:**
 1. Protected information surveys of scholars;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from scholars for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a scholar who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. DCSPCS has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect scholar privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. DCSPCS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. DCSPCS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of scholars who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. DCSPCS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also

be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Information on Title I

DCSPCS receives federal funding through Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs. This federal program provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged scholars to ensure that children meet challenging state academic standards.

Since more than 40 percent of the DCSPCS scholar body are classified as economically disadvantaged (as determined by participation in the National School Lunch Program), DCSPCS uses Title I funding to operate a school wide program to upgrade the instructional program for the whole school. Our school wide Title I program is based on effective means of improving scholar achievement and includes strategies to support parental involvement.

Annual Title I Meeting:

DCSPCS invites parents to attend our annual Title I information meeting, which will be announced in the fall. At this meeting we will describe our participation in Title I, Part A programs, explain the requirement of Title I, and explain parents' right to be involved (including developing our Title I Parent Involvement Policy and Parent Compact).

Parent Rights under Title I:

Under Title I, Part A, DCSPCS parents have the right to:

- **Be involved in our Title I, Part A programs** – DCSPCS, with the help of its parents, will develop and implement a Title I Parent Involvement Policy and a School-Parent Compact.
- **Request regular meetings** – Requests for meetings to discuss Title I programs should be put in writing and submitted to Nicole Bryan, nbryan@dcscholars.org.
- **Receive individual student report about performance on PARCC** – Parents will receive an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment (PARCC) in at least math, language arts, and reading.

Title I Complaint Procedures

A parent who feels that the school is not meeting its Title I or other responsibilities as outlined in this policy, should first discuss the problem with the Head of School. Examples of violations would be such things as:

- An annual meeting was not convened by the Head of School to explain Title I offerings to parents.
- Parents were not provided an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment (PARCC) in at least math, language arts, and reading.

If the concern was not resolved with the Head of School, a parent should begin a formal grievance as outlined in [Appendix B "Grievance Policy"](#). A complaint is defined by the DCSPCS as a written, signed statement. It must include the following:

1. A statement that DCSPCS has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations which apply to programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015.
2. The facts on which the statement is based.
3. Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence regarding the complaint.

Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program Educational Rights Public Notice

The mission of the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program is to ensure free, appropriate, public educational opportunities for homeless children and youths; to provide technical assistance to schools, shelters and the community; and to heighten awareness of homeless issues. Homeless children and youth should have equal access to the same educational opportunities and services as non-homeless children and youth. In addition, homeless children and youth should have the opportunity to meet the same challenging academic achievement standards to which all scholars are held pursuant to Title X of No Child Left Behind; McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act federal law.

1. **What is the definition of homeless children and youths?** The term "homeless children and youth" means:
 - Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelter (including D.C. transitional housing); are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
 - Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
 - Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and
 - Unaccompanied youth, including youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who qualify as homeless because they live in circumstances described above.

2. **Can a homeless child enroll in school?** Yes. The child may continue enrollment in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness. The school is the one the child attended prior to becoming homeless or the school in which the child was last enrolled. The child may also enroll in the school for the attendance area where he or she is living temporarily. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the school must immediately enroll the homeless scholar in the school, pending resolution of the dispute. If the local school cannot resolve the dispute, the school must follow the Dispute Resolution Process, not to exceed fifteen (15) days. The local school must provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written statement of the school placement decision and the appeal rights.

3. **Who should be contacted if a dispute arises regarding enrolling a homeless child or youth in school or if other assistance is needed?** The Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program has been designed to assist children and youth who are experiencing homelessness and their families regarding educational issues. If a homeless child or youth is

experiencing difficulty enrolling in school, please contact the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Office at (202)741-0470.

4. **What services are provided by the Homeless Children and Youth Program?** The Homeless Children and Youth Program provides the following services: transportation assistance; dispute resolution; emergency school enrollment assistance; special projects; Homeless Awareness Month; staff development; and interagency collaboration.

Non-Discrimination Notice

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Also, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, approved December 13, 1977 (DC Law 2-38; DC Official Code §2-1402.11 (2006), as amended) states the following:

Pertinent section of DC Code § 2-1402.11: It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice to do any of the following acts, wholly or partially for a discriminatory reason based upon the actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, genetic information, disability, matriculation, or political affiliation of any individual. To file a complaint alleging discrimination on one of these bases, please contact the District of Columbia's Office of Human Rights at (202)727-4559 or ohr@dc.gov.

**AMENDED AND RESTATED BYLAWS OF DC SCHOLARS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL,
INC.
A DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NONPROFIT CORPORATION**

**ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS OF THE BOARD**

Section 4.01. Annual Meeting:

- 4.1.1 The annual meeting of the Board shall be held in the month of September, but no later than September 30 if the Board does not set an earlier date, for the purpose of electing trustees and officers and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.
- 4.1.2 The annual meeting and all other meetings (except for those associated with executive sessions) shall be open to attendance by the general public. Public notice shall, however, not be required in the case of emergency meetings or executive sessions. In order to inform the general public, meeting time, place and location shall be well-publicized in the Legal section of a newspaper that is widely circulated in the community at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting date.

Section 4.02. Regular Meetings:

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held not less often than quarterly (including the annual meeting) at such place and time as shall be approved by resolution of the Board.

Section 4.03 Open Meetings:

All official actions and all deliberations by a quorum of the Board shall take place at a meeting open to the public, except in cases where executive sessions are authorized. Generally speaking, the Board may conduct in executive session meetings or portions of meetings devoted solely to matters involving (a) discussions of employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of performance, promotion or discipline of any specific prospective or current or former employee; (b) discussions of employment labor relations or arbitration; (c) discussions of the purchase or lease of real property; (d) consultation with the Corporation's attorney or other professional advisors regarding litigation or potential litigation; (e) discussions of confidential information regarding current, prospective or former students; (f) discussions of the Corporation's business which if conducted would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of information or confidential material protected by law or agreement with one or more independent third parties.

Section 4.04. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman and shall be called upon receipt of the written request of four or more trustees. The business to be transacted at any special meeting shall be limited to those items of business set forth in the notice of the meeting.

Section 4.05. Quorum:

Except as provided in Section 3.03 of Article III, a majority of trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the Board. Except as provided in Section 3.7.3 of Article III, the act of a majority of the trustees present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board. A majority of the trustees present, whether or not a quorum exists, may adjourn any meeting of the Board to another time and place. Notice of any such adjourned meeting shall be given to those who are not present at the time of adjournment.

Section 4.06 Board and Board Committee Action Without a Meeting:

Any action which may be taken at a meeting of the Board or a Board committee may be taken without a meeting prior to such action, if a consent in writing setting forth such action is signed by all of the members of the Board or committee, as the case may be, and is filed in the minutes of the proceedings of the Board or of the Committee.

DC Scholars Handbook Family Partnership Agreement

ATTENDANCE POLICY and DOCUMENTATION

- I will ensure that my scholar(s) comes to school every day on time to be in school and ready to go by 8:00am.
- I understand that if my scholar has 10 or more unexcused absences, DC Law requires DCSPCS to report it to Child and Family Services. At 15 & 20 unexcused absences, we report again.
- I understand that if my scholar has 17 or more excused or unexcused absences, he or she will likely be retained. DCSPCS does not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences when considering retention.
- I understand that scholars who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities.
- I will review my scholar's attendance letter every Thursday and notify the school within **5 days** of any discrepancies.
- I understand that an absence is excused only if I have contacted the school and written a detailed note regarding student illness, family emergency (as defined in the Scholar and Family Handbook), required court appearances, or religious observance.
- I understand that all excuse notes must be provided within five (5) days of the absence or the note will not be accepted.

ARRIVAL

- I understand that DCSPCS does not have a before care program at this time and, therefore, no scholars or parents will be permitted to enter the building or classrooms before 8:00 am, unless the leadership of DCSPCS deems conditions unsafe.
- I understand that I may walk my PS/PK scholar to class up until 8:30 am. At 8:30 am, my scholar must walk him or herself to class or be escorted by a school administrator.
- I understand that I must exit my PS/PK scholar's classroom by 8:30am because instruction begins at that time.
- I understand that breakfast is served from 8:00 am to 8:30 am each day. I understand that my scholar is tardy if he/she is not in the doors of the building at **8:30am**.

DISMISSAL

- I understand that I must be in the **building by 2:45 pm** in order to pick up my student for early dismissal. If I arrive at the building after 2:45 pm, I will have to wait until normal dismissal time to pick up my scholar (3:15 pm).
- I understand that the Main Office is not able to communicate changes in dismissal information to scholars or teachers. Any instructions regarding when or how they are to be dismissed from school should be communicated to the teacher directly via Class Dojo.
- I understand that if my scholar is not in aftercare, I must pick up my scholar at 3:15pm. I understand that at 3:30pm, the school will begin to reach out to emergency contacts and at 4:30 pm the school will reach out to Child and Family Services Agency.

HOMEWORK

- I agree to check my scholar's homework daily to ensure that it is complete.
- I agree to ensure my scholar reads independently for at least 25 minutes every day and to sign his or her reading log each evening.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

- I agree and understand that I must sign-up for Class Dojo.
- I agree to check my student's homework folder daily for information and communications and to return the folder to school each day.
- I agree to make sure my contact information is always up-to-date, and to notify the Main Office of any changes in phone numbers, e-mails, or addresses.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- I agree to promote and support the DC Scholars PATH Family Values as outlined in the Scholar and Family Handbook and accept responsibility as a partner in my scholar's learning.
- I understand that cursing, screaming, threatening, or other inappropriate behavior directed towards staff or students will not be tolerated at DCSPCS. Upon the first incident, I understand that there will be an in-person meeting with the Leadership to review our communication expectations, and I will receive a follow-up warning letter. Upon the second incident, I understand that I will no longer be able to enter the building.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- I agree to support my scholar's academic work by communicating regularly with my scholar's teachers, by scheduling appointments to speak with them as needed, by attending all Parent-Teacher Conferences, and by sending my scholar to school each day with a backpack and his or her HW folder.
- I agree to attend family meetings and other school-sponsored events on a regular basis.
- I agree to respond to phone calls from any school staff member promptly.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Name

Signature

Date