

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK



Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania Charter School

Excellence in Education
2022–2023

600 Newport Dr. Pittsburgh, PA 15234
(412) 668-2064

www.yswpcs.org

Contents

LETTER TO THE YSWPCS COMMUNITY	6
YSWPCS MISSION STATEMENT	7
YSWPCS VISION STATEMENT	8
YSWPCS FAMILY CONTRACT	9
INTRODUCTION	11
ACADEMIC YEAR	11
HOURS OF OPERATION	11
UNEXPECTED DELAYS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS	12
STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	13
DISCRIMINATION	13
PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	13
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	14
RECORDS	14
ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY	15
THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE	15
SCHOOL ABSENCES	15
MAKE-UP WORK	17
TARDINESS	17
TRUANCY	18
ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL	20
ARRIVAL	20
DISMISSAL	20
CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD’S ROUTINE	21
EARLY DISMISSALS	21
HOMEWORK, GRADES, AND PROMOTION	22
HOMEWORK	22
ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES	22

GRADING SCALE AND PROGRESS REPORTS	23
PROMOTION	24
OUR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	25
PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION	25
PHONE CALLS	25
FORMS AND PERMISSION SLIPS	26
DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS	26
DRESS CODE	26
BREAKFAST AND LUNCH	27
HALLWAYS AND RESTROOMS	28
RESTRICTED AREAS	28
LOST AND FOUND	28
VOLUNTEERS	29
VISITORS	29
FAMILY CONNECTION VISITATIONS	29
FIELD TRIPS	30
OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS	30
SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT	30
LOCKERS	31
SEARCH AND SEIZURE	32
TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES	33
HEALTH AND WELLNESS	34
WELLNESS POLICY	34
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION POLICY	36
ILLNESS, INJURY, AND MEDICATION	37
SAFETY	39
ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES	39
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	39
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	41
CHROMEBOOKS, COMPUTERS, AND ACCOUNTS	41

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES	42
STUDENT SERVICES	43
SPECIAL EDUCATION	43
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE	43
MTSS	43
CHARACTER EDUCATION	44
SPECIALS	44
WIN PERIOD	44
SCIENCE FAIR	45
MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT	46
SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED STUDENTS	46
EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM	47
REGISTRATION	47
SNACKS	48
DISMISSAL	48
ELIGIBILITY	48
BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS	49
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY	50
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS	50
RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE	50
ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE	53
THREATS OF VIOLENCE	53
ANTI-BULLYING	53
LET’S GROW TOGETHER	56
APPENDIX A: 2021–2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR	57
APPENDIX B: SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT	58
APPENDIX C: YSWPCS WELLNESS POLICY	61
APPENDIX D: TRUANCY PROCEDURES	73
APPENDIX E: VOLUNTEERING AT YSWPCS	74
APPENDIX F: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES	78

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY OF TERMS - BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT	86
APPENDIX H: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE	89
APPENDIX I: GLOSSARY OF TERMS DISCIPLINE	90
APPENDIX J: CLASSROOM AND ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESSES	92
APPENDIX K: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL	93
CHROMEBOOK USE AGREEMENT	97

LETTER TO THE YSWPCS COMMUNITY

Dear students, parents, and guardians,

Welcome to the **2021-2022** school year at Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School!

Our administrative team is excited about this year. Our caring, competent staff is looking forward to working with you to ensure that all of our children receive a superb education. We are all dedicated to providing the best possible learning environment!

We believe that education is a shared responsibility, and the successful operation of any school depends on the cooperation of students, staff, and parents and guardians. The YSWPCS mission is to create a partnership among the members of this triad. Each of us can play an important role in making our school a place where we can work, learn, and play together in harmony.

Our faculty and staff are eager to gift our community with their expertise in academics, special programs, and extracurricular activities. We encourage you to get to know us and our programs, activities, and schedules. Get involved in the classroom. Participate in clubs and activities. Make friends, work hard, and enjoy your time here. On behalf of the entire YSWPCS community, best wishes for a great 2021-2022 school year!

Sincerely,

YSWPCS Board of Trustees

YSWPCS Administration

YSWPCS Teachers and Staff

YSWPCS MISSION STATEMENT

Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania Charter School is a multicultural learning community emphasizing individual academic excellence and social development. We embrace native and non-native English speakers who desire a global perspective. To fulfill our mission, YSWPCS commits itself to the following goals:

- Foster proficiency in all academic areas
- Promote a basic conversational foundation in at least two major world languages (in addition to English)
- Cultivate an appreciation of the United States and other countries, their people, and their roles in influencing world history and present international issues
- Encourage leadership, independent thinking, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and positive peer interaction
- Establish the foundations for using technology throughout life.

YSWPCS believes that understanding and appreciating cultural diversity promotes responsible global citizenship, including mutual respect. Furthermore, development in citizenship and character complements intellectual growth

We recognize individual academic abilities. Every individual has inherent worth and the right to safety, acceptance, learning, and success. In addition, we believe that education is a shared responsibility among the school, its community, our parents and guardians, and our students.

Vital components of our program include:

- Instruction in core subjects according to Pennsylvania's Core Standards, as outlined in the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Standards Aligned System
- Daily instruction in Turkish and Spanish at all grade levels
- Weekly lessons in technology, music, art, and health or physical education
- Enrichment activities in the Extended Day Program
- Character education, counseling, special education, and English as a second language services
- Differentiated instruction to address individual needs
- Formal testing to monitor student progress
- Exposure to a variety of cultures in the core curriculum
- Cultural celebrations throughout the school year
- Community relationship building
- Competitions that instill positive attitudes toward achieving excellence

YSWPCS VISION STATEMENT

- Preparing students for high school, college, and life-long learning
- Providing an extensive use of technology
- Teaching at least two world languages
- Developing advanced performance in mathematics and science
- Promoting student projects and presentations
- Tutoring of students by students of universities and other colleges in Pittsburgh
- Preparing students for competitions, contests, science fairs, and Science Olympiads
- Encouraging strong family involvement
- Giving an opportunity to share cultures and benefit from each other
- Supporting multicultural events in school

YSWPCS FAMILY CONTRACT

It is the school's responsibility to publish the *YSWPCS Parent-Student Handbook* on our website. During the open house, a copy will be provided to each parent or guardian in attendance. Copies will also be available in the front office.

It is our parents, guardians, and students' responsibility to read and understand the content of the handbook. Families must submit a signed copy of the YSWPCS Family Contract Paperwork to the office no later than one week after the school year begins or after receipt of a copy upon mid-year enrollment. Doing so indicates that you have reviewed and agree to abide by the policies and procedures it contains.

Students who do not return the contract will lose their field trip privileges until it is submitted.

YSWPCS reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. When changes are made, we will post a revised copy to our web page and notify parents and guardians of the update.

NOTICE OF OUR TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL

To promote a healthy environment, YSWPCS is a tobacco-free school. **As a matter of policy, all smoking and tobacco use is prohibited in the school building, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities at all times.** Please cooperate by extinguishing and disposing of tobacco materials prior to entering school grounds or school-sponsored activities.

This tobacco policy covers all smoking methods, including electronic smoking devices

(e.g., e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes) and vaping-smoked products.

Please submit a signed copy of this contract to a subject teacher or the office within seven days of receiving the *YSWPCS Parent-Student Handbook*.

As a student, parent, or guardian of YSWPCS:

- I will show consideration for the rights and feelings of others, being careful not to hurt them physically or make them feel badly
- I will speak to others respectfully, not using profanity or uncomplimentary names
- I will show respect for all people working or helping in the school
- I will show careful regard for both my property and the property of others
- I will always ask permission before I borrow other people's things, and I will return them promptly and in good condition when I am finished
- I will attend school regularly
- I will be in class on time with all necessary materials
- I will make good use of class time and complete and turn assignments in on time
- I understand that I must make up assignments I miss because of an absence
- I will remain on campus during school time, including the lunch period
- I will not leave the school grounds without the permission of an adult
- I will do my best in my schoolwork, and I will let others do their best

- I will ask for help if I do not understand
- I will not bring contraband items to school
- I will help keep the school building and grounds clean and tidy
- I will walk in the halls
- I will not eat or drink in classrooms or hallways
- I will follow the dress code

I agree to follow all of the requirements of the *YSWPCS Parent-Student Handbook*, also referred to as the student code of conduct.

Parents and guardians, please sign the reverse side of this contract. Please also provide your child's or children's names and signature(s) after reviewing the handbook together. Thank you.

Student Name	Class	Date	Signature
--------------	-------	------	-----------

Student Name	Class	Date	Signature
--------------	-------	------	-----------

Student Name	Class	Date	Signature
--------------	-------	------	-----------

Student Name	Class	Date	Signature
--------------	-------	------	-----------

Parent/Guardian Name	Date	Signature
----------------------	------	-----------

INTRODUCTION

The *YSWPCS Parent-Student Handbook* is an overview of our school's goals, services, policies, rules, and processes. It describes how we operate and what we expect from ourselves, our students, and our parents and guardians. Its contents comprise our student code of conduct.

Please read the handbook carefully and discuss it as a family. It will guide your effective involvement in all aspects of the school. It will serve as an essential reference book throughout the school year. And it will provide you with information that will make your year purposeful and rewarding in every respect.

YSWPCS reflects us all. Thank you for helping us create a safe environment that is conducive to learning.

ACADEMIC YEAR

Our school year generally parallels that of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District. School holidays, inclement weather closings, in-service days, parent-teacher conferences, etc., generally match the school district schedule.

The primary difference between YSWPCS and Baldwin-Whitehall is make-up days for inclement-weather school closings. Because our school year is longer than that of other elementary schools in the district, adding days to the end of the year is usually unnecessary.

A detailed 2022-2023 school calendar, including scheduled events, is included below in Appendix A. It is available on the YSWPCS website, as well.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school day runs 7:45 am - 3:45 pm. School bus transportation is available to most students both to and from school. Supervised early arrival is available for working parents and guardians beginning at 7:45am. Students are not permitted inside the building before 7:45am, as there is no supervision available before that time. Children who are not riding the bus, must be picked up by a parent, guardian, or approved adult between 3:28pm and 3:45pm. Please see page 17 for more arrival and dismissal information. **When YSWPCS is operating in Hybrid Learning, dismissal times may change to accommodate for social distancing.**

Our Extended Day Program is held 3:45pm–5:15pm., Monday through Thursday. While the Extended Day Program is optional, it is very beneficial to our students. We strongly encourage parents and guardians to give their children access to the additional instruction, enrichment, and remediation it offers. (See “Extended Day Program” below for more information about this offering.) **When YSWPCS is operating in Hybrid Learning or Remote Learning, extended day programs may be limited, depending on County Health Dept recommendations.**

For security reasons, all exterior doors will be locked during school hours.

UNEXPECTED DELAYS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Under unexpected circumstances, school closings and delays will be announced on local radio and television stations, including KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE. Parents and guardians will also be informed by the school messenger system.

YSWPCS may consider either Pittsburgh Public Schools or Baldwin-Whitehall Schools when determining delays and closings.

YSWPCS will be utilizing Flexible Instructional Days in place of inclement weather days. Please refer to our website for more information and announcements.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

YSWPCS staff values the rights and dignity of our students at all times. We feel responsible for providing a safe, supportive, enriching environment in which all students can realize their full potential. We see our students as partners in creating such a space. We ask them to be caring, respectful, and cooperative with their teachers, our staff, their parents and guardians, and each other.

We codify our students' rights and responsibilities as follows.

Student Rights

- To feel safe in the school environment
- To take full advantage of learning opportunities
- To work in an environment free from disruption
- To express their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and concerns in a respectful manner
- To have a healthy environment free of smoke, alcohol, and drugs
- To use school resources and facilities for self-betterment under appropriate supervision
- To expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from all members of the community
- To be informed of all expectations and responsibilities
- To take part in a variety of school activities
- To have access to due process

Student Responsibilities

- To be caring and honest
- To do their best to learn and master all they can
- To respect school rules, regulations, and policies
- To be sure that personal expression does not interfere with the rights of others
- To follow state law and school policies concerning substance abuse
- To respect and protect the personal and property rights of others and the school
- To treat all members of the community with full respect, fairness, and courtesy
- To abide by all expectations of the school and its community
- To follow the prescribed guidelines participation in school activities
- To adhere to due process

See Appendix B for our school-parent compact, which describes the school's responsibility for providing high-quality education, discusses ways in which parents and guardians can support their children's learning, and addresses the importance of ongoing parent-teacher communication.

DISCRIMINATION

Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P. S. § § 951, et. seq.), no student will be denied access to a free and full public education on account of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, familial status, religion, sex, national origin, or handicap or disability.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All students have the right to:

- Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, familial status, religious creed, ancestry, sex, national origin, or handicap or disability
- Address the school on the same terms as any citizen. Similarly, all students are bound by the same

rules for exclusion from school activities and public address.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by symbolic speech. The expression of such opinions will not interfere with the freedom of others, and the author must sign a written expression of an opinion. YSWPCS prohibits any form of expression that involves libel, slander, obscenity, personal attacks, or other actions that disrupt the educational process. All forms of expression must also follow the student code of conduct and dress code (as described under “Our School Environment” below). We encourage student participation in the production of school-sponsored newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines, and similar publications as a learning and educational experience. Qualified faculty advisors will supervise the production of such publications, if any, and help students meet the high standards of journalism. To maintain consistency with the school’s basic educational mission, school authorities control the content of such publications.

RECORDS

Students 18 years of age or older, or the parents or guardians of a student under 18 years of age, are entitled to have access to their own or their child’s school records. To obtain such access, submit a written request to the CEO or designee.

Every student’s school records are private. YSWPCS will not disclose information about any student to an outside party except as authorized pursuant to the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 or in response to a subpoena as required by law.

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for students to make the most of their education. Students benefit from teacher-led activities, build each day's learning on the previous day's, and grow as individuals. Every student should attend school regularly, and even strive for perfect attendance.

By the same token, there are reasons a child can and should miss school. For example, children should remain home when they are ill. It is difficult for a sick child to learn. He or she exposes others to contagious diseases at school, and illnesses resolve themselves much more quickly with bedrest.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. Students absent without permission from school or from any class will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. To receive credit for a class, a student **must not miss more than 10 days of the class being offered**, unless excused by school.

SCHOOL ABSENCES

According to state regulations, YSWPCS is responsible for monitoring and maintaining records of student attendance. The Pennsylvania Department of Education recommends that schools immediately inform parents or guardians in writing upon each incident of an unlawful absence. **In response to this recommendation, Infinite Campus is programmed to send an Absent Scholar Report to parents or guardians each morning a scholar is marked Absent. If you receive this message in error, please contact the school immediately.**

Pennsylvania law broadly defines absences as excused when a student is prevented from attendance for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons. Many school districts, including YSWPCS, consider illness, family emergency, death of an immediate family member, professional appointments, authorized out-of-school activities, and school-organized educational travel as the only excused absences.

In those rare circumstances when a student must be absent from school, a Parent Excuse can be sent in one of two ways:

- complete the Attendance E-Form that is sent via Infinite Campus
- email the school office, including the date of the absence and the reason for the absence

All absences will be treated as **unexcused** until YSWPCS receives a written excuse explaining the reason for the absence. Parents and guardians should submit a written explanation within 3 calendar days of an absence. Failure to provide a written excuse within 3 days of an absence will remain permanently unexcused. We will not accept a note signed by the student, even with a parent's or guardian's permission.

All absences beyond 10 cumulative days require an excuse from a physician, court order, or funeral notice. Failure to supply an excuse will result in an unexcused absence and become a part of their school record. Under 22 Pa. Code § 11.24, **students who miss 10 consecutive school days will be**

dropped from the active membership roll, unless the school is provided with evidence the excuses are legal. YSWPCS may also pursue compulsory attendance prosecution.

YSWPCS recognizes two kinds of absences and tardiness: excused and unexcused. Parents, guardians, and students should read through the definitions of each carefully so that they understand the meanings of each one. **Families also need to be acutely aware of student responsibilities regarding homework, quizzes, and tests** after an excused absence, as well as the consequences for unexcused absences.

Excused Absences & Tardies - Professional Appts

- If possible, parents & guardians should schedule those appts for outside of school hours
- If possible, parents & guardians should alert the school **BEFORE** the absence
- When student is absent, parents & guardians will receive an Infinite Campus alert
- Parents & guardians should complete the Infinite Campus absence E-form, indicating a medical excuse will be submitted
- Email or Paper copies of Medical excuses are acceptable but must be submitted within **3 business days**. Infinite Campus will then be updated to “Medical Excuse”

Excused Absences & Tardies - Court Appts

- IF POSSIBLE, parents & guardians should alert the school **BEFORE** the absence
- When student is absent, parents & guardians will receive an Infinite Campus absent alert
- Parents & guardians should complete the Infinite Campus absence form, indicating a court excuse will be submitted
- Email or Paper copies of court summons are acceptable. Infinite Campus is updated to “Court Excuse”

Excused Absences & Tardies - Funerals

- IF POSSIBLE, parents & guardians should alert the school **BEFORE** the absence
- When student is absent, parents & guardians will receive an Infinite Campus absent alert
- Parents & guardians should complete the Infinite Campus absence form, noting a funeral absence
- The parent should submit official documentation for the funeral (obituary, funeral program, or funeral announcement)
- Email or Paper documentation of Funerals are acceptable
- Infinite Campus is updated to “Funeral Excuse”

Excused Absences & Tardies - Religious Exemptions

- Parents must alert the school **BEFORE** the absence
- Attendance Officer will pre-enter Excused Religious Absence into Infinite Campus
- Limited by PA State Law to 36 hours per school year

Excused Absences & Tardies - Parent/Family Excuses

- Family emergencies
- Personal Illness (max 2 consecutive days - physicians note required after 3rd day)
- A parent must inform the school of the Unexpected Absence via the Attendance E-form for every day

they are absent

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence becomes part of a student's school record. A student will be marked unexcused if he or she:

- Fails to bring a written note within **3 school days following an absence**, no exceptions
- Leaves school without the permission of the CEO or designee
- Is absent from school without parental permission
- Is absent for reasons considered unacceptable to school administration

MAKE-UP WORK

Excused Absences

A student with an excused absence should promptly make up missed assignments and exams and/or complete additional in-depth study assigned by a teacher. Assignments associated with an anticipated absence will be provided before or after the absence at the discretion of the teacher or school administration.

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

An absence from school, even for several days, does not excuse a student from responsibilities in the classroom on the day he or she returns. A student with an excused absence will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete missed work provided by his or her teachers.

It is the student's responsibility to find out what work he or she missed during an absence and when it needs to be completed. The student must do this the day he or she returns to school, and he or she must record the dates due.

Make-up tests will be scheduled by the teacher. It is our students' responsibility to take make-up tests at the designated time. A teacher is not obligated to reschedule a missed make-up and may issue a grade of zero.

Unexcused Absences

A student with 2 consecutive unexcused absences **may not make up missed work**. This means the unexcused absences in a class or classes will affect the student's grades because:

- Teachers will issue an F or zero for each class missed
- Teachers will issue an F or zero on all classwork, homework, and exams administered for the duration of the absence

TARDINESS

At YSWPCS, we view instructional time as a precious resource. It is important for every YSWPCS student to arrive at school on time every day and be present in the classroom for each entire period. Learning the responsibility of getting to class on time is an integral part of our standard of excellence, which prepares students for future success.

All exterior doors will close when the 8:12am bell rings. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to make sure their child is at school before the bell rings. YSWPCS determines if the child is tardy or not. We base this determination on our bell schedule, not universal cell phone times.

All Tardiness to school will be unexcused even though the parent or guardian brings the student to school. Oversleeping, car/traffic problems, etc. are all UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. Tardiness is excusable by a school official under the following circumstances:

- Professional Appointments
- Court Appointments
- District Bus Delays

A professional note or court summons will be required to verify the above.

A parent or guardian who brings a student to school after the morning bell rings MUST:

- Escort them into the building
- Sign the Late Arrival/Early Dismissal Book
- Provide professional note or court summons to main office, if applicable

Chronic tardiness is a serious problem. **Three instances of unexcused tardiness to school will be equivalent to one unexcused absence.** Repeated instances of late arrivals to school or class will lead to disciplinary action, i.e. after school detention. Problems with tardiness to school may require adjustments to the family's morning routine.

YSWPCS takes our students' safety, security, and well-being very seriously. We thank our parents and guardians for helping to ensure they learn to be punctual and to make maximum use of class time.

TRUANCY

Truancy shows a deliberate disregard for our educational program and is considered a serious matter that will result in immediate consequences.

YSWPCS defines Truancy as 3 or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. Habitual truancy is defined as 6 or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. If a student is truant:

- No credit will be recorded for work missed as a result of the truancy
- A record of truancy will be
- into the student's record file
- A student with 2 consecutive unexcused absences may not make up missed work. This means an unexcused absence in a class or classes will have a negative effect on the students' grades.
- A habitually truant student may not be eligible to attend field trips or Extended Day Program

YSWPCS must document the outcome of any attendance-improvement conference in a written attendance-improvement plan. YSWPCS may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled attendance improvement conference has passed.

According to new truancy legislation, it is the duty of YSWPCS to report unexcused absences directly to

the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Absences will be addressed as follows:

- After **5 unexcused** absences, a parent conference is required
- After **6 unexcused** absences, you may be referred to the magistrate and/or CYF
- After **10 unexcused** absences, your child may not be promoted to next grade level

See Appendix D for more information.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL

Students arrive at school between 7:30 am and 8:00 am each morning. Cost-free bus transportation is available from most of the school districts YSWPCS serves, and many of our families take advantage of this service. **Parents and guardians may also bring a child to school rather than use district transportation.**

Students dropped off will enter through the Multipurpose Room door at the rear of the building. Parents/guardians should observe all traffic signs and patterns. A vehicle drop off line will be in place for Student Dropoff around the playground area. Upon arrival, please join the line and wait until a staff member signals your child to exit the vehicle. Students will then enter the building and report directly to the cafeteria if it is before 8:00 am. Students will have the option to eat breakfast each morning.

Breakfast will be served from 7:30-7:55 am. For safety reasons, students may not be dropped off before 7:30 am. Parents and guardians are NOT PERMITTED to park on the premises and must remain in their vehicles.

Scholars arriving after 8:00am must be escorted to the front office door where the student will be allowed into the building. At that time, the parent or guardian will receive an official Tardy Notice.

DISMISSAL

Regular dismissal time will begin at 3:24 pm. Dismissal time on half days is 12:00 pm. Dismissal may begin early to accommodate for social distancing.

Any parent arriving late for dismissal will be given an Official Late Dismissal Notice. Students who ride the bus will be dismissed from their classes for boarding. These students will be released from both the front door and the cafeteria door.

Students walking home will be assigned a walker pass if requested by a parent or guardian. YSWPCS is not responsible for a child who walks home once he or she leaves the school grounds. If walkers need to wait on campus for any reason, they should ask permission from the extended day coordinator or teachers on duty.

Extended Day Program students must be picked up between 4:30 pm and 4:45 pm for the first session and between 5:15 pm and 5:30 pm for the second session. All Extended Day Program students must be signed out before leaving. For more information, contact the extended day coordinator or the office.

Regardless of whether it is a regular or an early-dismissal day, the school building will be locked at 6:00 pm.

CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD'S ROUTINE

If a child needs to leave school early or if there is a change in transportation at dismissal time, a parent or guardian must notify the school office by calling 412-668-2064 or emailing our school secretary at secretary@youngscholars.org by 2:00 pm.

For our students' safety, no child will be released to a person who is not pre-approved by a custodial parent or guardian. In all instances of early departure, the following precautions will be taken:

- Children may only be released only to a parent or guardian whose signature is on file in the office or to a properly identified person, authorized in writing by a parent or guardian to act on their behalf. ID will be checked.
- No staff member will permit or cause a student to leave school prior to the regular hour of dismissal except with the knowledge and approval of the CEO or designee and a parent or guardian.
- Students may not be released from school to any government agency without proper warrant or written parental permission except in the event of an emergency as determined by the parents or guardians.

If your child is planning to go home with another student, you must provide written permission and those families are responsible for providing transportation. **Students are only permitted to ride their assigned bus provided by their district.**

Parents and guardians who plan to be out of town should notify the school and ensure that the person named to be called in case of emergency is available. The office must always have a number to call in case of emergency.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Early Dismissals should be limited to professional appointments and emergencies. Early dismissals should not be requested for personal appointments; those types of appointments should be arranged after the school day. Frequent requests or patterns will require a meeting with school administration.

When picking up a student outside of regular school-day or Extended Day dismissal times, the parent or guardian must sign the "Late Arrival/Early Dismissal" book. The student will not be called to the office until a parent or guardian arrives at school.

HOMEWORK, GRADES, AND PROMOTION

HOMEWORK

Homework reinforces what has been learned in class, prepares students for upcoming lessons, extends and generalizes concepts, teaches responsibility, and helps students develop essential study habits. Assignments are adjusted as necessary to meet the needs of individual learners and learning styles. Homework is a vehicle for home-school communication, and parents and guardians can assist in making it a positive experience for their children.

Some assignments must be completed at home, such as reviewing for a test or quiz, preparing a long-term report, or doing an assignment that involves parent or guardian, family, or community participation. Finishing homework during extended hours is not mandatory, and parents and guardians should check each day to make sure work done at school has been completed.

A simple way of calculating how long homework should take is to allow approximately 10 minutes multiplied by your child's grade level beyond kindergarten. Thus, for everyday assignments a first grader may have approximately 10 minutes of homework, a third grader may have 30 minutes, and an eighth grader may have up to 80 minutes.

If, after that allotted time of consistent effort, a child has not completed his or her assignments, a parent or guardian can ask the child to stop and make a note to that effect directly on the homework assignment or in the assignment notebook. It is the child's responsibility, with parental guidance, to complete long-term assignments over a given time span, not at the last minute.

A daily minimum of 15–30 minutes of at-home recreational reading (or being read to) is strongly advised for all students.

It is our parents' and guardians' responsibility to ensure our students submit homework on time. Families can obtain online information about their children's progress by logging onto our website at www.yswpcs.org.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

At YSWPCS, formal assessments fulfill an important function in measuring each student's academic performance. External assessments (e.g., IReady) are used on a state-wide basis. Students at YSWPCS are exposed to formal assessments not only for the purposes of assessment but also for experience in assessment conduct, procedure, and technique.

The rules for taking examinations at YSWPCS, including state assessments, are as follows:

- Students must remain silent during the examination unless directed otherwise by the supervising teacher.
- Under no circumstances are students permitted to distract other students during the examination.
- Students must leave school bags outside or at the front of the examination room.
- Students are not permitted to take any paper, including worksheets and scratch paper, into the examination room. Further, students are not permitted to remove any paper, including the exam

paper, from the room.

- Students must bring appropriate equipment to the exam.
- Students are expected to be on time for the examination. No one will be permitted to leave early. Latecomers will not be granted extra time to complete the exam.
- Students are responsible for the collection of their work.
- Students absent from an examination must present themselves to the subject teacher immediately upon returning to school and request a make-up exam.
- Teachers will schedule make-up exams for excused absences.
- Teachers are not required to issue the exam if the student misses the make-up appointment.

In the event that a student violates these rules during an examination, he or she will receive an immediate zero. After the event, a review of the situation will determine if the zero award stands or if a lesser or harsher penalty should be imposed.

Any student found cheating during an examination, or who is determined to have cheated, will receive a zero on the exam. His or her parents or guardians will be notified, and disciplinary action may be taken by either the subject teacher or the CEO or designee. Families can obtain a copy of our cheating and plagiarizing policy from the child's subject teacher.

GRADING SCALE AND PROGRESS REPORTS

YSWPCS is dedicated to excellence in education, and we strive to create a caring and efficient communication between home and school.

Progress Reports

Students will receive individual grades in all classes at the end of each trimester, and school administration will mail report cards to the address of record. **Please notify the office about any address, email, or contact number changes.** The school is responsible for printing and issuing report cards in a timely fashion. It is our parents' and guardians' responsibility to request a report from the office if they do not receive one on time; they can call school administration at (412) 668-2064.

Grading Scale

All classes will follow the same scale for assigning letter grades. Teachers will establish the grading policies and procedures for their classes individually, and their grades will correspond to this scale.

YSWPCS Grading Scale, Grades K–8

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 78-80	D+ 70-72	F 0-64
A 94-96	B 84-86	C 76-77	D 67-69	
A- 90-93	B- 81-83	C- 73-75	D- 65-66	

Academic Awards

Scholars Award, High Honor Roll, and Honor Roll serves as a mark of excellence to recognize students who excel academically. Student lists are prepared at the end of each marking period. They are based on letter grades and include all subjects. Students with all As qualify for the Scholars Award. Students with all As and one B qualify for High Honor Roll. Students with all As and Bs qualify for Honor Roll.

PROMOTION

In order for a student to be promoted to the next grade level, the following criteria must be met.

- Students must have all passing grades in core subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Spanish and Turkish
- Students who fail two or more core subjects will be retained at their present grade level.
- YSWPCS is not conducting summer school for the grade promotion of its students.
- Excessive absences may be considered as a factor in promotions.

Students who do not meet these criteria may not be advanced to the next grade level.

OUR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

The staff welcomes parent and guardian input and feels strongly that education is a collaborative effort. Parents and guardians are advised to contact the classroom teacher directly should a concern or issue arise. In most cases, a simple phone call or email is enough to clarify or resolve most matters. If a concern is not addressed to everyone's satisfaction, school administration will provide further assistance.

When there is a need to meet with a teacher or administration, it will be helpful to have an appointment which **should be requested at least 2 days in advance** and expect to meet before or after school. A teacher may not be available during the day without proper notification.

Please keep your contact information current and updated by informing the school office of any changes in address, email, phone numbers or emergency contacts.

PHONE CALLS

Students will not be permitted to make phone calls during class time from anywhere.

Parents and guardians may call the office to leave a message for a child. It will be delivered before the last period, unless it is an emergency. Messages taken after school hours will be given to the child when possible. Parents and guardians are not permitted to call teachers during instructional time.

Students may bring their cellphones to school, but they are not permitted to use them during the regular school day or Extended Day. Students in grades K-8 who bring a cell phone to school, will be required to place it in a Yondr™ case at the beginning of the day. Yondr is a system for creating phone-free spaces in areas like our school. Once a student's phone is in a case, the case will lock, the phone will be inaccessible, and stored away until the end of the day.

At the end of the day, students retrieve their cases, unlock and remove their phones. All Yondr cases will remain at school. If a student is found with an electronic device, it will be confiscated by a teacher or staff member and **MUST** be retrieved by the parent or guardian.

SmartWatches are not permitted at school.

FORMS AND PERMISSION SLIPS

A number of important forms are sent home at the beginning and of the school year. These are required to ensure the health and safety of our students and that our families' preferences are known to the school with respect to optional opportunities and activities.

Please return all required forms immediately and keep the others on file for use as needed, including this handbook.

DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS

No person will distribute printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the CEO or designee. The CEO may regulate the content of distributed materials to avoid interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The CEO may also regulate the time, place, manner, and duration of such distribution.

DRESS CODE

The purpose of a dress code is to protect the health and safety of children. Because physical activity is encouraged every day, appropriate clothes and shoes should be worn at all times. Learning is an active process at YSWPCS; clothing may on occasion become soiled from outdoor play or art or science activities. Easily laundered clothing is advisable. Most student attire is acceptable. These are the guidelines to follow:

- Clothing should be school appropriate and modest, and not reveal personal/private areas. (No yoga, biker attire, or ripped clothing).
- Pants should not be excessively long or short.
- Shorts, skorts and skirts must be at least to mid-thigh while at a stance, sitting, and moving. This applies to all students in grades K-8
- Clothing should not depict violence, weapons, sex, drugs, or any other illicit activity in either words, pictures, or symbols. (Tattoos displaying such must be covered).
- Head Coverings are permitted for religious reasons **only**.
- Hats and outerwear (winter coats) are not to be worn in classrooms. A light jacket, hoodie (hood down) or sweater can be worn.
- The torso must be covered and undergarments and underarms should **not** be visible.
- Tops must have straps -no spaghetti straps or racer-back tops or muscle shirts. No mid-drift tops or sleeveless undershirts/beaters
- Students are not permitted to wear leggings, jeggings or tights **unless** worn under a long shirt, skirt, dress or shorts, which must meet or be beyond their mid-thigh. Leggings with sheer panels are inappropriate. This applies to all students K-8.
- **Shoes must have a back**
- **Flat shoes ONLY are allowed**
- Flip-flops, swim/athletic slides, slippers, platforms, and wedges should not be worn for safety reasons.
- Athletic shoes are preferred

- Students must wear athletic sneakers with laces or Velcro straps on the day of their physical education class. It is suggested that students wear athletic clothing on these days as well.

If a student comes to school wearing an inappropriate item, he or she will be sent to the office with a Dress Code Violation Form. A call will be placed to their parent or guardian. He or she will remain in the office until appropriate clothing is brought to school. If the parent or guardian cannot bring clothes or is not available, YSWPCS will provide another set of clothing for the child. A dress code violation may also be entered into Infinite Campus.

We rely on parental discretion and good judgment to guide students in making appropriate clothing choices for school. This is not a decision that should be left solely to the child.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

YSWPCS qualified to become part of the United States Department of Agriculture's Community Eligibility Provision under its Food and Nutrition Service. CEP is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and school districts in low-income areas. CEP allows YSWPCS to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications. The school will be reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students categorically eligible for free meals, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Menus

Lunch and breakfast menus are posted on the school website. We will also send copies home with students at the beginning of each month.

Cafeteria Protocol

All students remain at school during the lunch period. Students may eat lunch for free or bring a packed lunch. **During breakfast and lunch, students are expected to display good manners and courtesy.** Students should eat only in the lunch area, and are expected to clear their place and dispose of their trash appropriately when directed by staff. Staff on duty during breakfast and lunch hold students responsible for their behavior.

These are our expectations for cafeteria conduct:

- Students are to remain seated unless given permission by staff
- Dispose of plates and utensils in garbage bins
- Keep tables, seats, and floors clean
- Talk in an indoor voice (classroom voice); do not shout
- Keep cafeteria lines orderly: no pushing, running, horse playing, or cutting in lines
- Loitering in the cafeteria and hallways is not allowed; stay seated unless otherwise instructed
- Keep hands, feet, personal belongings, and food to yourself
- Use appropriate language
- Due to the risk of allergies, we strongly discourage sharing food

- Students may use the washroom and/or get a drink of water only when given permission by staff

HALLWAYS AND RESTROOMS

Hallways and restrooms are areas used by all members of the YSWPCS community. Because everyone uses these areas, there are rules of conduct that all students must follow. During class time, students are not to be in the halls or restroom without a pass from their teacher or the main office.

- Do not loiter in the halls, lunchroom or restrooms
- Eat only in the lunchroom
- Walk in the halls and restrooms
- Use polite and appropriate language
- Loud or disruptive noise is not permitted
- Help keep these areas clean and safe
- Put away or dispose of used items
- Keep belongings in lockers, **not** on the floor outside them
- Make sure you clean up after yourself and appropriately dispose of all trash
- Do not roughhouse, push, or wrestle with others
- Report any leaks, spills or other problems in the lavatory to a teacher or the main office
- Misuse or defacing of lavatory or any space will result in disciplinary action

RESTRICTED AREAS

After arriving at school, students may not leave the building for **any** reason without written permission from the CEO or designee of accompaniment by a teacher, staff member, parent or guardian.

- Students may not use a classroom without express permission
- Students may not use or remove any item from a teacher's or staff member's desk
- The playground of the school is off limits except when permission is given.
- Construction areas are out of bounds
- Any other areas that are determined by the CEO or school administration
- Students may not use the elevator unless there is an order from a physician.

Teachers and staff have the authority and discretion to correct any pupil at any time and submit referrals. The limitations noted here apply to the regular school day, extended hours, and school-sponsored events.

LOST AND FOUND

YSWPCS has a lost and found area in the multipurpose room. When students, teachers, or staff find personal items on school grounds, they will be turned into the office for placement in the lost and found. **If a student loses something, he or she should check the lost and found.** Labeling all removable clothing and personal items students bring to school will eliminate much of this problem and prevent families from having to replace expensive belongings. Indelible markers for labeling clothing are available at

local stores. **At the end of every trimester, we send all unclaimed items to a charity.**

VOLUNTEERS

YSWPCS has an active and extensive volunteer program for regular school hours and extended hours. Our Extended Day Program depends on the interest and participation of parents, guardians, and other adults to provide enrichment and club activities for students. The extended day coordinator and staff will provide training and guidance to volunteers as needed.

YSWPCS is open to parent and guardian volunteers to help with the food-serving process during lunchtime. Parents and guardians are also invited to help in the classrooms, either at school or at home. Our children especially enjoy parents and guardians volunteering to read.

Volunteers need to sign in at the front desk and get a “Volunteer” tag each day. Teachers/Staff will notify the Front Desk of any pending volunteers. All unannounced volunteers will not be admitted. While regular volunteering is appreciated, occasional participation is also helpful. Please consider participating in this vital part of the YSWPCS program. Do note that parents, guardians, and other adults must obtain all three clearances according to state law before volunteering in the school in addition, volunteers must have a completed COVID vaccination. We can reimburse anyone who obtains the clearances.

When YSWPCS is operating in Hybrid Learning, we will be unable to allow volunteers into the building.

See Appendix E for important information about volunteering.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at YSWPCS. **Upon arrival, they must enter through the front doors, check in at the main desk, and obtain a “Visitor” tag.** We welcome Alumni to schedule a visit. Parents and guardians may come to school to observe classroom activities with pre-approval from the teacher. Please understand that each teacher is responsible for the students in his or her class and cannot spend class time talking or conferencing with parents or guardians. However, every family is welcome to make an appointment to speak with a teacher outside of the classroom. Call the office or send a note to the subject teacher requesting a meeting. Parents, guardians, or students wishing to bring visitors to YSWPCS must complete the Student Visitor Form and receive approval from the office at least 1 school day in advance. Do not bring guests to school without prior arrangements.

Parents and guardians who bring something for a child during the day will leave the item at the front desk for delivery at an appropriate time.

When YSWPCS is operating in Hybrid Learning, we will be unable to allow visitors into the building.

FAMILY CONNECTION VISITATIONS

In order to foster a strong and cooperative home-school relationship, teachers will contact families and arrange meetings outside of school as time allows. This is an opportunity for our children to forge stronger bonds with their teachers, not to impede on your personal lives.

It also provides a chance for parents and guardians to visit with teachers in a more social and relaxed atmosphere.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips offer exciting ways to learn. YSWPCS students have the opportunity to go on field trips at various times throughout the school year. Any student who has demonstrated the inability to follow rules may also be prohibited from participating. This may include forfeiting payment(s). Students also may not be able to attend field trips if they have served ISS and/or OSS leading up to the field trip. This determination will be made by the administration. Students will be expected to:

- Bring the field-trip permission slip to school by the specified date signed by a parent or guardian; phone calls will not be accepted as permission
- Abide by the student code of conduct during the field trip

Loss of field trip privilege or choosing to not participate WILL NOT be considered an Excused Absence.

OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS

Students at school-sponsored off-campus events will be governed by the guidelines of the school and are subject to the authority of school officials. Failure to obey the lawful instructions of school officials will result in a loss of eligibility to attend these events and may result in additional disciplinary measures in accordance with the student code of conduct.

SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT

Students are only permitted to board the bus they are assigned to use. Conduct on the bus is expected to be the same as in the classroom. Safety depends on the skill of the drivers and nothing should be done to distract them. **Students may be denied bus privileges when behavior is inappropriate.** Riding on the school bus extends the regular school day for those students. All actions taken by administration can and will be enforced. Consequences include, but are not limited to, bus suspension or out of school suspension.

So that our students' ride to and from school is safe, the following expectations must be followed:

- Ride only the bus assigned
- Keep all noise at a low level and avoid using profane language
- Keep hands, feet, and all possessions to yourself
- Respect and obey the bus driver
- Remain seated until the driver gives you permission to move
- Keep the bus clean and aisle clear at all times
- Listen to the driver's rules pertaining food and drinks on the bus
- Enter and exit the bus in an orderly manner
- No horseplay or physical contact with others on the bus

Each school district may have their own set of Bus Expectations which students are expected to follow. In these cases, those expectations will be distributed to families at the beginning of the year.

Riding the bus is a privilege. Students who wish to enjoy this privilege must abide by the rules and

regulations in order to help to ensure safe and orderly bus transportation. Parents will be notified of each bus violation.

If a student chooses not to meet our expectations, the consequences are as follows:

- 1st write up = disciplinary action and Student Conference with Discipline Coordinator
- 2nd write up = disciplinary action and Parent Conference with Discipline Coordinator
- 3rd write up = student may be suspended up to 5 days from the bus
- 4th write up = student may be suspended up to 10 days from the bus and a **parent conference must occur before the child is permitted to ride the bus.**
- 5th write up = **loss of bus privileges, including activity and field trip buses, for the remainder of the school year**

The following behaviors will result in an automatic suspension from the bus and may also result in a suspension from school:

- Interfering with the safe operation of the bus
- Fighting
- Tampering with safety equipment
- Throwing objects out of the window
- Opening or leaving through the emergency door unless required by a true emergency
- Indecent exposure of self or others
- Damaging the school bus
 - Damaging a school bus will also result in a minimum \$40.00 fine
 - This fine must be paid before a student is allowed to ride the bus again

If a student is suspended from off the bus, it is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to ensure their child attends school. Special education procedure and protocol will be followed regarding special education students. (See Appendix F.) The school must follow the attendance policy and law when a child is absent from school.

The bus driver will refer discipline problems to the Discipline Coordinator in writing. Reasonable force may be used under the following circumstances:

- To quell a disturbance
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects
- For the purpose of self-defense
- For the protection of persons or property

Parents and guardians are reminded that it is unlawful for non-riders, including family members or guardians, to step onto a bus.

LOCKERS

Beginning in 2nd grade, each student is assigned a locker for his or her individual use. This locker is for storing books, hats, coats, and personal items necessary for school. It should not be used to store valuable items from home. Lockers remain school property and under the control of the school at all times. **Students have full responsibility for locker security and safeguarding locker contents.** YSWPCS

is not liable for personal items left in a locker or brought to school. To keep school items safe, students should keep their lockers private but unlocked. Students may not trade lockers with another student or let another student share a locker. **It is also the responsibility of each student to make sure that his or her locker is in working order at all times.** Students should report damage, vandalism, or the non-working condition of a locker to the office. Students who fail to do so will be held responsible for cleaning the locker or paying for needed repairs. Periodic locker checks will be made by YSWPCS staff to ensure that lockers are kept clean and orderly. ***Bookbags, outdoor and outerwear, including hats are to remain in lockers during the school day.**

In a regular school day, students can go to their lockers at the following times:

- Before classes begin in the morning (after dismissal from the cafeteria or multipurpose room or with permission from staff)
- Before and after lunchtime, but not during the lunch period
- After classes are over

When YSWPCS is operating in Hybrid or Online Learning, locker use will not be permitted.

Any article or material of a non-school nature and/or which may disrupt the mission of the school must not be placed in a locker or desk. Smart watches, Kindles, Nooks, Game Boys, iPod, and other hand-held technology, including cell phones, should remain at home for two reasons: potential loss or breakage and the risk of distracting students from school activities. The school will not be responsible for items lost or damaged. If a student is found using any electronic device, it will be confiscated by a staff member, and parents may collect any such items their child brings to school from the main office or Discipline Coordinator at their earliest convenience. Teachers may request that other items stay at home as well.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

A student will not place or keep in a locker or desk any article or material of a non- school nature or that may cause the disruption of the school's mission. Contraband in any form is strictly prohibited. School authorities may seize any such items.

The following rules apply:

- School authorities will make an individual search of a student's locker or desk only when there is reasonable suspicion that the student possess an item that is prohibited on school property or may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process
- If found, such items may be removed from the student's locker or desk by school authorities
- Searches will be conducted under the authorization of the CEO or designee

Any prohibited materials found may be used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceedings. Prior to a locker search, the student will be notified if possible and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Many teachers at YSWPCS use textbooks to teach their courses. In these cases, the teacher will register one book per student and note the condition of each one. Students must return all textbooks at the end of the year in usable condition. Should a student withdraw or be expelled, all textbooks must be returned to YSWPCS immediately. **We hold each student's parents or guardians responsible for the condition of textbooks issued at the beginning of the year.** Students should make sure these books are not lost, stolen, damaged, or defaced. Families will pay current market value to replace any books that are unusable or not returned. Final report cards, transcripts, and/or withdrawal forms will not be issued until all textbooks are returned in good condition or reimbursement is made. Many classes use consumable supplies as well—from materials to workbooks. Students may be required to pay for consumable materials. Families should meet with school administration if special circumstances prevent them from reimbursing the school for such materials.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

WELLNESS POLICY

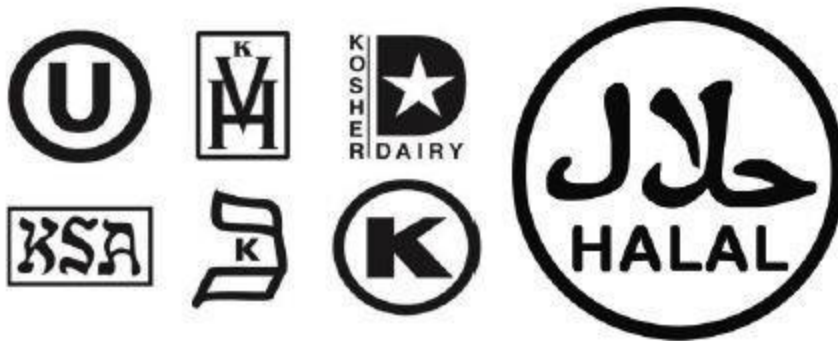
The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires all K-12 schools to implement formal wellness plans that support recognized nutrition, physical education, and physical activity goals.

As part of the YSWPCS Wellness Policy (see Appendix C), our students receive routine annual health screenings that conform to Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines. All students are measured for height, weight, and body mass index. Specified grades also receive vision and hearing evaluations. All screenings are conducted by our school nurse.

YSWPCS has a physical education program that requires teachers to build physical activity into their schedules throughout the day. Extended Day Program clubs also promote physical activity.

Every student participates in a 30-minute recess at lunch time, held outdoors unless the weather is inclement or the temperature drops below 32° F. All children are expected to participate—if a child is not well enough to go outside for recess, he or she is not well enough to be in school. Children should dress for the weather.

YSWPCS promotes student health and wellness through healthy, balanced meals and snacks. **Sugary snacks and treats will not be distributed to students, and children who bring sugary foods to school will be expected to save them for lunchtime.** Soda is discouraged and not permitted. When snacks and treats are served in our classrooms, items should be kosher and halal-certified foods in order to accommodate the religious beliefs of some of the student body. Foods with these symbols on the package satisfy these students' religious tenets:



Healthy Snacks

Parents and guardians can support **YSWPCS'** efforts to promote student health and wellness by sharing healthy kosher and halal-certified foods on special occasions. Rule of thumb: if sugar is listed as the first or second ingredient on the package, make a different choice. Here are some ideas:

- Fresh vegetables prepared at home or in the supermarket produce section, for example sugar snap peas, carrots, celery, and broccoli or cauliflower florets
- Vegetables with dip, such as a store-bought low-fat ranch dressing or a homemade dressing made with yogurt or reduced-calorie mayonnaise
- 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice
- Canned and packaged fruit products in juice
- Low-fat or nonfat milk or yogurt
- Whole-grain crackers and chips, including graham crackers, rice cakes, and baked tortilla chips
- Bean dips, like hummus and black bean dip, and salsas for dipping chips and crackers
- Fresh fruit of all kinds: grapes, apples, bananas, oranges, pears, and cherry tomatoes are usually available most of the year; berries and melons appear in the summer
- Dried fruit of almost any kind (avoid banana chips, which are fried, and anything with a "yogurt" covering); "Just Tomatoes," a brand of dried fruits and vegetables, crunch like chips but have no fat
- Nuts and seeds include peanuts, pumpkin seeds, and sunflower seeds; most come unsalted; they can be served alone or mixed with dried fruit or whole-grain cereals, chips, or crackers
- Portable, kid-friendly cheeses like string cheese and Laughing Cow minis, including the low-fat version
- Whole-grain breakfast cereals and other whole-grain mixes (like low-fat granola) in sandwich baggies, even without milk

A list of sample healthy food choices is also included in the table below. If you have questions, please contact your child's teacher. Thank you for your support as we join the fight against the obesity epidemic in this country!

Crunchy	Chewy	Creamy	Juicy
Pretzels, popcorn, flavored mini rice cakes, animal crackers, trail mix, granola bars, baked chips, graham crackers, cereal, air crisps, apples, baby carrots, celery sticks	Raisins, dried fruit, bagels, breakfast bars, Rice Krispy treats, graham treats, chewy granola bars	Pudding packs, cheese cubes, milk, yogurt, bananas	Juice packs, Jello TM packs, applesauce, canned fruit, cherry tomatoes, oranges, tangerines, grapes,

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION POLICY

YSWPCS has a Celebration Policy to avoid interrupting instruction for birthdays and other celebrations or events. Parents, please coordinate all plans in advance with the classroom teacher to avoid any hurt feelings, misunderstandings, or scheduling conflicts! If you would like to have a short class birthday acknowledgement for your child, please speak with your child's teacher in advance. Parents should be mindful of the district's nutritional policy as well as the dietary restrictions of students in the classroom. These birthday recognitions are short (ten minutes) and limited to the classroom community.

- Please be sensitive to children who are not allowed to take part in parties for family or religious reasons.
- Do not take pictures – not all children have a signed photo release on file.
- Parents are asked to drop off the treats in the main office to be delivered to the classroom.
- Birthday party invitations are not to be distributed at school. Invitations may be mailed. Please refer to the School Directory Link for more information. (optional)
- The school will not permit bouquets of balloons and other celebratory decorations to be sent to the classrooms. These can be distracting to students' learning.
- Birthday celebration requests must come from parents one week in advance. Both teachers and parents can come to an agreement on the best date for the celebration.
- All birthday celebrations should take place after 2:45 pm.

Distribution of food or treats outside the school lunch program must be foods that are **individually, commercially wrapped**. Foods made at home may not be distributed within the school. If your child wants to bring a birthday treat, encourage them to bring in a healthy snack or even better; bring an item for the classroom such as a classroom book (signed and dated by your child) or other classroom supplies such as pencils, erasers, etc. The reason for this strict interpretation of school district policy is because of the growing number of students who struggle with food allergies, diabetes, and childhood obesity. Individually packaged items that would be considered healthy snacks include: pretzels, baked crackers, and granola bars.

Attention! Attention! Please do not send cupcakes, doughnuts, or sheet cakes for your child's birthday treats. These items are not individually wrapped and do not meet the guidelines of our district policy. Cupcakes, cakes, doughnuts will be sent back home!

We are strongly encouraging families to send non-food items on birthdays. Instead of a food item, please consider sending something for the class to enjoy such as:

- game for the classroom
- classroom book (Have your child pick it out, sign it, and date it.)
- fun school items for each child to keep such as pencils, pens, erasers, markers, etc.

ILLNESS, INJURY, AND MEDICATION

During the school year, YSWPCS has a school nurse or first-aid-trained person available at all times to discuss or assist with medical problems or concerns. All staff receive CPR and first aid training at the beginning of the year as well.

If a child is ill, he or she **may** see the school nurse or someone at the office **but should have a referral form from a teacher**. In addition, all students can make an appointment in advance to speak with the nurse about any health or wellness issues that may concern them. The nurse is here to help with emergencies and non-emergencies alike.

Illness or Injury

If a child becomes ill or is injured during the school day, he or she must report to the nurse's office for an evaluation. If the nurse is not available, the classroom teacher should coordinate care with the Front Office. If a student misses a class without informing the teacher, even for an illness or injury, the absence will be considered unexcused. **Students are not to leave the building without permission**. They should always report to the office for help or direction.

24 Hour Rule Reminder: Your child is to remain home 24 hours after temperature and/or vomiting has ended.

Medication

YSWPCS is not licensed to allow the dispensing of medication except for inhalers for asthma and the EpiPen. **Medication may be brought to school only if taking it during school hours is essential to a student's health**. Otherwise, parents and guardians should administer medications at home. If a student must take medicine at school, these procedures apply:

- The medication to be administered by designated school personnel must be sent directly from the pharmacy or physician's office or brought to school by a parent or guardian.
- The school must receive a Medication Administration Directions Form signed by the student's physician and a parent or guardian.
- If the school nurse is not available to administer the medication, a parent or guardian must visit the school to do so.
- On the medication container, the following information must be clearly printed: – Student's name – Name of the medication – Dosage – Time the medication must be taken

Only the amount of medication needed for dosage at school may be sent in. In the case of prolonged need, parents or guardians should send in the dosage required for a clearly specified period, such as one week or one month. Extra medication will not be sent home with the student. The only medications that may be kept at school are inhalers for asthma, EpiPens, and medications that must be administered during school hours to preserve a student's health. A new doctor's order for administering medication at school is required at the start of each school year, even if the same prescription was administered the previous year.

All medication will be kept in a secure location in the nurse's office. Students may not carry any medication with them during the school day, including cough drops. Aspirin, Tylenol, and other patent drugs are not available from YSWPCS.

Head Lice

YSWPCS believes that a safe and clean learning environment must be maintained to realize its goals and objectives. We therefore enforce a “no nits/no lice” policy.

Head lice do not originate in the school, and the school cannot prevent their spread. Because schools bring large numbers of children into close contact every day, the potential for the transmission of head lice exists. The school can, however, be helpful to the community in controlling the spread of head lice by providing educational assistance. The role for YSWPCS will be education in three areas:

- Preventing the transmission of head lice
- Proper treatment of an infestation
- Notification of an infestation

Educating staff, parents and guardians, and students is one of the most powerful tools in controlling head lice outbreaks. Head lice are easily shared, and parents and guardians are encouraged to report any suspected infestation to the CEO or designee. Students with head lice are to be kept home until 24 hours after treatment is started and the child is nit-free. With proper treatment and notification, this problem can be controlled.

SAFETY

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

In the case of a serious accident or injury to a student, YSWPCS will immediately notify his or her parents, guardians, or emergency contact and administer authorized medical attention.

For a minor injury, the child will be treated in accordance with first aid procedures. Generally, this simply means cleaning a scrape or scratch with soap and warm water and then covering it with an adhesive bandage. Regardless of how minor, our school nurse or designee will promptly inform a child's parents or guardians when the accident or injury affects the child's head or neck. Our nurse records injuries other than those requiring minimal first aid on an accident form.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The following emergency procedures are practiced at regular intervals so that students and staff are always prepared. Drills take place during regular and extended hours. The procedures described applying to regular and Extended Day Program hours. The extended day coordinator is responsible for teaching the procedures to Extended Day volunteers and checking the building in the case of a drill or event.

Fire

In the event that a student believes a fire has broken out, it is the student's responsibility to activate the fire alarm. A map and a student roster are posted by the door of each classroom and the multipurpose room. **Students should leave by the nearest available exit, regardless of where they are in the building.** All classes and individual students must move away from the building toward the playing field where teachers will double-check class lists and account for all students.

Evacuation

In the event our school building needs to be evacuated due to unsafe conditions, our first and foremost concern is the safety of our students and staff. School administration will take immediate action to move everyone to a safe location. This may mean that students will be housed outside the school grounds.

Once students and staff are secure, the school administration will share information with parents and guardians about the incident and any danger it may pose to our students.

If students are not permitted to return to the building, teachers and school administrators are prepared to contact parents, guardians, and emergency contacts. They will provide information about where and when their children may be picked up. All other procedures are identical to those for a fire drill.

Tornados

An announcement will be made over the PA system when there is a risk of or it is apparent that a tornado is entering the area. All students will move to the interior hallways and assume a protected position: on knees and elbows, face-down, with their hands clasped behind their necks.

Each teacher will turn off his or her classroom lights and close the door after all the students have left the room. He or she will take the student roster, conduct a headcount, and then assume a protected position.

Active Shooter

Protection and safety are the top priority in an active shooter event or terrorist attack. School employees are trained on emergency response procedures and ALICE—Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. This will help us more proactively handle the threat of an aggressive intruder or active shooter.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Computers are used to support learning and to enhance instruction. Computer networks allow people to interact with many computers. The Internet allows people to interact with hundreds of thousands of networks.

At YSWPCS, students must use all computers, Chromebooks, and accounts in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

CHROMEBOOKS, COMPUTERS, AND ACCOUNTS

The person in whose name a Chromebook or account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use. Users should change passwords frequently, and **they must not give a password to another user except a teacher, parent, or guardian.**

Computer and Network Usage

As the Internet provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents or guardians of users if the user is under 18 years old) must understand that the school does not control the content of the information available on these other systems. Some of the information available is controversial and, sometimes, offensive. The school does not condone the use of such materials. The person in whose name an account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use.

Under supervision, responsible users may use the Internet to:

- Research assigned classroom projects
- Explore other computer systems
- Send email to specified teachers, parents, and guardians

Responsible users may not:

- Use the Internet for illegal purposes
- Use impolite or abusive language
- Violate the rules of common sense and etiquette
- Change a computer file that does not belong to the user
- Send or receive copyrighted material without permission
- Share a password with anyone except teachers and parents or guardians
- Use the Internet to send email to other users except teachers and parents or guardians

Unacceptable uses of computers, Chromebooks, accounts, and the YSWPCS network also include:

- Violating the conditions of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act with regard to student's rights to privacy
- Using profanity, obscenity, or other language that may offend another user
- Reposting or forwarding a personal communication without the author's prior consent
- Copying commercial software in violation of copyright law
- Using the network for financial gain, commercial activity, or illegal activity
- Damaging any part of the hardware or software of the YSWPCS computer network system

System operators have access to all user accounts, including email. If any person violates the rules above, his or her use of the network will be canceled. There will be no second chances. If a user is unsure how to do something with a computer, Chromebook, account, or network, he or she should ask a teacher or the computer specialist in the school.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Students need to be acutely aware of what they post online. Social media venues are very public. Everything a person posts leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Students must not post anything they would not want friends, parents or guardians, teachers, or a future employer to see.

Students should follow the student code of conduct when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with another person's opinion; however, counter arguments should be made in a respectful way. Criticism must be constructive, not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.

Here are some guidelines for using social media safely and respectfully.

- **Be safe online. Never give out personal information**, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birth dates, school locations, locations of extracurricular activities, or pictures. **Do not share your password** with anyone except a teacher, parent, or guardian.
- Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas is recommended. However, be sure to read the entire article prior to linking to ensure that all information is appropriate for a school setting.
- **Do your own work!** Do not use other people's intellectual property without their permission. It is a violation of copyright law to copy and paste other's thoughts. When paraphrasing another's idea be sure to cite your source with the URL. It is good practice to hyperlink to your sources.
- **Be aware that pictures may also be protected under copyright law.** Verify that you have permission to use the image or it is under creative commons attribution.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- Blog and wiki posts should be well written and follow writing conventions, including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work, be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.
- If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away.
- Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or access to future access to online tools.

Please note: Students are not permitted to record and or post appropriate or inappropriate content or pictures of staff, parents or peers without their consent. This pertains to content posted during school, after school, and/or during the weekends. Any violations of this nature will result in disciplinary actions to the fullest extent, and possibly legal ramifications.

STUDENT SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATION

YSWPCS provides special education and learning services to students with disabilities. We also contract with the Allegheny County Intermediate Unit #3 for occupational, physical, and speech and language therapy.

A teacher, parent, or guardian should never hesitate to request an evaluation when a struggling student does not respond to typical classroom interventions, adaptations, and accommodations. The child may have a learning disability or other issue that we need—and want—to address. He or she may also qualify for services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

If so, a team that includes teachers, specialists, parents or guardians, and others as appropriate will develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the student. Such plans detail additional instruction and services specifically tailored to a child's needs, both inside and outside the classroom.

Instructional strategies might include using manipulatives, emphasizing visual over auditory learning, repetition, mnemonics, assistive technologies, and so on. Frequent assessments determine the effectiveness of chosen strategies and information, which are adjusted as necessary to the student's needs. In each room, individualized instruction congruent with the requirements of a student's IEP can be maintained when the special education teacher is not present.

Occupational therapy and speech and language therapy are also available for students who are identified as needing services.

See Appendix F for our “Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services & Programs.” It contains detailed information about screening and evaluation, services, educational placement, confidentiality, procedural safeguards, and modes of communication. Appendix F also contains information about our discipline policies for special education students.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Students who are learning English as a second language or who come to school with limited proficiency in English are evaluated for inclusion in our English as a Second Language Program, which provides small group instruction in grammar, vocabulary, writing, and other skills that support academic success. Instruction is coordinated with each student's regular curriculum, with an emphasis on essential communication skills that support social interaction.

MTSS

Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework that many schools, including YSWPCS, use to provide targeted support to struggling students. It focuses on the “whole child.” MTSS supports academic growth and achievement, but it also supports many other areas, including behavior, social and emotional needs, and absenteeism.

The Tiers of Support increase in intensity from one level to the next with Tier 1 receiving the general classroom support. Students in Tier 2 may receive small-group intervention; while those in Tier 3 receive one-on-one help.

The MTSS model can help general education students receive interventions sooner. It can also help identify sooner which students need special education. If you believe your student would benefit from more intensive support, please contact their homeroom teacher about referral to the MTSS team.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Through our character education program, we offer classes for building good character, bringing out the best in our students, and ensuring they acquire the basic life skills they need for life-long success. The program encourages students to take responsibility for their actions, familiarizes them with good character traits, exposes them to the World of Work and a variety of career options, and helps them develop into good citizens with high moral values.

SPECIALS

All students will receive technology, general music, art, and health or physical education classes every week. Parents and guardians will receive a schedule of classes so they know when their children need to wear or bring sneakers for gym or come prepared with the required materials for music, art, and technology.

Students in grades K-2 will attend two 40-minute periods of physical education, art, and music every 5 days. Students in grades 3-8 will attend one 40-minute period of art, music, physical education every 5 days. Students in grades K-5 will attend one 40-minute period of technology and students in grades 6-8 will attend three 40-minute periods of technology every 5 days. Subject teachers will share more details about the specific routines in their classrooms during our back-to-school events.

SCIENCE FAIR

YSWPCS intends to organize a school-wide science fair every year. Due to our high expectations from our students in science, math, and technology, all students in grades 3-8 are required to complete a group (grades 3-4) or individual (grades 5-8) research project in one of these areas if the school organizes a science fair.

A science fair handbook will be provided to the students by the YSWPCS Science Fair Committee. Every student is expected to follow the guidelines cited in the handbook.

MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT

SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED STUDENTS

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School makes every effort to identify children within the district that may be experiencing homelessness.

The term homeless children and youth is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes individuals:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings;
- Living in substandard housing (no running water or working utilities, infestations, etc.).

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children. Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance with school supplies/materials, tutoring and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin throughout the duration of their homeless episode. This includes:

- Immediate enrollment as long as other students living in the same area would be eligible to attend the school unless there is overcrowding or a specialized selection process
- Free and reduced school lunch
- Help with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help setting up transportation services (if the student qualifies)
- Help to get basic uniform clothing
- Help with basic school supplies

The Homeless Liaison may be able to provide information on community agencies that provide additional health and human services.

If you and your child are experiencing homelessness, or if your living situation changes during the school year, please be sure to contact the YSWPCS Homeless Liaison for more information and support. We will work with you so that your child(ren)'s education is disrupted as little as possible.

YSWPCS Homeless Liaison

Deborah Evans

Professional School Counselor

d.evans@youngscholars.org

412.668.2064

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

Our Extended Day Program is a privilege available to all YSWPCS students, K-8. It provides high-quality educational, vocational, recreational, and social programs, some of which are competitive in nature. Extended hours support students as they learn world languages, work to achieve their full potential in core subjects, and seek to enrich their lives with activities that match their interests and talents.

Extended Day takes place Monday through Thursday when school is in session. There are no clubs or tutoring sessions on Fridays, nor does Extended Day operate during teacher in-service days, school vacations or holidays, or other out-of-school- environment days unless organized by the teacher.

So that we can achieve the YSWPCS vision of forming global citizens who are proficient in two world languages, science, math, and use of technology, we strongly encourage every child's participation in Extended Day.

The following list is a sampling of sessions and clubs that we may offer. We encourage students to participate in Spanish and/or Turkish Club to strengthen their skills and fluency levels.

- Spanish Club, Turkish Club, and tutoring use a variety of games and activities to promote language skills.
- Math Club uses a variety of games to promote math skills and thinking strategies.
- Science Club gives students an opportunity to experience hands-on activities and experiments in the various areas of science.
- In the Arts and Crafts Club, students work with methods and materials not usually used in regular day art classes.
- Robotics Club and Coding Club are for students with an interest in computer technology. Our robotics program uses a Carnegie Mellon University curriculum to expose the students to First Lego League competitions. They learn new skills and practice those previously learned.
- Sports Club and intramurals are for those with an athletic inclination who wish to engage in sports activities.
- Reading Club involves various reading activities, such as silent reading, book sharing, dramatic expression, and so forth.
- Community Service activities teach social responsibility within the school and beyond.

Other clubs may be formed throughout the year if interested parents and guardians offer to share a skill, talent, or interest with our students.

REGISTRATION

Open registration for first trimester activities occurs in September. There is no cost for clubs or tutoring for the 2022-23 school year as grants have been received to cover the costs of supplies and snacks. Staff members, volunteers, and tutors teach Extended Day lessons and activities. Some clubs run for a set period of time, for example one trimester. Others operate the entire year.

If a preferred club is full, students will be put on a waiting list and given the opportunity to choose another club that meets their needs and interests. It is the decision of the club supervisor what an appropriate number of students is for that specific club.

All clubs and tutoring will be offered from 3:45-5:15pm

Participation in the Extended Day Program is not compulsory. However, once a child has enrolled in a club, regular attendance is mandatory to maintain enrollment. If a child misses more than three sessions, he or she will be removed from the club, refund is not guaranteed. Other students will then have an opportunity to participate. **Regular school attendance and discipline must be in good standing as well.**

SNACKS

Students are provided a light snack after school. They may also bring one from home to eat during Extended Day snack time. Snack examples include crackers, string cheese, popcorn, fruit, and juice. Since some students have severe food allergies, we ask parents and guardians to remind their children that food sharing is not allowed. Parents and guardians should also avoid sending soda or sugary snacks. See the section titled “*Wellness Policy*” above for information on healthy snack choices.

DISMISSAL

Parents and guardians may drive onto the grounds and park in the school parking lots to pick their children up from Extended Day. **All Extended Day students must be picked up in the main lobby NO LATER than 5:30 p.m.**

For the first late (5:31pm and after) pickup, parents and guardians will be issued a verbal warning and will be required to sign a late pickup document. After the second late pickup, parents and guardians will receive a written warning and will be required to sign a late pickup document. The third late pickup will result in student removal from ALL after school activities, including both tutoring and clubs. The student will not be permitted to participate in after-school activities for the remainder of the school year.

ELIGIBILITY

If a student falls below a 70% grade average for the following classes he or she will not be permitted to participate in the Extended Day Program.

- ELA
- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Science
- Turkish and/or Spanish

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The Extended Day Program is an optional program open to all students with parental permission. They

are intended to be part of the educational offerings at YSWPCS.

Our children play an important role in maintaining a positive environment. In the Extended Day Program, the schedule is more flexible and the atmosphere is very relaxed. With these privileges come responsibilities and many choices. Our hope is that our students make appropriate behavioral choices during extended hours clubs and activities. **A student is not able to participate in Extended Day if they have an outstanding after school detention or have served in ISS that particular day.**

It is important to remember that the Extended Day Program is not a childcare service. Students who demonstrate by their behavior that they do not wish to participate in clubs and disrupt the program will be unenrolled. The Extended Day Coordinator also has the authority to dismiss a student from the program at any point to ensure the safety of all students and staff. If a student is unenrolled from an after-school activity due to behavior, he or she will not be permitted to participate in clubs or tutoring for the remainder of the school year.

If an Extended Day Teacher feels that a child is not complying with school rules and behavioral expectations, it is his or her responsibility to redirect the child involved toward more appropriate behavior. This redirection may include one or several of the following steps as deemed appropriate by the extended day teacher:

- Discuss behavior with the student(s) involved
- Intervention (PBIS Approach)
- Referral to the Extended Day Coordinator or Discipline Coordinator
- Disciplinary report and/or parent-teacher conference
- Probation (Extended Day)
- Expulsion (Extended Day)

The CEO or designee can be asked to review a matter of problem behavior by an Extended Day Teacher, the Coordinator, or a student, parent, or guardian. The CEO or designee will meet with the concerned student and the Extended Day Teacher or Coordinator to obtain needed information. A decision by the CEO or designee concerning resolution of disagreement will be provided to all interested parties.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

YSWPCS staff and students value the dignity of all members of the school community at all times. We respect the rights of students to make choices and to experience the consequences of those choices. Students are taught decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills to develop their abilities to make sound decisions.

The core goal of our policy is two-fold:

- Hold students accountable for their behavior
- Help them understand that good behavior is a matter of making wise choices

To the extent that this approach is successful, children will develop into responsible citizens who understand what socially acceptable behavior is and who act accordingly because they care for each other and respect the adults who care for them.

Childhood is a period of time when individuals have imperfect impulse control. We want to encourage our students to think about their behavior and see it as a choice that carries consequences rather than rewards or punishments. **Every poor choice is followed by the option to change, and an adult may clarify the consequence for not doing so.** That way, the child retains responsibility for the outcome. Consequences are under the child's control and are self-imposed.

From that point on, the behavior tells the teacher or adult what choice was made. There is no need for scolding or verbal criticism; the consequence follows the behavior and is applied in a firm, fair, friendly manner by an adult, with encouragement to make good choices in the future.

Making amends is a way of permitting the child to maintain his or her self-esteem because, while a behavior is unacceptable and the damage must be repaired, the child is not "bad." If a student continually makes poor choices, teachers will work with the parents or guardians to help the child make better ones.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for students to achieve social, emotional, and academic success. Attention is focused on creating school-wide, classroom, and individual support systems. These systems improve lifestyle results for all students by making targeted misbehavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.

The purpose of school-wide PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. PBIS emphasizes the use of data for informing decisions about the selection, implementation, and progress-monitoring of evidence-based behavioral practices. It also organizes resources and systems to improve durable implementation fidelity.

RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

YSWPCS is focusing on maintaining a discipline plan that is fair, restorative, and consistent. **We feel that**

all students have a right to go to school in a safe environment. Each student also deserves the opportunity to learn in an atmosphere of respect, free from the influence of disruptive classmates. Students and teachers share the responsibility for creating and maintaining a respectful, safe, and stimulating learning environment. We realize that there will be times when students forget their responsibilities or are temporarily unwilling to be cooperative. For this reason, we have developed a plan of discipline that has as its goal restoring a safe and stimulating environment and restoring those who are negatively impacted by the misbehavior. **When a student is involved in a conflict with other students, a teacher, or school expectations, we view that as a situation that needs to be resolved and as a teachable moment.**

For minor incident resolution, the teacher will work toward reteaching and modeling appropriate student behavior. For major incident resolution, the involved students, staff, and community members will work with the coordinator of student discipline to determine the harm caused, what factors caused the harm, and which parties are responsible for actions taken. The tables below show a continuum of consequences that include both practices from restorative discipline and traditional discipline. All incidents will be handled on a case- by-case basis.



Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Infractions		
<p><u>Level 1 Infraction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defiance-refusal to comply with established expectations/norms • Disruptive behavior (talking out of turn, yelling, running in hallway, out of seat without permission) • Dress code violation • Inappropriate language or gestures (e.g. Name calling) • Disruptive and or unsafe behavior on bus or in lunchroom (1st offense) • Tardiness to class • Technology violation • Being in hallway or restroom without permission or pass • Acting inappropriate toward others • Food or drink in classroom or hallways • Property misuse • Possession of cellphone 	<p><u>Level 2 Infraction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated level 1 infraction • Intentional unkindness and cruelty toward peer • Profanity/vulgarity or abusive language (written or verbal) • Discriminatory language • Disrespecting staff/ talking back • Play fighting, excessive horseplay or making physical contact with another scholar • Skipping class • Tardy to class 10 mins or more • Inappropriate location, out-of-bounds area • Destruction/Defacement of school or other's property • Disruptive or unsafe behavior on bus (2nd offense) • Dishonesty • Copy work of fellow peer • Stealing • Taunting of others 	<p><u>Level 3 Infraction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated Level 2 infraction within 2 weeks • Extreme Physical Aggression • Fighting • Arson • Bomb threat, false alarm • Forgery, theft, plagiarism • Gang affiliation display • Harassment/bullying • Inappropriate display or posting on social media of peers or staff • Property damage, vandalism • Possession and use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, combustibles
Restorative Practices		
<p><u>Level 1 Restoration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-teaching and re-modeling expectations • Think sheet-written reflection • Restorative conversation between scholar and teacher 	<p><u>Level 2 Restoration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-teaching and re-modeling expectations • Think sheet- written reflection • Restorative conversation between effected individuals • Conference with the COD 	<p><u>Level 3 Restoration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-teaching and re-modeling expectations • Restorative conference includes family and COD • Intervention with counsel • Individualized instruction • Behavior contract • Crisis intervention plan
Consequences		
<p><u>Level 1 Consequence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch detention and /or loss or recess • Loss of privilege • Community service • Written/Verbal apology • Parent Contact 	<p><u>Level 2 Consequence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Contact • Community service • Loss of Privileges • After-school detention • In-school suspension • Out of school suspension 	<p><u>Level 3 Consequence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community service • Loss of privileges • Restitution • Probation contract • In school suspension • Out-of-school suspension

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE

It is YSWPCS's mission to recognize that every individual has inherent worth and protect the right of every student to safety, acceptance, learning, and success. Therefore, we have zero tolerance for drugs, weaponry, and deliberate acts of aggression or violent behavior that result in a student harming him or herself, another student, or school or personal property. This policy is applied consistently, across all grade levels. Violent behavior results in an immediate referral. **Please see Appendix G for definitions of the terms used in this section of the handbook.**

THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Threats of violence toward other students, school staff, or facilities are prohibited and may result in suspension or expulsion, regardless of whether the student has previously engaged in such conduct.

All employees and students are required to report evidence of threats of violence to the CEO or designee. Such reports will be investigated by the CEO.

In cases of threats that may constitute a serious violation of criminal law, the CEO will notify law enforcement authorities. In cases of threats that may constitute a minor violation of criminal law, the CEO has the right to notify law enforcement authorities if appropriate.

ANTI-BULLYING

It is the intention of YSWPCS, consistent with state and federal law, to strive to maintain a learning environment that is free of harassment and bullying. Harassment and bullying threaten our students' physical, mental, and emotional health, prevent them from receiving the education to which they are entitled, materially disrupt the mission of the organization, substantially interfere with our students' educational performance, and foster incidents of violence.

The content below defines harassment, bullying, and violence, specifies and describes prohibitions, outlines reporting procedures, provides for the undertaking of appropriate remedial actions calculated to stop the harassment, bullying, and/or violence, and prohibits retaliation against those who, in good faith, report harassment pursuant to this policy. **YSWPCS does recognize that students retain certain rights under state and federal law, including freedom of expression,** although such rights are not

necessarily coextensive with the rights of adults in society at large. It is not the purpose of this policy to impinge upon the legitimate rights of students or school personnel under state and federal law in the school environment.

Notice of Prohibition Against Bullying and Anti-Bullying Interventions

Bullying behavior by any student at YSWPCS is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. To the extent permitted under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, school staff are required to make a reasonable effort to notify the parents or guardians of the targeted student of the action taken to prevent further acts of bullying. Staff are also required to make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or guardian of a student who commits a verified act of intimidation, harassment, or bullying of the response of the school staff and the consequences that may result from further acts of bullying.

Any student may submit a complaint, orally or in writing, regarding harassment, intimidation, bullying, and hazing. The student may be the subject of these actions, a friend of the subject, or an observer. A student who wishes to file a complaint should follow the YSWPCS Grievance Procedure outlined in **Appendix H** below.

Retaliation against an individual who submits a complaint is prohibited. The right to confidentiality for both the complainant and the accused will be preserved whenever possible. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed at the onset of an investigation as it cannot be predicted what will be discovered or what kind of hearing will result.

If harassment or bullying continues, the alleged aggressor will be suspended and removed from the school, pending a long-term hearing. When a special education student is involved, special education procedure and protocol will be followed (see Appendix F). IEP and/or behavior management plans will also be consulted as a determinant for consequences and for interventions to address the issue.

Investigating Bullying and Other Intimidating Behavior

The CEO or designee will appropriately and promptly investigate all reports of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, the student's history, and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The following are key points to consider during the investigation process:

The CEO will make a reasonable effort to inform the parents or guardians of the victim and the accused of any formal report of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing. The CEO will inform them at that time whether or not an investigation will take place.

If an investigation does take place, it will consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint was filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incidents or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of other methods or documentation deemed relevant by the investigators.

The school may take immediate steps to protect the complainant, students, teachers,

administrators, or other school personnel pending the completion of an investigation. The investigation will be completed as quickly as possible.

The school is responsible for processing and maintaining a file of all formal incidents. The school-wide student reporting system will be utilized to track formal incidents, including bullying, harassment, intimidation, and hazing. Reports may be reviewed by school administration and may also be used to compile data regarding the extent of bullying within the school.

Consequences for Bullying

Verified acts of bullying will result in an intervention intended to ensure the prohibition against bullying behavior is enforced. Bullying behavior can take many forms. It also varies dramatically in how serious it is and what impact it has on the targeted individual and students. Accordingly, there is no single disciplinary response to bullying. Conduct that rises to the level of bullying as defined above and in Appendix G will warrant disciplinary action against the alleged aggressor of such bullying.

Consequences may include detention, in- or out-of-school suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion. Other interventions may include restorative justice, mediation, or the involvement of other programs adopted by the school to address bullying behaviors. Special education students will be subject to disciplinary action specified within their IEP or behavior management plan. The extent to which disciplinary action is imposed is at the professional discretion of the CEO or designee.

False reports of bullying behaviors will be regarded as serious offenses and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

See Appendices F: Special Education Services and Disciplinary Policies, I: Classroom and Administrative Discipline Procedures), and J: Exclusion from School) for more information on disciplinary procedures for YSWPCS, including those for bullying and other intimidating actions.

LET'S GROW TOGETHER

The YSWPCS staff, Board of Trustees, and administration look forward to a wonderful school year. With your participation and support, we expect each student to develop academically, socially, and emotionally. Our motto, composed by one of our first-year students, says it all . . .

LET'S GROW TOGETHER, GLOBALLY.

APPENDIX A: 2022–2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR



YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CHARTER SCHOOL

2022-2023 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Aug-22							Sep-22							Oct-22							
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3							1	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		5	6	7	8	9	10		3	4	5	6	7	8	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		11	12	13	14	15	16	17		9	10	11	12	13	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		18	19	20	21	22	23	24		16	17	18	19	20	
28	29	30	31					25	26	27	28	29	30			23	24	25	26	27	
																30	31				
New Staff Orientation Aug 15-16 All Staff Orientation Aug 17-26 Back to School Night Aug 25 First Day of School Aug 29							No School - Labor Day Sept. 5 Extended Day Starts Sept. 26 No School - Staff In-Service Day Sept. 23							No Students/ Parent Teacher Conferences 10am-6 pm - Oct 17 Fall Festival-Oct 21 No Students- Clerical Day- Oct 31							
3	Students					Staff	13	20						21	19						21
Nov-22							Dec-22							Jan-23							
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	
27	28	29	30					25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				
Thanksgiving Turkey Drive Nov 16-19 Community Thanksgiving Dinner Nov 22 No Students- Clerical Day Nov 23 No School- Thanksgiving Break Nov. 24-28 End of first Trimester November 23							Honor Roll Ceremony December 9 Winter Concert- December 21st Half Day School- Dec 22 No School Winter Break Dec. 23-2nd Jan							No School for Students. Staff in service- Jan 16							
18						19	16						16	20						21	
Feb-23							Mar-23							Apr-23							
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4							1	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	
26	27	28						26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	
															30						
No School, President's Day- Feb 20 Black History Month Celebration- Feb. 22 No Students Parent-Teacher Conf. February 13							No Students -Clerical Day March 3 End of 2nd Trimester March 3 No School for Students. Staff in service- March 6 New Student Lottery -March 15							No School - Spring Break - April 3- 7 PSSA ELA Test April 24-28							
18						19	21						23	15						15	
May-23							Jun-23														
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat								
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3								
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		4	5	6	7	8	9	10							
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		11	12	13	14	15	16	17							
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		18	19	20	21	22	23	24							
28	29	30	31					25	26	27	28	29	30								
PSSA Math Test May 1-5 PSSA Science Test May 8-12 No School - Staff In-Service Day May 12 No School Memorial Day May 29 Extended Day Ends May 25 No School- Clerical Day May 26							KG & 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony June 13 & 14 Half Day school for Student June 14 Last Day of School June 14 Last Day of School for staff June 15														
								Snow days June 15-16 Last Day of Staff if Snow days June 16 Total days for the staff : 200/198 Total days for the Students: 180													
														Testing School Close First/Last of Day School Staff in Service - Half Day for Students Half Day Schedule First/Last Day of Extended Day							
Please note that this calendar is subject to change.																					
>Should emergency/increment weather closings occurs; days will be added extending the school year beyond the last day of school noted in this calendar.																					
> Should three or more (days) emergency/increment weather closing occurs before spring break; days may be taken out from Spring Break to make up missing days.																					

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Family Engagement Policy (LEA and School Level)

Purpose

The Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes that parent involvement contributes to the achievement of academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents and guardians, and the community.

Authority

In compliance with federal law, YSWPCS and parents and guardians of students participating in Title I programs shall jointly develop and agree upon a written parent-involvement policy. When developing and implementing this policy, the school shall ensure the policy describes how the school will:

- Involve parents and guardians in the joint development of the school's overall Title I parent-involvement plan and the process of school review and improvement.
- Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to support in the planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- Involve parents and guardians in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of schools served under Title I. This process may include, but is not limited to:
 - Identify barriers to participation by parents and guardians who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority.
 - Use findings of annual evaluations to design strategies for more effective parent involvement.
 - Involve parents and guardians in the activities of schools served under Title I. The Board shall adopt and distribute the parent-involvement policy, which shall also be incorporated into the school's Title I plan. The policy will be evaluated annually with parent involvement.

Delegation of Responsibility The CEO or designee shall ensure that the school's Title I parent-involvement policy, plan, and programs comply with the requirements of federal law. The CEO and/or Title I staff shall provide to parents and guardians of students participating in Title I programs:

- Explanation of the reasons supporting their children's selection for the program
- Set of objectives to be addressed
- Description of the services to be provided The CEO shall ensure that information and reports provided to parents and guardians are in an understandable and uniform

format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and guardians can understand.

Guidelines An annual meeting of parents and guardians of participating Title I

students shall be held to explain the goals and purposes of the Title I program. Parents and guardians shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation, and evaluation of the parent-involvement program. Parents and guardians shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs. In addition to the required annual meeting, additional meetings for parents and guardians shall be held at various times of the morning, day, and evening. At these meetings, they shall be provided:

- Information about programs provided under Title I
- Description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet
- Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children
- Opportunities to submit comments about the program at the district level

If sufficient, Title I funding may be used to facilitate the attendance of parents and guardians at meetings through the payment of transportation and childcare costs.

Opportunities shall be provided for parents and guardians to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss their children's progress. Parents and guardians may be given guidance as to how they can assist at home in the education of their child.

School-Parent Compact The school shall jointly develop with parents and guardians of students served in the program a school-parent compact outlining the manner in which parents and guardians, teachers, staff, and students share the responsibility for improving student achievement in meeting academic standards.

The compact shall:

- Describe the school's responsibility for providing high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in the Title I program to meet the school's academic standards
- Indicate the ways in which parents and guardians will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their children's education and positive use of extracurricular time
- Address the importance of ongoing parent-teacher communication through, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents and guardians, and reasonable access to staff

School-Parent Compact

This school-parent compact has been agreed to by YSWPCS and the parents and guardians of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It outlines how parents and guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement. These parties also agree to the

means by which the school and its parents and guardians will build and develop a partnership that will help our children meet the performance standards of the state. This school-parent compact is in effect for the 2018–2019 school year.

School Responsibilities

YSWPCS will:

1. Teach necessary concepts to your children
2. Strive to be aware of the individual needs of your children
3. Regularly communicate with you on your children's progress. (reading specialist's log, Student Information System, report cards, regular progress reports)
4. Provide a safe and nurturing environment conducive to learning
5. Provide meaningful learning activities with clear directions for your children

Parent and Guardian Responsibilities

As parents and guardians, we will support our children's learning in the following ways:

1. Be involved in our children's education
2. Utilize Infinite Campus, Canvas, Classdojo, Classroom, and/or Google Classrooms
3. Read to or with our children every night
4. Promote our children's self-esteem
5. Attend parent conferences
6. Be sure that our children get enough sleep each night
7. Turn off the television and limit TV time

Student Responsibilities

As students, we will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and meet the performance standards of the state. Specifically, we will:

1. Read at least 20 minutes outside of school each day
2. Complete work on time
3. Turn in all homework assignments
4. Be responsible for our own behavior
5. Challenge ourselves

Parental Right to Know Teachers' Qualifications

YSWPCS notifies parents and guardians each school year of their right to request information on the qualifications of the teachers and paraprofessionals teaching their children. The school will also provide timely notice to parents and guardians if their child has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

APPENDIX C: YSWPCS WELLNESS POLICY

YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD WELLNESS POLICY

PREAMBLE

YSWPCS (hereto referred to as the School) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The School believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health- promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.” In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.”

This policy outlines the School’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. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the School have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the School in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The School establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.
- The School will coordinate the wellness policy with other aspects of school management, including the School’s School Improvement Plan, when appropriate.
- NOTE: Will also include any relevant data or statistics from state or local sources supporting the need for establishing and achieving the goals in this policy.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in the School.

SCHOOL WELLNESS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ROLE AND MEMBERSHIP

The School will convene a representative School wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this School-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The SWC membership 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 (ex., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (ex., health education teachers, school health services staff [i.e., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [i.e., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (ex., superintendent, CEO, COO), school board members; health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

IMPLEMENTATION

The School will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each school, and includes information about who will be responsible to make 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. It is recommended that the school use the Healthy Schools Program online tools to complete a school level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation, and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found on our website. RECORDKEEPING

The School will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the office and/or on the office computer. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit SWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups’ participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of annual policy progress reports for each school under its jurisdiction;
- Documentation of the triennial assessment* of the policy for each school under its jurisdiction; and
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made

available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

The School will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the schools within the School in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be published around the same time each year July, and will include information from each school within the School. This report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A description of each school's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- A summary of each school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated School policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the SWC. The annual report will be available in the business office.

The School will actively notify households/families of the availability of the annual report.

The SWC, will establish and monitor goals and objectives for the School's schools, specific and appropriate for each instructional unit (elementary or secondary OR elementary, middle, and high school, as appropriate), for each of the content-specific components listed in Sections III-V of this policy.

TRIENNIAL PROGRESS ASSESSMENTS

At least once every three years, the School will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the School are in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which the School's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the School's wellness policy.

The SWC, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy. The School will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

REVISIONS AND UPDATING THE POLICY

The SWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as School priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, OUTREACH, AND COMMUNICATIONS

The School is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the

wellness policy. The School will actively communicate ways in which representatives of SWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that School. The School will also 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. The School will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the School's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. The School will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the School and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

The School will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The School will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

NUTRITION

SCHOOL MEALS

Our school is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

The School participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP). School is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations. (The School offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following

Smarter Lunchroom techniques:

1. Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans)
2. Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
3. Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
4. All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names

5. Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students.
6. All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
7. White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
8. Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
9. A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.)
10. Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor, and promotional ideas
11. Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
12. Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options

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. 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.

WATER

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day*. The School will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

COMPETITIVE FOODS AND BEVERAGES

The School 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 (i.e., "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 are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks.

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* and *the extended school day** will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.

CELEBRATIONS AND REWARDS

All food offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. The School will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and from the USDA.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The School will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards; and
3. Rewards and incentives. The School will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Food and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

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*. The School will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas [*examples from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and the USDA*].

NUTRITION PROMOTION

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

The School 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 evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques; and
- Promoting foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Additional possible promotion techniques that the School and individual schools may use are available at www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

The School aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by 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;

- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

ESSENTIAL HEALTHY EATING TOPICS IN HEALTH EDUCATION

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

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate<http://www.choosemyplate.gov>
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

USDA's Team Nutrition provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu

graphics, and more.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING IN SCHOOLS

The School 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. The School strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on School property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the School is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the School to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the School's wellness policy.

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 advertising and marketing is defined as an oral, written, or graphic statement 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, Schools will consider replacing or updating scoreboards or other durable equipment over time so that decisions about the replacement include 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 the School.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests, or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities and the School is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection). All schools in the School will be encouraged to participate in *Let's Move! Active Schools* (www.letsmoveschools.org) in order to successfully address all CSPAP areas.

To the extent practicable, the School will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The School will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The School will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*” subsection).

All students will be provided an equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The School will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All School **elementary students** in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60-89 minutes per week throughout the school year.

The School physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the Presidential Youth Fitness Program or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TOPICS IN HEALTH EDUCATION

The School will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time, and type of physical activity

- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity

RECESS (ELEMENTARY)

School offers at least 30 minutes of recess on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand- sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built into the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

In the event that the school or School must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BREAKS (ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY)

The School recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The School recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The School will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

ACTIVE ACADEMICS

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The School will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and

resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The School offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. The School will encourage students to be physically active after school by clubs, physical activity in aftercare.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT

The School will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. The School will encourage this behavior by engaging in *six or more* of the activities below; including but not limited to:

- Designation of safe or preferred routes to school
- Promotional activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- Promotion of safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper
- Crossing guards are used
- Crosswalks exist on streets leading to schools
- Walking school buses are used
- Documentation of number of children walking and or biking to and from school
- Creation and distribution of maps of school environments (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE STUDENT WELLNESS

The School will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The School will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

School staff are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the School's curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the SWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The School will develop relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION AND ENGAGEMENT

The School will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the School will use electronic mechanisms (such as email or displaying notices on the School's website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

STAFF WELLNESS AND HEALTH PROMOTION

The SWC will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.

The School will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The School promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

When feasible, the School will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help School staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing School reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

APPENDIX D: TRUANCY PROCEDURES

TRUANT STUDENTS

A student is considered truant when he or she accumulates 3 or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

YSWPCS will notify parents or guardians in writing within 10 school days of the child's third unexcused absence that the child has been truant. This notice will include:

- Description of the consequence if the child becomes habitually truant
- An invitation to an Attendance Improvement Conference to create an attendance improvement plan

Meaningful attempts will be made to encourage parent participation in the conference by advance written notice and attempts to communicate via telephone. However, YSWPCS must hold the attendance-improvement conference even if the parent or guardian declines to participate or fails to attend.

YSWPCS must document the outcome of any attendance-improvement conference in a written attendance-improvement plan. YSWPCS may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled attendance-improvement conference has passed.

HABITUALLY TRUANT STUDENTS

A student becomes habitual truancy when he or she accumulates 6 or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

In cases of habitual truancy, YSWPCS

- **must** refer the child to either (1) a school-based or community-based attendance-improvement program or (2) the Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth and Families for services or possible disposition as a dependent child
- **may** file a citation against the parent or guardian of a habitually truant child in magisterial district court

The potential consequences of Habitual Truancy include:

- Fines up to \$750: Pennsylvania law states that a person convicted of habitual truancy may be fined (1) up to \$300 plus court costs for the first citation, (2) up to \$500 plus court costs for the second citation, and (3) up to \$750 plus court costs for the third and any subsequent citations
- Parents and guardians are subject to 3 days of jail time if the court finds that they willfully failed to comply with a court's decision despite having the ability to pay a fine or complete community service
- Referral to CYF for a second conviction in 3 years
- Scholars who incur 10 or more unexcused absences will not be promoted to the next grade in the following year

APPENDIX E: VOLUNTEERING AT YSWPCS

YSWPCS encourages every parent and guardian to spend time working with our teachers, contributing to our Extended Day Program, or helping with tasks that can be done at home. Our students enjoy seeing their families becoming involved with their school and spending time with them during the school day.

Volunteering for ongoing tasks, like lunch duty or Extended Day club instruction, helps us keep school running on a day-to-day basis. Contributing to short-term tasks, like organizing a holiday party or reading to a child's class, make a difference in our students' day. Parents and guardians benefit from learning more about our school environment, teachers, and staff, as well as supporting their children.

Included below are two documents that provide information about obtaining the state clearances all volunteers in Pennsylvania need to work with or near school-aged children. **YSWPCS will reimburse the costs associated with clearances if a volunteer cannot obtain them through another cost-free channel.**

Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School Information for Volunteers

Thank you for considering sharing your talents and time with the students and families of Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School. Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School welcomes and values volunteer participation in our schools. The following information will help you determine the type of clearances that you will need to volunteer in Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School.

Pennsylvania law requires all persons having direct contact with school children to obtain background checks and clearances. In the best interest of the safety and security of our students, Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School requires the submission of these clearances prior to volunteering.

Volunteer Required Documents - IMPORTANT NOTE: Volunteer clearances are NOT acceptable for employment purposes.

Clearances: Links to the state's websites are below. Please see the helpful hints next to each link. **Clearances provided must be dated within one calendar year.**

- [PA State Police Criminal Background Check](#) - Click the control number to view your results. Click the "Certification Form" link in the center of the page to view, save and print your official certificate.
- [PA Child Abuse History Certification \(electronic\)](#) - Click "Create Individual Account". The Keystone Key is a username you create. Follow the site's step-by-step instructions for creating a password. Be sure to keep a record of your Keystone Key and Password, as you will need them to access your results. You will receive an email from the site when your results are available, within 14 days of submission. Or [PA Child Abuse History Clearance \(paper form\)](#).
- [FBI Fingerprinting](#) (2 Options)

If you have been a Pennsylvania resident for the past 10 consecutive years, you may submit the Volunteer Affirmation in place of fingerprinting.

If you have been a Pennsylvania resident fewer than 10 consecutive years, you must complete the fingerprinting process. Enroll at [IdentoGo](#) and make an appointment for digital fingerprinting at a location

of your choice.

TB TEST: (Only required if you spend 10 hours or more a week with students)

Volunteer Coaches and Volunteers who spend 10 hours or more a week with students MUST submit results of a recent TB test prior to volunteering. TB tests are available through your doctor's office, a minute clinic or a local pharmacy. The TB test is a 2-day process; one day to administer the test and one day to read the results.

How often will I need to renew my clearances?

You will need to update your clearances every 5 years. What should I do once I receive my clearances? Bring originals and one copy with you to the Front Office along with your driver's license or passport. You will be given a "Volunteer" Badge when you enter the building.

Important Information:

Volunteers will not be provided with an official copy of the FBI clearances.

You are required to notify YSWPCS Front Office within seventy-two hours of any arrest or conviction of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation as a volunteer.

YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CS VOLUNTEER AFFIRMATION

A volunteer who has been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period, or who has resided in Pennsylvania for less than ten years but has obtained a Report of Federal Criminal History Record since establishing residency and provides that report to the YSWPCS, is not required to submit a current Report of Federal Criminal History Record (fingerprinting) if this Volunteer Affirmation is completed.

I, (print name) _____, would like to serve in the position of an unpaid volunteer for the YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CS. Under penalty of law, I affirm that I have either (a) been a Pennsylvania resident during the entirety of the ten-year period or (b) obtained a Report of Federal Criminal History Record since establishing residency in Pennsylvania prior to my signing this Volunteer Affirmation. I am aware that the YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CS will be relying upon this Volunteer Affirmation for the purpose of complying with Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law ("CPSL"). I further affirm that I am not disqualified from service as a school volunteer for any reason including, but not limited to, by reason of having been convicted of any of the following offenses under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Code or of an offense similar in nature under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of Pennsylvania:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children)
- A felony offense under the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding today's date
- The attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit any of the above offenses

I hereby affirm that the information contained in this Volunteer Affirmation is correct. I further affirm that in the event that I am arrested for, or convicted of, an offense that would constitute grounds for denying my further participation as a school volunteer, or if I am named as a perpetrator of child abuse, I will immediately provide the YOUNG SCHOLARS OF WESTERN PA CS with written notice of the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator of child abuse in the statewide database. I acknowledge that providing false information and/or willfully failing to disclose information as required by law constitutes a crime.

Signature of Volunteer

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

APPENDIX F: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

The following document is YSWPCS's annual notice of special education services, programs, and rights for the 2022–2023 school year.

The number one goal of YSWPCS is to help each and every student reach his or her full potential. This includes, of course, our students with special needs.

Parents and guardians are often the first to recognize signs of learning disabilities and other difficulties their children face. **If you are interested in special education services for your child, please review this notice carefully, and then contact the school with questions, concerns, or a request for an evaluation.**

Information about our discipline policies for special education students is included after the public notice.

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES & PROGRAMS

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who need special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The IDEA requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents in newspapers or other media before any major identification location or evaluation activity. The IDEA requires this notice to contain certain information. Pennsylvania law requires each school district to fulfill this notice requirement by providing an annual public notice.

YSWPCS is required by the IDEA to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. Pennsylvania has adopted state laws which conform with the IDEA and which school districts must follow. In Pennsylvania school age children with disabilities who need special education related services are identified as a child with a disability. Students are exceptional if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following 13 physical or mental disability categories listed in IDEA:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Serious Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability

- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment/Blindness

In Pennsylvania, students also qualify as exceptional if they require specially designed instruction and are determined to be mentally gifted.

The IDEA requires the provisions of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners. In Pennsylvania, a child between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners who has a development delay or one or more of the physical or mental disabilities listed above is identified as a child with a disability.

These children are afforded the rights of school age exceptional children, including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provisions of appropriate programs and services. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to these children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act.

Screening

Each school district must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities, which include but are not limited to: review of group-based data (cumulative record, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded class, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening.

In schools, which have an Instructional Support Team (IST) or child study team or Response to Intervention (RTI), the above screening activities may be a consideration by these teams as another level of screening. Parents and members of the professional staff of the student's school have the right to request screening by the IST or child study team.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted in the student's home school unless other arrangements are necessary. For more information, contact:

CEO

Young Scholars of Western PA CS
600 Newport Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Tel: 412 668 2064 Fax: 412 668 2068

Evaluation

When screening indicates that a student may be exceptional, YSWPCS will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. "Evaluation" means procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that meet the child's needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is called a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which must include a school psychologist, a teacher and the parents. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and use procedural safeguard procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation may not be racially and culturally biased.

The MDE process results in a written evaluation report called an (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. The evaluation report also makes recommendations for educational programming regardless of whether or not the team recommends that the student is exceptional. Once parental consent for an evaluation is obtained YSWPCS has timelines and procedures specifies by law, which it must follow.

Parents who think their child is a child with a disability may request, at any time, that YSWPCS conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the Coordinator of Special Services. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation YSWPCS shall provide the parent with a form for written permission. Instructional Support (IS) activities or RTI do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request, at any time, including prior to or during the provision of instructional support activities, a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation. YSWPCS must provide to parents, on request, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained.

Educational Placement

The determination of whether or not the student is exceptional is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is exceptional. The IEP team must include a district representative, the student's teacher, special education teacher and the parents. If the student is determined to be exceptional an IEP will be developed.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, and objectives, and the individual programs and services, which the student will receive. IEP's are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students and therefore be protected by other federal

and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. YSWPCS must ensure that protected handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student.

In compliance with state and federal law, YSWPCS will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aides, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for protected handicapped students are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

YSWPCS or parents may initiate an evaluation of a student under the laws, which protect handicapped students. Parents who wish to have a child evaluated should contact the CEO or the Office of Special Services.

Confidentiality

Each school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its exceptional and protected handicapped students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws..

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school CEO (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The CEO will arrange access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of a student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the school CEO (or appropriate school official). Clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by YSWPCS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Washington, DC 20202-4605

YSWPCS maintains its education records in compliance with the guidelines for the collection, maintenance and dissemination of pupil records. Category "A" data which includes the minimal personal data necessary for operation of YSWPCS will be maintained for a minimum time period of 100 years. Category "B" data which includes verified information of clear importance, but not absolutely necessary to the school, over time, in helping the child or in protecting others will be maintained until the child leaves school. Category "C" data which includes potentially useful information, but not yet verified or clearly needed beyond the immediate present will be reviewed at least once a year and destroyed as soon as its usefulness has ended.

In addition, YSWPCS may release "directory information" without parental consent unless a prior written objection to the release of such information is provided to YSWPCS by the parent(s). "Directory information" includes the following: student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, photographs, videotapes, major fields of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, duties of attendance, honors and awards received. If you object to the disclosure of this information, you must submit a written letter of objection to YSWPCS on or before the end of September. Written objections should be mailed to:

CEO
Young Scholars of Western PA CS
600 Newport Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Tel: 412 668 2064 Fax: 412 668 2068

Procedural Safeguards

Procedural safeguards protect the rights of parents and students. These safeguards include the following:

Parent's consent is always required prior to:

1. Conducting an initial (for the first time) evaluation or a reevaluation.
2. Initially placing a child with a disability in a special education program.
3. Disclosing to unauthorized persons personally identifiable information.

YSWPCS must notify parents in writing whenever it wants to begin, change, or discontinue special education and related services. Along with this notification, YSWPCS will provide the parents with a comprehensive, written description of their rights.

Parents who disagree with such actions proposed or refused by YSWPCS have the right to request a hearing by an impartial third party using a procedure called due process. School districts also have the right to initiate due process in certain situations. During a due process procedure, a student must remain in the last agreed upon educational placement (a status called pendency). Due process procedures are governed by timelines and procedures in Pennsylvania law.

Due process usually begins with a pre-hearing conference between YSWPCS and the parents, although either party may waive the right to a pre-hearing conference. Throughout due process, any person, including an attorney, may represent parents. If a pre-hearing conference does not resolve the dispute, the parent may request an impartial due process hearing with an independent hearing officer. Due process hearings are oral personal hearings and are open to the public, unless the parents request a closed hearing. The decision of the hearing officer shall include finding of fact, a discussion, and conclusions of law. The decision of the hearing officer may be appealed to the appropriate court.

Pennsylvania has also made mediation services available throughout the Commonwealth at Commonwealth expense. Mediation services help parents and agencies involved in a dispute over special education to attempt to reach a mutually agreeable settlement with the assistance of an impartial mediator. Mediation does not deny or delay a party's right to a due process hearing.

Each school district must make available, upon request, printed information regarding special education programs and services and parent due process rights. This printed information is available from each building principle and the Office of Special Services.

Mode of Communication

The content of this notice has been written in straight forward, simple language. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania CS and request an explanation.

The Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania CS will arrange for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania CS will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normality used by the parent (e.g. sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

For further information contact: Director of Special Services
 Young Scholars of Western PA CS
 600 Newport Drive
 Pittsburgh, PA 15234
 Tel: 412 668 2064 Fax: 412 668 2068

Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania CS will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or any other legally protected classification. Announcements of this policy are in accordance with the state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1966, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information regarding grievance procedures, services, activities, programs and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons or, for inquiries regarding compliance with the above nondiscriminatory policies, please contact:

CEO
 Young Scholars of Western PA CS
 600 Newport Drive
 Pittsburgh, PA 15234
 Tel: 412 668 2064 Fax: 412 668 2068

Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania CS will make reasonable accommodations to its programs and services to assure access to all persons. If, because of a disability, you require an accommodation please contact the Superintendent of Schools, Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator,

Young Scholars of Western PA CS
 600 Newport Drive
 Pittsburgh, PA 15234
 Tel: 412 668 2064 Fax: 412 668 2068

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES YSWPCS must complete the following steps for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Service Agreement if any of the following are being considered:

- Suspension for more than 10 consecutive days
- Expulsion referral

A team must convene a manifest determination meeting within 24 hours of the misconduct and invite the student's parents or guardians to attend.

The team must provide written notice to the parents or guardians of the recommended disciplinary action and the date and time of the meeting.

During the manifest determination meeting, the IEP team will review the student's most current evaluation, IEP, and placement to determine if the referred misconduct is related to the student's disability. Two questions are to be answered by the school team at this meeting:

- Is the conduct caused by or did it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?
- Was the conduct in question a direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP?

If the school team determines that the student's behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, school officials may apply the student code of conduct as encapsulated in the *YSWPCS Parent-Student Handbook*. In no event, however, may the student be suspended without YSWPCS providing appropriate educational services for more than 5 consecutive or 15 cumulative school days in a school year.

A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement must be issued with the results of this determination and a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice must be given to the student's parents or guardians. **If parents or guardians disagree with the team's decision, they can request an expedited Special Education Hearing and a state-appointed hearing officer will review the manifest determination.**

If necessary, the IEP team will review and revise the existing behavior intervention plan or, as necessary, complete a functional behavior assessment and intervention plan to address the misconduct.

The IEP team will also determine the appropriateness of an interim alternative educational setting, as indicated; include the services modifications in the IEP that will enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum; and help prevent the problem behavior from recurring.

If the student's behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, the student's placement may be changed if:

- The student carried a dangerous weapon to school or a school function
- The student knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function
- The student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function

In these special circumstances, over parent or guardian objections, school officials may remove the student by issuing a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement to an interim alternative education setting for not more than 45 days.

Alternative placement may be considered in the manifest determination meeting if the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the conduct is not a "special circumstance," and the student is substantially likely to cause injury to self or others if maintained in the current placement.

Students with disabilities, even if expelled, must be provided with educational services per their Free and Appropriate Public Education right.

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY OF TERMS - BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT

Bullying - An intentional act or series of acts directed at another student or students that (1) occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, (2) is committed in written, verbal, physical, and/or electronic form (3) is severe, persistent, or pervasive, and (4) has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with a student's education
- Creating a threatening environment
- Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Examples of bullying include:

- Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm
- Damaging, extorting, or taking a student's personal property
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities
- Perpetual conduct by an individual or group with the intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or incite a student

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying - An intentional act or series of acts directed at another student or students that (1) occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, (2) uses computers, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, and/or electronic devices, (3) is severe, persistent, or pervasive, and (4) has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with a student's education
- Creating a threatening environment
- Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Examples of cyberbullying include sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings (including blogs).

All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process, offenders shall be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include legal and/or criminal proceedings.

Harassment - Knowingly pursuing a pattern of conduct that is intended to threaten, alarm, or terrorize another person. Disability harassment is defined as intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on his or her disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying the student's participation in, or receipt of, benefits services or school opportunities.

Harassment and disability harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal acts, teasing, inappropriate use of sarcasm, or demeaning jokes

- Name-calling, belittling
- Nonverbal behavior such as graphic or written statements
- Conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating
- Inappropriate physical restraint by adults

Racial harassment - Physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic opportunities or physical, emotional, and/or psychological well being

Sexual orientation harassment/homophobic bullying - Physical, verbal, or electronic communication or gestures relating to an individual's sexual orientation when the conduct is intended to threaten, alarm, or terrorize the person.

Sexual harassment - Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment could take place under any of the following circumstances:

- When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of obtaining an education
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct or communication by an individual is used to factor decisions affecting that individual's education
- The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment

Hazing - Committing an act against a student or a group of students, or coercing a student or a group of students into committing an act, that creates a risk of harm to a person. This includes initiation practices connected with student organizations. This also applies to any and all gang imitation activities or practices.

Hazing includes but is not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body
- Physical activities that subject the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics, and so forth
- Any activity involving the consumption of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
- Any activity that:
 - Intimidates or threatens a student with ostracism

- Subjects the student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame, or humiliation
- Adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student
- Discourages a student from remaining in school
- Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves a violation of state or federal law or school policies

APPENDIX H: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any complaints regarding forms of harassment, discrimination, or violation of federal law pertaining to civil rights matters should be addressed through the following procedure.

Step 1: Meeting at the building level

Complainants may try to resolve problems promptly through informal dispute resolution with the person immediately involved. If this is not possible, or if the result is unsatisfactory, the complainant will meet informally with the CEO or designee. The administrator will investigate and reply to the complainant verbally or in writing, as the complainant prefers, within 5 business days of the initial meeting.

Step 2: Written complaint

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved through Step 1, the complainant may file a written grievance with the CEO within 10 business days of disposition at Step 1.

- The written complaint must include:
- A clear statement of the alleged violation
- The remedy sought by the complainant
- The complainant's signature and date

The CEO will conduct a full investigation of the grievance and will prepare a written report of the investigation that will include:

- A clear statement of the allegations of the grievant and remedy sought
- A statement of the facts as contended by each party
- A statement of the facts as found by the CEO and evidence to support each fact
- A list of witnesses interviewed and documents reviewed during the investigation
- A narrative describing attempts to resolve the grievance, if valid

If the CEO believes the grievance is valid, he or she will recommend appropriate action to the YSWPCS Board of Trustees.

The report must be filed with the board within 15 days of receipt of the written grievance. A copy of the report must also be provided to the complainant.

The board will make necessary findings based on the investigation and report of the CEO. If the grievance is valid, the board may accept the CEO's recommendations at their discretion.

Any and all recommendations of the board will be implemented by the school immediately. A copy of the board's findings and/or recommendations will be provided to the complainant.

Step 3: Appeal

At any stage in this grievance procedure, the complainant has the right to file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Philadelphia Office, 100 Penn Square East, Suite 515, Philadelphia, PA, 19107-3323.

APPENDIX I: GLOSSARY OF TERMS DISCIPLINE

After-school detention—The requirement of a student to attend after-school detention with the Discipline Coordinator or designee for the required number of days according to the offense. Detention runs 3:50–5:15 p.m. and may not be missed for any reason. Prearranged after-school activities, doctor’s appointments, or a job are not considered acceptable reasons to miss detention. Missing detention or arriving late will result in further disciplinary action.

Before-school detention—The requirement of a student to attend before-school detention with the Discipline Coordinator or designee for the required number of days according to the offense. Detention runs 7:30–8:10 a.m. and may not be missed for any reason. Prearranged before-school activities, doctor’s appointments, or a job are not considered acceptable reasons to miss detention. Missing detention or arriving late will result in further disciplinary action.

Behavior contract—Simple positive-reinforcement intervention. The behavior contract spells out in detail the expectations of the student, teacher, and sometimes parents or guardians in carrying out the intervention plan.

Community service—Consequence of involvement in community-service activities or projects to be completed before, during, or after school.

Conference with student—Consequence of a student meeting with an administrator, teacher, and/or parent or guardian in any combination.

Crisis intervention plan—A plan developed for supporting a child at times when he or she may be at risk of harm to self or others, especially as related to mental health or behavioral health needs.

Dangerous weapon—A weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance used for, or readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury. In the case of a jackknife, blades less than 2.5 inches in length are not considered dangerous weapons. A multi-tool containing a blade or cutting device is deemed a dangerous weapon.

Family group conference—A mediated formal meeting between family members and school officials regarding the care and protection or incidents of a student.

In-school suspension—The requirement of a student to spend the day with the Discipline Coordinator or designee until 3:24 p.m. or for as many days as it takes for the student to prove that he or she is prepared to return to class. Assignments from teachers will be brought to the student, who is expected to be on task. The student will work on his or her assignment during the time in which that class is held.

- No student may receive an in-school suspension without being informed of the reasons for the suspension or given the opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- Communication to the student’s parents or guardians will follow the suspension action taken by the school.
- When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the CEO or designee will be offered to the student and the student’s parents or guardians prior to school day 11, in accordance with the procedures in 22 Pa. Code § 12.8.

- The student's school district has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

Individualized instruction—Consequence in which a student receives individualized instruction specifically related to his or her problem behaviors.

Loss of privilege—Consequence in which a student is unable to participate in some type of privilege.

Lunch detention—The student eats lunch in the office of the Discipline Coordinator or designee.

Out-of-school suspension—A student's temporary loss of the right to attend school or set foot on school grounds. The set period of time is determined by the Discipline Coordinator or designee according to the level of offense. The student may not return from suspension without his or her parents or guardians.

Parent contact—Communication with parents and guardians by phone, email, or person-to-person meeting about a student's problem behavior.

Probation contract—A student is denied attendance at after-school clubs, field trips, and other school events for a specified time or until the problem behavior improves.

Restitution—Apologizing or compensating for loss, damage, or injury or performing community service (see definition above).

Short-term suspension—The removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of fewer than 10 days.

Reflection sheet—A document that allows a student to reflect on his or her problem behaviors, how those behaviors affect others, and how they could change in future situations.

Victim-offender conferencing—A process that provides victims and offenders to meet in a safe, structured setting and engage in a mediated discussion.

APPENDIX J: CLASSROOM AND ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESSES

HANDLING DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

YSWPCS complies with state and federal regulations related to student discipline. At YSWPCS, teachers lead the way in maintaining orderly classrooms, administering PBIS, engaging in restorative discipline, and initiating traditional disciplinary actions.

Teachers:

- Cooperatively establish, review, and enforce classroom and building rules
- Recognize and encourage students' positive behavior at all times
- Develop alternative approaches to dealing with a child's behavior by analyzing root causes and the effectiveness of previous approaches
- Apply logical and natural consequences for problem behaviors
- Communicate continually with staff, students, and parents and guardians
- Monitor, evaluate, and, as needed, revise behavior plans

Teachers will discuss specific school procedures in detail with their students during the first week of school. Students will also learn about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in school and society during their character education classes.

Please see Appendix F for specific information about how YSWPCS handles discipline issues with special needs students.

APPENDIX K: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion.

YSWPCS complies with state and federal regulations related to student discipline, including exclusion from school. The procedures described here are based on the Pennsylvania Code, Title 22. References are provided.

In all disciplinary matters, students have the opportunity to present their version of the facts and circumstances leading to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions to the professional staff member imposing such sanctions. **A student may be suspended from instruction only after his or her rights to due process, described below, have been observed.**

SUSPENSION

Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of 1–10 consecutive school days.

Suspensions may be given by the CEO or designee.

No student will be suspended until he or she has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.

Parents or guardians and the superintendent of the district will be notified immediately in writing when a student is suspended. The administration reserves the right to require an in-person parent meeting (re-entry meeting) prior to the student returning to school after a suspension.

When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parents or guardians will be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements set forth in 22 Pa. Code § 12.8(c).

Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10-school day period.

Students are responsible for making up exams and classwork missed during a suspension. They will be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the Board of Trustees.

Informal Hearing

The purpose of an informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents or guardians to meet with the CEO or designee to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The following due process requirements are to be observed in regard to the informal hearing:

- Notification of the reasons for the suspension will be given in writing to the parents or guardian and student
- Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing will be given

- A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing
- A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his or her own behalf
- The district will offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension

EXPULSION

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the board of education for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls.

Most expulsions require a prior formal hearing under 22 Pa. Code § 12.8 (see “Formal Hearing” immediately below). However, if an informal hearing determines that a student’s presence in school constitutes a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days unless the formal hearing is unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded will be provided with alternative education which may include home study.

During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student will be placed in his or her normal classes except as set forth in subsection 22 Pa. Code § 12.6(d).

Students who are less than 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and they must be provided an education.

The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student’s parents or guardians through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district’s superintendent.

If the parents or guardians are unable to provide for the required education, they must submit to the school district written evidence so stating within 30 days. The district then has the responsibility to make a provision for the student’s education.

If 30 days pass without the district receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it must recontact the parents or guardians and, pending the parents’ or guardians’ provision of such education, make a provision for the student’s education, proceed under 22 Pa. Code § 12.6(e)(3), or do both.

If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school district may act in accordance with Chapter 63 of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act of 2008 to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See 22 Pa. Code § 12.1(b).

Formal Hearing

Access to K-12 public education is a statutory right for all school-aged children in the state of Pennsylvania. Therefore, when a student is to be excluded from school, he or she must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process (see below).

In every case involving possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing, which is itself an element of due process. At our school, this hearing may be held before the YSWPCS Board of Trustees, an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board.

Where the hearing is conducted by a committee of the board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire Board of Trustees is required to expel the student.

The following due process requirements are to be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

1. Notification of the charges will be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing will be given.
3. The hearing will be held in private unless the student or a parent or guardian requests a public hearing.
4. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
5. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
6. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person to answer questions or be cross-examined.
7. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his or her own behalf.
8. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
9. The proceeding must be held with all reasonable speed.

Where a student disagrees with the results of the hearing, he or she should seek recourse in the appropriate court of the Commonwealth.

If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may file a claim for relief in the appropriate federal district court.

DUE PROCESS

The Discipline Coordinator may impose short-term or long-term suspensions consistent with the provisions of this handbook. The student will be told the reason for the disciplinary action and given the opportunity to present his or her version of the events. In addition, if the suspension contemplated is longer than 10 school days, the student will have the right to present witnesses on his or her behalf.

In the event that a suspension is implemented, the school will notify the parents or guardians by phone of the incident and the terms of the suspension. A formal written notice specifying the offenses and the terms of the suspension will be sent to the student's last-known address via express mail within 24 hours. A student suspended from school may only return to school when accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who may be designated.

A student may appeal his or her suspension to the YSWPCS Board of Trustees. The board will convene a hearing at the earliest possible date. The board will give the student the opportunity to present his or her appeal and may ask questions of the student. The board will respond to the student appeal within 48 hours. The board may, by majority vote, overturn or modify the decision of the CEO or designee.

Only the Board of Trustees may expel a student. Upon the recommendation of the Discipline Coordinator, the board will convene an expulsion hearing. The student will be given a written statement of the charges and will have the opportunity to present his or her case to the board, call witnesses, and have representation present. The student will also receive a list of community agencies and free legal

assistance that may be available.

The board's decision will be recorded in writing and sent to the student's last-known address within 48 hours of the hearing. Notices and conferences will be conducted in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the student's parents or guardians.

Discipline for Students with Special Needs

Please see Appendix F for information about how YSWPCS handles discipline issues with special needs students.

CHROMEBOOK USE AGREEMENT

All users must also sign the following agreement before a Chromebook can be issued.

YSWPCS Chromebook Use Agreement

- I will take good care of my Chromebook
- I will never leave my Chromebook unattended
- I will never loan my Chromebook to other individuals
- I will not take my Chromebook to the restroom
- I will know where my Chromebook is at all times
- I will make sure my Chromebook is charged daily
- I will keep food and beverages away from my Chromebook because they may damage it
- I will not disassemble any part of my Chromebook or attempt any repairs
- I will protect my Chromebook by carrying it carefully
- I will use my Chromebook in ways that are educational and meet YSWPCS expectations
- I will not decorate my Chromebook (apply stickers, markings, etc.) or deface the serial number or YSWPCS tag
- I understand that my Chromebook is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of YSWPCS
- I will have my parents or guardians file a police report in case of theft, vandalism, or other acts
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse
- If my Chromebook is intentionally broken, my family will be responsible for covering the associated expenses (\$100 for screen repair, \$200 for full replacement)
- I will not explore or display inappropriate content on my chromebook.