

Family Handbook

2016-2017

Current as of August 4, 2016



Excel Academy

Public Charter School

2501 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20020

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Dana Bogle, Principal

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Excel Academy Creed



I am a **scholar** because I love **learning**.

I am **college-bound** because I **work hard**.

I am **proud** because I am a **girl**.

I am a **leader** because I have a **voice**.

I am **successful** because I **dream** big.

We are **strong** because we are **sisters**.

We **determine** our **destiny**.

We will **change** the **world**.

We will **EXCEL!**

Educate. Empower. EXCEL!

EXCEL ACADEMY PCS

Our Mission

The mission for Excel Academy Public Charter School is to provide pre-school through eighth grade girls a solid academic foundation and enrichment opportunities to prepare them to succeed in high school and college and to develop the skills and confidence they need to make healthy, positive lifestyle choices.



Our Vision

Excel Academy's founders and staff believe that with strong support and training, all students can learn and achieve at high levels. Excel Academy offers a unique single sex educational model in the elementary school years for female students in the District. Based on an early educational intervention model that offers preschool for three-year-olds to promote school readiness, Excel implements a curriculum proven to build student achievement in reading, writing, math, and teach ethics, personal responsibility and healthy choices. We use early and frequent assessments to gauge students' progress and identify academic needs for classrooms and individual students, and respond to the data such assessments provide with immediacy. We hire highly skilled teachers and have ongoing professional development to create and maintain a community of respect and collaboration with our staff and parents. We embrace students' parents and guardians as essential partners in their student's education, and we will reach out to families and the wider community to support Excel Academy's girls.

IDEALS

***I*ntegrity** - We are honest; we do what's right; and we refuse to compromise our values.

***D*iscipline** - We have self-control, and we make good choices.

***E*njoyment** - We bring joy to our learning, our school, and our community.

***A*chievement** - We work hard to exceed our goals.

***L*eadership** - We are influential, and we show the way.

***S*isterhood** - We are united. We rise and fall together.



DISCLAIMER

It is expected that all staff members, parents/guardians, and community members will exercise sound judgment in their actions and act in the best interest of all students at all times with total attention to the safety and welfare of everyone in the building.

It is understood that by receiving this handbook and being enrolled at Excel Academy PCS, that all parents/guardians understand the expectations for all the policies and procedures listed in this guide. It is not possible to list everything that we might encounter, but it is expected that all staff, parents/guardians, and community members will support and follow all school-wide decisions, policies, and procedures set at any time. All decisions, policies, and procedures will ALWAYS be in the best interest of all students at Excel Academy PCS.

Honor Code

As an Excel Academy scholar, I pledge to demonstrate academic integrity at all times. I understand that ALL forms of cheating violate the Excel Academy Honor Code and compromise my learning community.

Cheating: Cheating is defined as the act of giving unauthorized assistance to or receiving unauthorized assistance from another individual for the purpose of completing tests, homework, or other class assignments. Cheating includes, but not limited to, the following:

Cheating:

- 1) Giving questions or answers to scholars in your class or in another class.
- 2) Receiving questions or answers from scholars in your class or another class.
- 3) Copying another scholar's answers.
- 4) Possessing or using cheat-sheets in any form.
- 5) Leaving books or notes open on your desk or around your desk.
- 6) Obtaining a copy of the test before it is administered.
- 7) Talking or using signs or gestures during an assessment.
- 8) Using cell phones or other forms of technology to communicate information to another scholar or obtain information from another student.
- 9) Using calculators in a manner that has not been approved by a teacher.
- 10) Deliberately missing a class or being tardy for a class to avoid taking a test.

Consequences of Violating the Honor Code:

If a scholar violates the Honor Code, she will be subject to consequences that include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- 1) A grade of zero will be given for the assignment or assessment.
- 2) The teacher will document the violation in writing and include in the scholar's academic record.
- 3) The scholar may receive consequences including lunch, recess, or after school detention, in-school or out-of-school suspensions or other action deemed necessary by the teacher or administration.
- 4) The teacher and/or administrator will contact parents.
- 5) The scholar may be denied permission to participate in Community Circle and/or school field trips.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Office Hours - 7:00am - 5:00pm

Academic Day – 8:30am – 3:30pm

Office: 202.373.0097 | Fax: 202.373.0477

www.EXCELPcs.org

Grades: Pre-K3 – Kindergarten (Early Childhood)

- *Avril Crooks, Assistant Principal*

Grades: 1st – 4th (Elementary School)

- *Tara Warrington, Assistant Principal*

Grades: 5th – 8th (Middle School)

- *Elizabeth Schoenberger, Assistant Principal*



Before and After School

The major goals of the Before Care and After School Program include: improving student outcomes, engaging scholars in enrichment activities and providing a balanced meal to support scholars' healthy growth and development.

The Before Care Program will begin at 7:00 am and end at 8:00 am, in time for scholars to report to their classrooms and have breakfast. The cost for Before Care Program is \$50 per month. All scholars must be walked into the building and signed-in to Before Care Program. Please do not let your scholar walk into the building alone.

The Excel Academy After School Program is a high-quality, structured environment that provides scholars with an opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment and academically focused activities. In the After School Program scholars will eat a healthy supper, complete homework and independent reading, and participate in a variety of enrichment activities. ***The After School Program will begin at 3:30pm and will end at 6:00pm, this program will only be for scholars in PK3 – 4th Grades. The cost is \$150 per month. (Scholars in grades 5th – 8th, may participate in school clubs, after school. Materials fee may apply.)*** Any scholar not picked up by 6:00pm will have a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. After 30 minutes, Excel reserves the right to call the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) if no contact can be made with parents or guardians. We do have discounts available for parents with multiple scholars attending Excel Academy. Payments must be submitted in the form of a money order or cashier's check made out to Excel Academy. All payments should be made at the beginning of each month; by the first Friday of the month payments should be submitted. There will be a payment schedule distributed to all parents and families who register for the Before and After School Programs. Please remember to write your scholar's name on the money order or cashier's check so it may be attributed to the correct person.

School Start

Arrival procedures begin promptly at 8:00am. Breakfast is served between 8:00am - 8:30am. Parents and guardians are asked to drop off their scholars at the school entrance and allow them to transition inside independently. During morning arrival, parents will not be permitted to enter their scholars' classrooms to facilitate a timely and smooth start of the school day.

Dismissal

Excel's academic day ends at 3:30pm for all scholars. Please make arrangements for your scholar to be picked up on time. Scholars will only be released to adults who appear on the pickup list and who can present a photo ID.

Regular School Attendance

Regular school attendance is the most critical variable in ensuring academic success. Attendance information is reviewed daily, and routine meetings will be held with parents whose children are frequently absent. Scholars with excessive tardies and absences may be recommended for grade retention, potential referral to Child and Family Services Association (CFSA) for Educational Neglect, and/or possible withdrawal.

Late Pick-up Policy

It is imperative that scholars be picked up at 3:30pm. Any scholar who is not picked up by 3:45pm will be taken to the designated late pickup area and charged a late pickup fee of \$1 per minute.

**The school is required to report any scholar who is picked up late more than (3) times within a two-week window.*

Pick-up List Policy

Excel Academy teachers and staff will not remove custodial parents from the pickup list without written legal documentation. All family disputes should be handled outside of school.

Attendance, Tardiness, and Early Dismissal Policies

In order for students to reach for their academic and personal best, they must show up and put forth their best effort at school **each and every day**. At Excel Academy, regular attendance is required. Our curriculum is rigorous and requires students to fully participate every day to keep pace. Parents are responsible for getting their child to school on time, every day.

To improve student attendance, families should:



- Schedule appointments before and after school. When this is not possible, vary the times appointments are made so the same class is not missed each time. You may confer with your child's teacher in advance.
- Avoid scheduling family trips during the school year.
- Establish a routine to arrive at school and be prepared to begin the day on time.

Excused Absences:

- Illness: Excel Academy will accept a parent note for the first 3 days of absence due to illness. After three days of consecutive absences, a doctor's note is required that specifies the days missed and the cause for the absences in order for the absences to be excused.
- Medical or dental appointments
- Necessity for student to attend judicial or administrative proceedings under subpoena
- Religious Holidays
- Parent note indicating there is a family emergency (may include; funerals, hospitalization of family members, etc.) Approval from administration required.
(We will anticipate students will return to school as soon as the emergency is resolved.)
- Court documents mandating a court appearance

Unexcused Absences:

- Oversleeping | - Inclement weather that does not close the school
- Transportation Issues | - Family Vacations
- Shopping and Hair Appointments | - Baby-sitting

Student Attendance/Tardy Policy: Excel Academy takes student attendance extremely seriously. Excel Academy's school day begins promptly at 8:30am. Any scholar that arrives to school after 8:30 am will be marked tardy. Scholars who arrive after 10:00am will receive an unexcused absence. Teachers will work closely with their campus dean to address any attendance issues very early, so they do not become significant problems. The following steps will be taken to minimize attendance issues:

Attendance Rubric

Parent/Guardian must sign out anytime student leaves school grounds prior to normal dismissal time.

	<i>1st - 4th Tardy (arrival after 8:30am)</i>	<i>5th - 9th Tardy</i>	<i>10th - 14th Tardy</i>	<i>15th or more Tardy</i>
<i>Tardy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Letter of Concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Letter of Warning • Parent Coordinator makes parent contact for support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Required Attendance Meeting with parent/guardian/attendance clerk and Parent Coordinator • Initiate Attendance SST • CFSA is contacted
	<i>1st - 4th Excused Absence</i>	<i>5th - 9th Excused Absence</i>	<i>10th - 14th Excused Absence</i>	<i>15th + Excused Absence (Truancy)</i>
<i>Excused Absences</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Excused absence slip/note from parent/guardian for reason of absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Excused absence slip from parent/guardian for reason of absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Letter of Concern • Parent Coordinator makes parent contact for support • Excused absence slip from parent/guardian for reason of absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Letter of Concern #2 • Required Attendance Meeting with parent/guardian/Attendance Clerk and Parent Coordinator • Initiate Attendance SST • Attendance Contract or Chronic Illness form signed, if applicable
	<i>1st Unexcused Absence</i>	<i>3rd Unexcused Absence</i>	<i>5th + Unexcused Absence</i>	<i>10th + Unexcused Absence (Truancy)</i>
<i>Unexcused Absence</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Letter of Warning #1 • Parent/guardian/Parent Coordinator Meeting scheduled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call to • Letter of Warning #2 • Required Attendance Meeting with parent/guardian/Attendance Clerk and Parent Coordinator • Initiate Attendance SST • Attendance Contract signed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robo call • Required Attendance Meeting with parent/guardian/Attendance Clerk and Parent Coordinator • CFSA is contacted • OSSE is contacted • Metropolitan Police Department is contacted and every 10 thereafter, with written notification to the parent.

Dismissal Procedures

Scholars will be dismissed from designated locations at the campus dismissal times. All parents and guardians must present a picture ID to the classroom teacher to sign out their child.

- Students will only be released to a guardian or designee listed on the Student Release Authorization Form.
- Families wishing to add names to the Student Release form must do so in advance in the main office by completing a form.
- Middle School scholars may be dismissed independently with parent/guardian permission.

Early Dismissals: Excel Academy's school day ends at 3:30pm. In order to minimize disruptions in instruction, we ask that parents wait until the end of the day to pick-up scholars. Students with early dismissal miss valuable instructional time and interrupt the schedule of our community. Frequent early dismissals will result in administrative follow-up. If a parent needs to pick up a student prior to 3:30pm, we are asking that we be informed by 12:00pm so we will have students ready for an early release. It is disruptive to remove students during 3:00pm - 3:30pm, as this is the wrap-up and dismissal time. We will not permit early releases after 3:00pm, unless there is an emergency

Truancy

Truancy Defined

Truancy is the willful absence from school by a minor (5–18 years of age) with or without parental approval, knowledge, or consent.

A truant is a minor (5–18 years of age) who, without a valid reason and with or without parental knowledge or consent, does not attend school. A truant is defined as any student who accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences in one school year. Students between the ages of 14 and 18 who accumulate 15 or more absences will be referred to DC Court Services for truancy. Students under the age of 14 will be reported to CFSA, per District of Columbia policy.

Truancy Enforcement

All uniformed law enforcement officers in the District are responsible for truancy enforcement.

- If the police pick up a truant, she will be transported in a police vehicle to the school.
- Parents/guardians are notified of the student's truancy status.
- Parents/guardians and students may be required to attend a truancy conference.

Consequences of Poor School Attendance

Missing school may result in:

- 1) Poor work habits
- 2) Lower grades/loss of credit
- 3) Frustration in learning
- 4) Dropping out of school

Student Responsibilities

- 1) Arriving on time to school each day
- 2) Attending all classes daily;
- 3) Assuming responsibility for behavior, which supports regular attendance;
- 4) Coming to school each day ready to learn and prepared with all required materials.

School Closures, Delays or Emergencies

In the event of school closures, delays or emergencies, families will be notified by robo-call. It is very important that the school has updated phone numbers. Families can also check the school's website, www.EXCELPCS.org, Social Media @ExcelAcademyPCS, and the local news channels: NBC 4, FOX 5, ABC 7 or CBS 9 for inclement weather updates.



Absences will be documented as UNEXCUSED if the school is open.

Visitor Policy

Parents are a vital part of the Excel community, we have an open door policy and we welcome all visitors. All visitors must present ID, check-in, and sign in at the front desk. Visitors will be escorted to their destination.

All visitors wishing to meet with an Excel employee, we encourage them to make an appointment to ensure availability.

Admission

Excel Academy Public Charter School is a free, open enrollment, public charter school in compliance with District of Columbia residency requirements as mandated by the D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB). Applications are available at the school and on-line at www.EXCELPCS.org. Applications received on or before the enrollment deadline may possibly be entered into the Excel Academy PCS lottery. If the lottery system is applied, applications received after the last day of open enrollment will be placed on the appropriate waitlist in the order received. Families may only apply once for each child. Multiple applications for one student will be discarded. Applications and waitlists do not carry over from one year to the next.

Withdrawal

Our goal is to educate every student to her highest potential. We do this in partnership with families, staff, and community. We believe that the staff of Excel must work to ensure every family understands the school's mission, goals, policies, and expectations. We recognize that many situations may arise, and families may need to withdraw their students and move to other schools. Parent / Legal Guardian must complete a withdrawal form. Parent / Legal Guardian will be invited to an exit interview with someone from school administration. Copies of all records will be kept in Excel's Student Record Files and will be forwarded to the receiving school upon request.

When a family moves from Washington, D.C. or decides to withdraw their child for any reason, they must complete a withdrawal form. Withdrawal forms can be obtained from the main office. Parents must indicate the new school of enrollment within 5-10 school days of withdrawal, or Excel Academy designee is required by law to contact D.C. Child and Family Services. No student records will be released to subsequent schools if a withdrawal form is not completed. Once withdrawn, a student must complete a new student application if planning to re-enroll at Excel Academy PCS. Students that are expelled may not re-enroll.

Re-Enrollment

Students are enrolled according to the Enrollment Procedures set forth by the DC Public Charter School Board. To be enrolled, a student must complete all necessary documentation; provide current proof of residency, and medical and immunization records. Failure to provide necessary documentation will result in a loss of enrollment slot. Current students must complete an Intent to Enroll form annually by the set date. Failure to complete the Intent to Enroll form will result in a student losing his/her slot for the upcoming school year. The student will have to begin the enrollment process as a new entering student and will be placed on the waitlist.

Residency:



The enrolling parent or guardian must be a resident of Washington, D.C. and able to provide supporting documentation, using the documents outlined in the Office of the State Superintendent's *Residency Verification Guidelines*, by the deadline specified by the school, both during initial enrollment, and on each subsequent re-enrollment. If at any time Excel Academy PCS has reason to believe that a student is not a resident of the District of Columbia, we are required by law to report possible fraud. The school designee will conduct a residency investigation. During a residency investigation, families will have one week to provide additional documentation.

Policy for Re-Enrollment (Non-Residence)

Excel Academy PCS does not expect to enroll Non-District residents. Excel Academy PCS will follow District of Columbia Public School guidelines for non-district enrollment and enforce all rules. If the school does not have sufficient enrollment, then it will consider enrolling non-District students at full tuition as set by the District of Columbia.

School Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks

Excel Academy provides each student with three nutritious meals and a snack every day, prepared here in our fully equipped, onsite kitchen. Meals and snacks are provided free of charge, through our participation in the National School Lunch Program and the USDA Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. If you choose to send lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send only healthy food options. For more information about our lunch program visit our website www.EXCELPCS.org

Allergy Notice: Scholar lunches may not include sodas or any item made with peanuts or peanut butter. If your child has a peanut allergy, please notify the school nurse.

Healthy Foods

Student nutrition is a priority at Excel Academy. In an effort to curb the consumption of low-nutrition foods, the following policy has been created.

Chewing gum is not permitted.

The following foods are discouraged:

- Food and drink with high amounts of sugar (e.g. soda, donuts, cake, cookies, etc.)

Healthy Food Options:

- Fruits, vegetables | fruit and vegetable juice
- Yogurt, cereal
- Popcorn, crackers, graham crackers



Birthday Policy

We at Excel PCS recognize that your scholar's birthday is an important milestone; therefore, any parent who plans a birthday celebration at Excel should first contact your child's teacher to arrange an appropriate time and location. ***Foods brought for the class by students must be store purchased, indicative of being prepared in an establishment licensed by the Board of Health. In addition, please make arrangements with the classroom teacher prior to the sending of any treats to avoid potential allergy issues or conflicts with the date and time.***



Excel Academy PCS follows DC Healthy Schools Act, and encourages families to provide healthy choices to our scholars.

Health Services & Medication

The Health Suite is located on the 2nd Floor (Rm. 212). The nurse, is not an employee of Excel, however he/she is responsible for coordinating all medical and nursing services provided in the school. Nursing services include: health assessments, health counseling, health care referrals, emergency care, first aid, and supportive health and safety education for all students and school personnel.

The nurse or trained staff may administer medication with a physician's authorization and parental consent. Students must have on file a medication authorization form that can be obtained from the nurse.

Students will not be admitted to the Health Suite without a valid pass from a teacher. The nurse will sign the pass noting the arrival time and the length of stay in the health unit. The pass will be given to the teacher upon the student's return to class. If the nurse determines that a student is too ill to remain in school, s/he will contact the child's parent/guardian. Students who are ill may not leave the building without written authorization from the attendance office.

Exclusion Criteria

Children may not attend Excel if they have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Any illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in the school program
- Any illness that results in a greater need for care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
- Fever (over 100 degrees by mouth, ear, or rectally)
- Difficulty breathing (e.g. uncontrolled asthma attack)
- Lethargy, extreme irritability, persistent pain, or other sign of possible severe illness
- Vomiting (two or more times in the past 24 hours)
- Mouth sores associated with drooling (e.g. herpes stomatitis)
- Contagious rash (chicken pox, impetigo, scabies, ringworm of the scalp)
- Rash with fever or behavior change
- Infectious conjunctivitis (pink/red eye with white or yellow eye discharge)
- Head lice
- Sore throat and swollen glands to the point of discomfort and difficulty eating
- Persistent cough that interferes with activities

If the school nurse or Excel staff/faculty suspect or learn of a student with a communicable disease, contagious symptoms or any of the above signs/symptoms the student must submit a physician's note indicating that s/he is eligible to be in school. Students will not be permitted to return to school activity without a physician's clearance.

Immunizations

Students must be up to date on all immunizations recommended by the District of Columbia DOH. If you do not want your child immunized for medical or religious reasons, you must fill out the appropriate exemption forms available from the nurse. Students who do not have all of their immunizations up to date will not be permitted to attend school.

Communicable Disease

The DC DOH does not permit students to remain at Excel if they have a communicable disease or symptoms of a communicable disease. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should notify the school's nurse within 24 hours after the student has developed a known or suspected communicable disease. If a student is found to have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease, a notice will be sent home indicating the disease and the nature of the illness. The names of the students will not be provided. All information about communicable diseases is confidential.

The following communicable diseases must be posted or reported:

- Chicken pox/varicella
- Conjunctivitis, infectious (pink eye)
- Diarrhea: viral, parasitic or bacterial (e.g., E. coli, Salmonella, Shigella, Rotavirus, Norwalk agent, Enterovirus, Giardia)
- Diphtheria
- Fifth Disease/Erythema infectiosum
- Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
- Herpes simplex virus stomatitis (severe case of oral herpes)
- Impetigo
- Influenza (the flu)
- Lice
- Lyme Disease
- Measles
- Meningitis, viral or bacterial (e.g., meningococcus, enterovirus)
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Rabies
- Rubella
- Ringworm of scalp or body
- Scabies
- Stomach virus
- Strep throat/Scarlet fever
- Tuberculosis
- Typhoid Fever

Medication

The school nurse and/or trained staff may administer medication to students while in school provided that students have a current Medication Authorization Form signed by a current physician on file. No medication will be administered unless the parent has completed a Medical Authorization Form. The form must be completed each school year.

- Prescription Medicine—Prescription medicines will be administered by the nurse or trained staff only if such prescription medicine is (a) brought to the school and left in the original, sealed container; (b) only according to the specific instructions on the container; and, (c) only if brought to the school by the parent or caregiver. Students may not bring prescription medicine to school themselves.
- Non-prescription Medicines—Excel staff and/or nurse will not administer any nonprescription medication without a note from physician. Please cooperate by not asking our staff to administer drugs without instructions from a physician.

Students must secure all remaining medication by the last day of school from the school nurse. Any medication left after the last day of school will be discarded.

Student possession of prescription or non-prescription medication outside of the Medication Policy outlined above is a violation of the Code of Character



Updated Student/Family Information

It is very important that the school has current and up-to-date information on your child. In case of emergencies, we must be able to contact parents/guardians in a timely manner. *If your contact information changes, please inform the school immediately.*

School Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student ("eligible student"). The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

Per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), all student records are treated as confidential and kept under restricted conditions. Parents may request to review their child's records at any time, or to be informed of the information contained therein. Parents may request that Excel corrects records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents may request photocopies of their child's records but files may not be removed from the school location where they are maintained. When requested by a parent, it may take up to 48 hours to get copies of the file(s).

Excel reserves the right to disclose student records without parental consent to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

Student Readiness Policy

Accidents and Changes of Clothes - Scholars must be potty trained before beginning Excel Academy. While we recognize that young scholars have accidents, we cannot spend valuable learning time changing clothes and attending to the individual bathroom needs of all scholars in the classroom. Girls at Excel Academy take several whole group bathroom breaks each day and have frequent opportunities to use the restroom at school. However, as our girls continue to grow and develop, they may occasionally have an accident. For this reason, we suggest that all families send two changes of uniforms in a labeled Ziploc bag to school (Pre K 3-2nd). One change of clothes remains in your child's cubby and the other in her backpack. We do not provide extra clothes for girls at school. If your child has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, a parent will be called to bring the appropriate items.

Accidents should be a rare occurrence. Pull-ups should not be worn to school at any time. Our scholars are given frequent bathroom breaks, and many classrooms have built-in bathrooms. Families of scholars who have frequent accident challenges will be asked to meet with the principal to address the issue.

Toileting Policy

Excel Academy wants to maximize learning throughout the academic day. The policy below outlines the toileting policy that will enable scholars to quickly change in the event of a bathroom accident and resume learning.

Teachers will:

- Bring students their change of clothes and provide a bag for soiled clothes
- Talk students through the steps of changing (take off shoes, wet bottoms, underwear, and put them in the bag)
- Provide students with wipes and towels and verbally direct students where to wipe
- Direct students to throw away wipes and towels
- Direct students to put on their clean clothes and put soiled clothes in a Ziploc bag and then their backpacks

Teachers will not:

- Touch any area of a student's body that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Close stall doors with a teacher and student inside.

Respecting the School and our Community

Students, families, and faculty should work hard to keep our school space clean. Backpacks and jackets should be hung neatly on hooks or placed completely in cubbies. They should never be left on the floor. Eating areas are completely cleaned before students leave them. Bathrooms are kept clean. Everyone is asked to pick up small trash as they walk through the building. It is a community effort to keep the building clean at all times. All members of the Excel Academy family are expected to be highly respectful to those who live and work nearby.



- Scholars traveling to and from school on foot or via the Metro bus need to conduct themselves as if they were in school hallways; traveling on the sidewalk in a safe and orderly fashion; throwing away trash in appropriate bins, moving with purpose to and from school; and keeping hands and feet away from anything that may be private property or possessions.
- Families who drive their students to or from school must be mindful of blocking traffic or causing other disruptions with traffic patterns.
- In general, all Excel Academy community members must be sensitive to how their actions affect the neighbors and our school reputation in the community.

Student Assessments & Curriculum

Pre-Kindergarten (3yrs and 4yrs)

Assessments: Teaching Strategies GOLD

Curriculum: Creative Curriculum, Jolly Phonics

Kindergarten

Assessments: (ELA/Math), STEP (ELA)

Curriculum: Journeys (ELA), Foundations (Kinder Phonics), Lucy

Calkins (WR), Eureka Math (Math)

1st – 4th Grade

Assessments: NWEA (ELA/Math), STEP (ELA), PARCC (3rd -4th)

Curriculum: Journeys (ELA), Foundations (1st-2nd Phonics),

Lucy Calkins (WR), Eureka Math (Math)

5th – 8th Grade

Assessments: NWEA, PARCC,

Curriculum: Journeys (5th Grade ELA), Collections (6-8th Grade

ELA), Eureka Math (5th-8th Math), Discovery Education (5th-8th

Grade Science and Social Studies), Achieve 3000 Online

Intervention, Avancemos (5th-8th Grade Spanish)

Assessment Descriptions

- **PARCC:** standard based common core aligned assessment given in the spring to measure each student's mastery of common core standards. **[3rd – 8th Grade]**
- **STEP:** a one-on-one assessment that evaluates a student's reading and comprehension ability. **[K-3rd Grade]**
- **NWEA Reading and Math:** Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments computer adaptive diagnostic and survey assessments that provide insight into a student's core reading and mathematics knowledge. **[K-3rd Grade]**
- **Teaching Strategies GOLD:** Online observation-based assessment system based on 38 research-based objectives that include specific predictors of school success. Objectives are aligned to one of the 10 possible Areas of Development and Learning – Social and Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, The Arts, English Language Acquisition. **[PK3 - PK4]**

Home Visits and APTT

Excel Academy recognizes the critical role that parents and families play in the education of their scholars.

Through a partnership with the Flamboyan Foundation, we will continue to partner with families through home visits and **Academic Parent Teacher Team (APTT)** meetings. **[PK3 – 3rd Grade]**

APTT meetings will serve as an opportunity for parents to discuss their scholars' progress with the teacher based on specific math and literacy skills. Parents will also have the opportunity to create a "Make-and-Take" project that can be used at home for additional practice. APTT meetings will be held in a whole-group setting with opportunities to speak one on one with teachers.

Home visits serve as an opportunity to meet with your scholar's teacher to become more familiar with our academic program and discuss any specific goals you may have for your scholar. Home visits can be scheduled with your scholar's teacher for weekday afternoons and evenings. Home visits can also be scheduled outside of the home in a neutral location such as a coffee shop or library. The expectation is that all families will receive a home visit. **[PK3 – 8th Grade]**

Volunteers and Chaperones Guidelines

Parents/guardians are encouraged to serve as chaperones on class trips. The classroom teacher or trip coordinator will provide you with information regarding activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervising students, and emergency procedures. In addition, the following guidelines will help you effectively perform your duties as a chaperone:

1) All school rules apply on all school-sponsored field trips. Chaperones are expected to comply with all school policies, follow the directive by the coordinating teacher, and work cooperatively with other volunteers and school staff members, and model appropriate behavior for students. The chaperone will follow the trip plan developed by the teacher.

2) In order to comply with school policy, before or during the field trip, chaperones:

- May not use or possess alcohol or other drugs
- May not use tobacco or tobacco products in the presence of, or within sight of scholars
- May not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to scholars

3) Scholars must be monitored at all times while at a school-sponsored event. As a chaperone, you will supervise a small group of students, helping them learn, and making sure they behave appropriately. Students must stay with you, their chaperone, at all times. Go over use of the buddy system with students under your care. Account for all participants regularly and before changing activities. Be sure you know when and where to meet the rest of the group at the end of the trip. Chaperones must be readily available, be mindful of safety concerns, and respond to scholars' needs. Do not use your cell phone for non-emergency or non-trip related purposes. It is not acceptable for outside work or reading to be completed while you are supervising scholars.

4) Scholar behavior is your responsibility. School rules related to scholar behavior apply. Go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and site-specific rules with scholars. Ensure that scholars do not engage in any extra activities not pre-approved by the teacher. While you are responsible for scholar behavior, it is the responsibility of the teacher to discipline the scholar.

5) Eating and drinking are not permitted outside of designated areas and predetermined times.

6) For the protection of both scholars and the chaperone, chaperones should not place themselves in situations where they are alone with a scholar.

7) Siblings and family members may not attend a school-sponsored field trip.

8) Be sure you know:

- What to do in an emergency (medical emergency, natural emergency, lost child, serious breach of rule, etc.)
- Who is first aid trained
- Where the first aid kit is
- Where your cell phone is
- Where the Emergency Consent to Treat Packet is located
- To keep the cell phone contact number of the teacher and other chaperones available.

9) Please follow the directions of the docents and guides even if other groups do not.



Professional Attire and Conduct

Excel staff and scholars adhere to a professional dress code. We ask that our parents and family members adhere to a similar dress code and expectations whenever on school grounds. We also ask that all parents refrain from using profanity or other inappropriate language when on campus. Parents who do not adhere to these policies will be escorted out the building immediately.

Uniform Guidelines

In order to maximize time on task and decrease attention towards outside distractions, Excel Academy girls are expected to adhere to a formal Dress Code. Anything deemed inappropriate or distracting by the administration may also be added to this policy. Clothing must be sized appropriately to fit the student. Clothes may not be too big, too small, too short, or too tight. Students in the building or participating in off campus activities are expected to be in Dress Code, including school performances, field trips (unless otherwise indicated), or during after school events.

Tops:

- (Pre K 3- Kinder) Yellow polo or blouse, short or long sleeved, solid color
- (1st – 4th) Light blue polo or blouse, short or long sleeved, solid color
- (5th – 8th) White or Gray polo or blouse, short or long sleeved, solid color
 - **All Scholars:** Navy Blue sweater or cardigan (optional)

Bottoms:

- PK 3 – 4th: Navy bottoms, jumpers, pants, shorts, skirts, or skorts (must reach the knee)
- 5th - 8th: Khaki bottoms, pants or skirt
 - **All Scholars:** White, black, gray or navy blue solid color socks or tights (optional)

Shoes/Belts:

- (BLACK) Soft-soled, closed-toed dress shoes (no boots or heels) | Gym shoes may be worn for recess only.
 - Snow and rain boots may be worn to school during inclement weather and must be changed prior to going to class
 - **All Scholars:** Black or navy belts (optional)

Gym Uniform:

All Scholars: Solid Blue sweatpants or shorts, with an Excel T-shirt, and solid black gym-shoes.

Excel Academy scholars are *not* permitted to wear:

- Hooded sweatshirts and outerwear in the building. Scholars must remove coats, jackets, and non-uniform outerwear upon entering the classroom
- Denim of any color
- Tops or bottoms with patterns, designs, logos, stripes or polka dots
- Distracting jewelry or accessories including watches, bracelets, headbands with large flowers/fixtures, or oversized hair accessories, and hoop or dangling earrings (stud earrings allowed)
- Shoes with heels
- Non-religious headwear, hats, scarves or bandanas
- Make-up of any kind (including lip gloss)

Non-Academic Material

Students should not bring anything unrelated to school. Examples include: video games, magazines, make-up, iPods, playing cards, toys, etc. These items will be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian.

Student Cell Phones

Students are permitted to carry a cell phone to school for emergency use only. They must turn the phone OFF during school hours and must keep the cell phone in their backpack. If any phone is visible or making noise during school hours, it will be confiscated and turned into the Dean of Students. Excel Academy will not be responsible for lost or stolen phones.



Student Network Internet Policy

Purpose:

Excel Academy PCS has developed the Excel Academy PCS computer network for instructional use. All files on the network are considered property of Excel Academy PCS, and subject to normal review and maintenance procedures. The use of the Internet is a *privilege*, not a right.

Policies:

It is the policy of Excel Academy PCS to mandate and expect that students will use the Internet/network in a responsible manner. Accordingly, the school has established a policy and procedures for the use of the Internet/network along with rules governing the behavior of students who access the Internet. Students who do not comply with the standards of behavior outlined in the student conduct and discipline plan or with the Internet/network rules below may lose their privilege to use the Internet/network and/or be subject to other disciplinary action.

Guidelines:

The Excel Academy PCS network is to be used only in a moral and ethical manner. As a user of the network, students are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- Only licensed software may be used on the network.
- Games and personal software are not to be installed on the computers. No one shall execute a software program that has not been installed on the server by the Excel Technology Department.
- Intentionally altering the files and/or the hardware on Excel computers or mobile devices will be viewed as vandalism.
- Deliberate attempts to spread viruses through the network will be dealt with by the administration of the school as a violation of the Student Network Acceptable Use Policy.
- Unauthorized copying of school software will be considered theft.
- Each student will be provided a username and password to be used by that student to access the network. This is the only login information that a student should be using. Students shall not lend their password out to anyone else and should inform a staff member immediately if they feel their password has been compromised.
- Users are to log off the system as soon as they are finished to prevent use under the wrong login information.
- There will be no distributing of threatening, obscene, or harassing messages over the network or through the printer.
- Abusive, obscene, or disrespectful oral or written language or gestures and swearing will be strictly prohibited in any digital format including, but not limited to, electronic mail.
- Students may not engage in advertisement of products or services for sale or participate in “chain letters” or “pyramid schemes”.

- No confidential information is to be distributed to other parties at any time. This includes reposting of information sent by another party.
- Students are not permitted to connect to networks other than those provided by the school.
- Students are not permitted to deliberately bypass the Excel Academy PCS Internet firewall by use of proxy servers or other known methods.
- Students will follow the instructional directives of the teacher or staff member in charge at all times.
- The illegal use of copyrighted software is strictly prohibited. Any and all damages which may occur as a result of unauthorized usage or access will be the responsibility of the user.
- The use of the network to access obscene or pornographic material is prohibited and will be dealt with as a serious breach of school rules.

Social Media Policy:

As an Excel student you represent the school even when you are not posting to social media during class time, and you must follow Excel Internet policies and these guidelines anytime you post material that could identify you or your relationship to the school or when using Web tools in the classroom or in any way related to classroom or school activities.

- 1) ***Be aware of what you post online.*** Social media venues are public. What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you wouldn't want friends, enemies, parents, teachers, or future employers to see.
- 2) ***Follow the school's policies when writing online.*** What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online. Harassing, bullying, threatening and other types of inappropriate conduct is prohibited in school and online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Criticism should be constructive and not hurtful.
- 3) ***Be safe online.*** Never give out personal information, including last names, phone numbers, exact birth dates, and addresses. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teachers and your parents.
- 4) ***Be careful when you link.*** 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 to a school setting.
- 5) ***Do your own work!*** Do not use other people's work without their permission. It is illegal to copy and paste other people's work (even parts of their work) without giving credit to that person. Hyperlink to your sources or include the web address where the information can be found. Law may also protect pictures, videos, songs, and audio clips. If you don't have permission to use the images, videos, songs or other clips, don't use them.
- 6) ***Don't be an imposter.*** Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- 7) ***Use appropriate writing.*** Blog and wiki posts should be well written. Use proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you suggest edits to someone else's work be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.
- 8) ***Tell someone.*** If you find inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher. If you cannot tell your teacher, tell your principal.
- 9) ***Follow the rules.*** Students who do not abide by Excel's policies and these guidelines will be subject to the consequences outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy.

Photo Permission

Photographs and videotape footage of students involved in various school related activities are often used as part of Excel's community relations. Photographs/videotapes may be used in school publications, video/TV productions, and newspapers. Names of students may be placed in articles in school and local newspapers/newsletters to recognize various student achievements.

Video/ Audio Recording

Video and audio recording of events not open to the public involving a) school employees carrying out their school-related duties, and/or b) students, and/or c) parents and/or d) others involved in school-related business, including but in no way limited to meetings between parents and teachers/administrators, IEP team meetings and other special education – related meetings, meetings between or among administrators and school employees and/or meetings between or among school employees only and/or meetings between or among administrators only shall not be permitted.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the CEO, Deborah Lockhart. Prior written requests to video or audio record events as aforesaid must be made to the CEO, Deborah Lockhart at least 48 hours prior to the event that the requestor seeks to video or audio record. Such permission should only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and where doing so will be in the best interests of Excel in pursuing its educational mission and in the best interests of students. If permission is granted to video and/or audio record an event, under no circumstances may any recording of any kind whatsoever be made public, posted on the Internet, or sold.

Nothing herein shall be interpreted to prohibit any person from video or audio recording any school-related event which is open to the general public, including but not limited to athletic contest, fine arts performances, debate tournament, etc. A person may not profit directly or indirectly from the recording of any such public event by selling or posting such recordings on the Internet for a fee.

Please indicate on the form at the end of student handbook whether or not you give your permission to allow photographs and videotapes to be taken of your child to be used in school publications or video productions or for the name of your child to be published in school publications or local newspapers.

RTI Model

To assist students who may need targeted and specialized support, Excel Academy will follow the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. It is expected that there is parental involvement / communication during every step of this process. As a part of this model, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) Teacher or parent may identify a student who needs additional support in meeting academic and behavior goals.
- 2) The teacher will identify a specific growth goal they wish to reach with the student in 5 weeks.
- 3) The teacher will implement and record research-based strategies for a period of 5 weeks that document student growth and progress daily.
- 4) At the end of the 5-week process, the teacher will decide whether or not the student should receive an additional 5 weeks of support or be moved to Tier 3.
- 5) Once moved to Tier 3, a student may receive additional evaluations and observations from the Director of Special Education Services or outside evaluators including, but not limited to, speech therapists, behavior therapists, and/or occupational therapists.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

Section 504 is a federal statute designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of a disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In accordance with Section 504, a qualified student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities shall not, on the basis of that disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any program or activity offered by Excel Academy PCS.

Qualifying a student under Section 504 is made on a case-on-case basis. The Student Support Team (SST) along with the Director of Special Education Services at the individual campuses will review each referred child's individual profile to determine whether there is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

The Director of Special Education Services will convene a Section 504 meeting with the parent(s) to review the nature and severity of the impairment, its duration or expected duration and the impact of the impairment on the child's opportunity to access and benefit from programs and activities offered by Excel Academy PCS.

If a student is determined eligible for services under Section 504, a plan will be developed that specifies the adaptation, accommodations and modifications that a student may need to participate in programs and activities offered by Excel Academy PCS.

If you believe that your child has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, you may contact the Director of Special Education Services at the campus where your child attends. The name of the Director of Special Education Services for each campus may be obtained from the school's front office.

Section 504 – Notice of Parental Rights

This is a notice of your rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"). These rights are designed to keep you fully informed about the school's decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of those decisions.

If your child is in the process of being considered for Section 504 eligibility or has been identified for Section 504 accommodations/services, you may have the right to the following:

- Have your child participate in and benefit from the school's education program without discrimination based on disability.
- Receive notice with respect to any action taken regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- Refuse consent for the initial evaluation and initial placement of your child.
- Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes your child's right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school provide related aids and services to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school activities.
- Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-disabled students.
- Have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions for your child based upon information from a variety of sources, by a group of persons who know your child, your child's evaluation data, and placement options.
- Have your child be provided an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the school.

- Have educational and related aids and services provided to your child without cost except for those fees imposed on the parents/guardians of non-disabled children.
- Examine your child's education records and obtain a copy of such records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
- A response to your reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's education records.
- Request the school to amend your child's education records if you believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school refuses this request, you have the right to challenge such refusal.
- Request mediation or an impartial due process hearing to challenge actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or placement. You and your child may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you. Hearing requests can be made pursuant to the school's grievance procedure.
- File a local grievance or a complaint with the District of Columbia Office for Civil Rights within the U.S. Department of Education. The regional office is located at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202 and can be reached at 202-453-6020 (phone), 202-453-6021 (fax), OCR.DC@ed.gov (email), and <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>.

The Section 504 Coordinator for Excel who is responsible for Section 504 compliance is:

Evelyn Hill-Johnson, Director of Special Education
 Excel Academy Public Charter School
 2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
 Washington, DC 20020
ejohnson@excelpcs.org

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 all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

At Excel Academy, we use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to support school wide rules and expectations. These rules and expectations are taught to scholars by school staff members to prevent initial occurrences of challenging behaviors.

At Excel Academy, we are expected to demonstrate the **IDEALS**:

Integrity - We are honest; we do what's right; and we refuse to compromise our values.

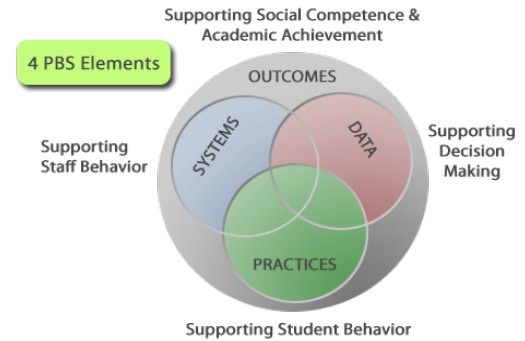
Discipline - We have self-control, and we make good choices.

Enjoyment - We bring joy to our learning, our school, and our community.

Achievement - We work hard to exceed our goals.

Leadership - We are influential, and we show the way.

Sisterhood - We are united. We rise and fall together.



Using positive incentives is a key component in ensuring the success of the program. These incentives are used to reward appropriate behaviors that support the school-wide behavioral expectations. Positive incentives may include, but are not limited to: a visit to the school store, Fun Fridays, dress-down days, art days, field trips, performances, etc.

The IDEALS of Excel Scholars

	Integrity & Discipline	Enjoyment & Achievement	Leadership & Sisterhood
Classroom	Take pride in your classroom and classroom materials. Do your own work. Maintain personal space. Body in learning positions.	Always do your best. Active participation. Make every minute count! Strive for academic EXCELlence!	Use kind words to uplift others. Be present and on time to class. Use manners. Be supportive of your sisters. Honor each other's differences.
Hallway	Move with a purpose. Use appropriate voice level during transitions. Respect the space of others.	Move with a purpose and safely. Greet others with a silent finger wave/wave. Reset mind for learning.	Keep our hallways clean. Walk on the peach. Set a good example for other scholars.
Cafeteria	Use appropriate voice level. Select healthy foods. Use your time wisely. Chew your food properly.	Enjoy your own meal! Ask for assistance when needed. Have polite and appropriate conversations with others.	Say "please" and "thank you". Clean up eating area. Wait your turn.
Restroom	Keep walls and floors clean. Wait your turn. Respect the space of others. Wash your hands with soap.	Use your time wisely. Return to class quickly. Properly fix your clothes before leaving.	Respect the privacy of others. Wash and dry your hands. Report any problems to teacher/TA.
Recess	Move your body with control. Clean up when it is time to go. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.	Use equipment safely. Share with others. Have FUN!	Take turns and play together. Make it fun for everyone. Solve problems in a positive way.
Special Events/Morning Meeting	Raise a quiet hand to share. Sit in seats appropriately. Track the speaker. Use appropriate voice levels.	Listen and Learn. Use appropriate applause. Be engaged.	Encourage one another. Model scholarly habits. Celebrate everyone!

Behavior Level Tier System (Quick Reference Chart)



Excel Academy PCS Quick Reference Chart: Behavior Level Tiers, Approaches, Consequences

Tier Level	Examples of Behaviors by Tier	Responses/Approaches	Consequences/Escalation of Behavior
Tier #1 Behaviors: - Handled by classroom teachers, does not include removal from classroom - Teacher must document behavior in writing - Teacher can inform parent/guardian when appropriate	1.1 Attendance (tardiness, excessive absences, unexcused absences) 1.2 Dress (out of uniform) 1.3 Disrespectful Behavior (walking away, talking back, false information, swearing, inappropriate gestures, uninvited touch, derogatory written materials) 1.4 Disruptive (talking during lesson/activity, rude noises, leaving seat without permission, horseplay, throwing minor objects, false alarms), 1.5 Insubordination (refusal to work in class, refusal to participate in school alternatives, refusal to comply with direction or instruction), 1.6 Intimidation (harassing, teasing, instigating, minor threatening towards a peer) 1.7 Possession/Misuse of Personal Property (using toys in class, using cell phones and listening to music devices during school hours) 1.8 Improper Use of Technology (damaging computer software, accessing inappropriate websites), 1.9 Theft (of minor items such as toys brought to school by other students)	- Avoid power struggles - Refer back to IDEALS - ask the student to repeat the IDEALS - Restate expectations and the expected behavior (model, engage in positive practice, or watch videos about expected behavior) - Redirect student - Sit the student in closer proximity to teacher or assistant, move them to a seat away from distracting student - Parental contact in writing or by phone - Track student behavior weekly or daily - In-class time out for an identified time - Loss of classroom privileges	- Behavior contract - Teacher/Parent conference - In-school disciplinary action (exclusion from extracurricular activities, and/or written reflection, mediation, or similar actions of short duration minimizing the student's loss of academic instruction time) - *Three consecutive offenses within same day or three continual days of a specific behavior may escalate to Tier 2
Tier #1 Behaviors: - Can be handled by teacher with assistance from administrator if needed, does not include removal from school - Teacher/administrator must document behavior/resolution in writing - Teacher informs parent	1.10 Disruptive (excessive talking, refusing to remain in seat, throwing objects that may cause injury or damage property) 1.11 Disrespectful Behavior (continual walking away and talking back, directing profanity or obscene offensive gestures towards staff) 1.12 Intimidation/Threats to others (threatening behavior directed towards a staff member or adult of authority, inappropriate/threatening physical contact between students) 1.13 Insubordination (chronic refusal to follow staff direction or participate in school activities, refusal to serve detention, refusal to report to office, unauthorized presence in hallway during class time, running out of the classroom or other common space, unintentional injuries to others) 1.14 Improper use of Technology (using computer equipment without permission, intentional misuse of school equipment, accessing files/school information without permission) 1.15 Theft (possession of property less than \$250) 1.16 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behavior 1.17 Minor Property Damage (Tearing down bulletin boards, and writing on desk)	- Avoid power struggles - Redirect student - Reinforce expectation/rules and provide student with clear, direct and concise consequences/options - Speak to student one-on-one - Take away privileges and unstructured time - Parental contact in writing or by phone - Track student behavior weekly or daily - In-class time out for an identified time	- Administrator/parent conference - Temporary removal of student from classroom for less than 1 hour 1. Buddy Room - Behavior contract - In-school disciplinary action (exclusion from extracurricular activities, and/or written reflection, mediation, or similar actions of short duration minimizing the student's loss of academic instruction time) - Possible suspension for K-3 students at administrator's discretion

*Special Education students with an IEP for behavior may require different consequences or responses.



Excel Academy PCS Quick Reference Chart: Behavior Level Tiers, Approaches, Consequences

Tier #2 Behaviors: - Generally handled by teacher or administrator depending on the situation and severity - Administrator involves SPED team when appropriate - Teacher/administrator must document behavior/resolution in writing - Administrator notifies guardian	2.1 Academic Dishonesty (cheating, altering report cards or notes) 2.2 Bullying/harassment (using severe humiliating and/or intimidating - language/behavior including on the internet repeatedly) 2.3 Abusive language (written or verbal use of slurs, based on actual or perceived race, color religion, national origin, sex, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, disability, and/or place of residence, including derogatory sexual language) 2.4 Fighting/Serious Physical Aggression (engaging in reckless behavior that may cause harm to self or others, fighting where there is no injury or weapon) 2.5 Defiance/Disrespect (excessive lying to or giving misleading information to school staff, possession or distribution of obscene/pornographic material on school premises) 2.6 Inappropriate language (obscene and/or seriously offensive language or gestures) 2.7 Disruption (verbal, written or physical threat to person/property, continuous talking out of turn, yelling, noise with materials; horseplay/rough-housing and/or sustained out of seat behavior when redirected) 2.8 Theft (possession of stolen property more than \$250) 2.9 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behavior	- Verbal redirection - Temporary student removal from classroom for less than half of the day 1. Buddy Room - Behavior contract - In-school disciplinary action (exclusion from extracurricular activities, and/or written reflection, mediation, or similar actions of short duration minimizing student's loss of academic instruction time) - Parental contact in writing or by phone by administrator - Administrator/student conference - In-school suspension for ½ day for first time offense (with instructional work)	- Parent conference - Alternative assignment or academic penalty - Out of school suspension, excluding Pre-K (Second offense: one day out of school suspension, third offense: two days out of school suspension)
Tier #3 Behaviors: - Handled by administrator and may include additional actions to support the student and stimulate corrective behaviors - Administrator involves SPED team when appropriate - Administrator documents the incident - Administrator notifies parent	3.1 Fighting/Serious Physical Aggression (fighting which creates substantial risk of or results in injury to an individual, assault with a weapon) 3.2 Harassment/Bullying (inciting other to violence or disruption, using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to intimidate or threaten another person repeatedly) 3.3 Major Theft/Property Damage (cause of major damage to another student's property, vandalizing school/staff property that cause disruption to the school environment) 3.4 Abusive language (continual/excessive written or verbal use of slurs based on actual or perceived race, color religion, national origin, sex, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, disability, and/or place of residence, including derogatory sexual language) 3.5 Other offenses (any behavior/conduct including, but not limited to, possession/distribution of alcohol and/or drugs, gambling, arson, possession of knife, explosives/handgun, or other illegal conduct that causes disruption to the school operation or causes substantial harm to self or others) 3.6 Leaving the Classroom (Walking out of the classroom or leaving designated area without permission. 3.7 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 2 behavior	- Parent conference - Seek administrator support	- In-school suspension for 1 day (with instructional work) - Out of school suspension for 1-3 days - Expulsion

*Special Education students with an IEP for behavior may require different consequences or responses.

Suspensions (In-School/Out-of-School)

In more challenging cases, after exhausting all in-class/school strategies and supports, the Administrative team may determine the most appropriate action is suspension. All consequences are done in a progressive nature. Suspension may include either of the following:

In-School Suspension - Scholar is isolated from class, completing grade level assignments during the designated suspension period.

Out-of-School Suspension - Scholar remains home for specified number of days.

Infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated disregard for school policies and procedures
- Cheating or copying
- Disrespect of a fellow student or Excel staff member
- Disrespect, damaging, stealing or destroying school property
- Using or possessing medication or drugs inappropriately
- Committing any form of harassment
- Speaking or behaving with excessive vulgar, abusive or profane language
- Making verbal or physical threats
- Fighting, pushing, biting or unwanted physical contact
- Setting of false alarms, calling in threats
- Gambling
- Departing the building without permission
- Forgery of any sort, including parent signature

Expulsion

Our Discipline Policy has been created to develop a school culture where minor infractions are immediately addressed and positive behavior choices are explicitly taught. Excel's clear set of consequences and consistent systems are in place to address small issues to preclude the onset of larger, more challenging behaviors that could require expulsion. However, under certain circumstances, students may be subject to suspension/expulsion by the Principal as explained below:

According to District regulations:

- a) Any student who is found on the school premises or at a school-sponsored event, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94-C, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal.
- b) Any student, who assaults an Excel Academy staff member on school premises or at a school-sponsored event, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal.

In addition to those categories provided by the statute, students may face expulsion as a result of the following infractions:

- Repeated or excessive disciplinary referrals and/or suspensions
- Repeated and fundamental disregard of school policies and procedures
- Assault against fellow students or other members of the school community
- Destruction or attempted destruction of school property including arson
- Possession of alcohol on school premises or at a school sponsored event

Procedures for Suspending and Expelling Students with Disabilities

The basis for disciplining, suspending or expelling students with disabilities shall be no different than the basis for such actions taken against students without disabilities. Reasonable accommodation of a student's disabilities shall not prevent the school from applying its discipline policy to students with disability when their behavior is not related to the disability. However, students with disabilities are entitled to certain additional procedural protections during the discipline process. These protections include, but are not limited to, requirements for a meeting to determine if behaviors resulting in expulsion or suspension longer than ten (10) days are a manifestation of a student's disability. Parents can request more information about this process and a copy of the procedural safeguards by contacting the Special Education Coordinator or Section 504 Coordinator.

Procedural Due Process

Excel Academy is in compliance with the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board's guidelines with respect to due process. Procedural Due Process applies to any student violation, which may require or merit long term suspension or expulsion. Refer to the Due Process manual, which is available upon request.

Bullying, Sexual Harassment, Cyber Bullying, Threatening, Fighting or Promotion of Fighting or other Violent Behavior

In the interest of preserving the safety of the students and staff at Excel, the school has a clear anti-violence policy. Harassing, threatening bullying, cyber-bullying, fighting, and promoting fighting or other violent behavior are taken very seriously.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment is defined as any severe, persistent, or pervasive **physical, electronic, or verbal conduct**, including but not limited to harassment based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, genetic information, disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or based on association with a person or group with any of the actual or perceived characteristics listed above.

It is directed toward a student(s) that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student(s) in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student's person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Sexual harassment is defined as, but not limited to verbal or nonverbal unwelcomed sexual advances or sexual behavior that substantially interferes with a student's education, or creates an intimidating or hostile environment. Sexual harassment is prohibited at Excel.

Cyber bullying is defined as the use of information and communication technology to bully, embarrasses, threaten, or harass another. It also includes the use of information and communication technology to engage in conduct or behavior that is derogatory, defamatory, degrading, illegal, and/or abusive.

The use of cell phones and other technology—including computers, e-mail and social networking sites—to harass, bully, threaten or defame a student or employee is specifically prohibited. Any student who feels s/he is a victim of cyber bullying should report the incident to the Dean.

Any student found complicit in the posting, sending, or execution of such material will be subject to disciplinary action as defined in the Excel Code of Character.

Threatening behavior is defined as an expressed or implied threat (verbally, physically, electronically, or in writing) to interfere with: 1) the health or safety of any individual associated with Excel; 2) with Excel property; or 3) property on Excel premises belonging to others. Any student who engages in threatening behavior will be subject to serious disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion.

Threat/False Threat - No student shall make any threat through written or verbal language, sign, or act which conveys a serious expression of intent to cause harm or violence. Furthermore, no student shall make a false threat of harm or violence, even jokingly, which causes or is reasonably likely to cause fear or a disruption to school activities. All threats and false threats will be subject to serious disciplinary action.

Promoting fighting or other violent behavior is defined as the use of passive or active: resistance, noise, threat, fear, intimidation, coercion, force, violence, recording devices, social media, electronic devices, or any other form of conduct that causes the disruption of any lawful function, mission, or process of the school.

Fighting is defined as the exertion of physical force to harm someone or potentially harm someone. Fighting is one of the most egregious violations of the Code of Character. If a student engages in a fight, while representing the school, s/he is subject to serious consequences, including expulsion.

Unless the administration determines, without doubt, that any participant in a physical altercation is clearly defending himself/herself from an aggressor or aggressors, then the physical altercation will be considered a fight in which all parties share equal responsibility.

All of the above mentioned behaviors are Level 3 violations and may be subject to expulsion.

Instead of threatening or fighting someone, there are a number of ways that a conflict can be resolved. For example:

- Inform the Dean, a security guard, a favorite teacher, or any other adult in the building and seek out conflict resolution.
- Walk away from a situation that appears to be escalating, then seek out assistance.
- Count to 10 and take deep breaths until you get your emotions under control.
- If you have difficulty managing your anger, you could meet with the school social worker.
- Request mediation between you and the other person with whom you have an issue.



These are just a few suggestions that enable a potentially violent situation from escalating.

Student Restraint

Excel Academy Public Charter School maintains a firm, consistent Code of Conduct. Our school has very clear disciplinary structures and policies. These procedures do not allow for corporal punishment, but do include clear rules and consequences. In accordance with DC law, corporal punishment is prohibited. School personnel can use reasonable force only as necessary to protect students, other community members, or themselves from assault by a pupil. Should such an incident occur, an Assistant Principal shall file a detailed report of the event, with the Principal. All staff authorized to administer restraint or therapeutic holds shall be trained annually in accordance with the Department of Education guidelines.

Complaint Process

Excel Academy Public Charter School works closely with the Board of Trustees to hear and resolve any complaints brought forward by staff, students, or parents. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the party to first address the problem directly with the staff member(s). Complainants must schedule a meeting with the party in question before bringing formal complaints to the Board. After the initial meeting, if the complainant is dissatisfied with the solution proposed by the appropriate staff member, a meeting will be scheduled with the Assistant Principal, then the Principal. If the situation has still not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, a meeting will be arranged between parties.

If these meetings do not resolve the relevant complaint, the concerned party should follow the formal complaint process outlined below.

Formal Complaint Process

The first step in the formal process is to obtain a Formal Complaint Form from the school's main office and return it to the grade level Assistant Principal (refer to page 4). You may attach descriptive or supportive information to the form. Keep a copy of the form and any attachments.

When your complaint form is received at the school, the grade level Assistant Principal (refer to page 4) will contact you within three (3) school days to establish the date, time and place of a meeting to discuss your concern, if such a meeting has not already occurred. Usually, this meeting will take place within ten (10) school days following said contact from the grade level Assistant Principal (refer to page 4). Within ten (10) school days following this meeting, the Head of Academics will respond to you in writing with a decision.

Sometimes a complaint or its resolution may be too complicated or, for other reasons, cannot be decided within ten (10) school days. In such cases, the grade level Assistant Principal (refer to page 4) will contact you within the first ten (10) school days and arrange for an extension of the decision for no more than an additional ten (10) school days.

If you are not satisfied with the written decision, or if you do not receive a reply to your formal complaint within the specified time, you may request that your complaint be considered by the CEO, Deborah Lockhart. You must file your request for review within fifteen (15) calendar days of the grade level's Assistant Principal (refer to page 4) response or the date when a decision was to have been made.

If you wish to request a review, forward the Complaint Form to the CEO, Deborah Lockhart, with a note explaining the basis for disagreeing with the decision. The CEO, Deborah Lockhart will respond, using a procedure and time limits similar to those followed by the grade level Assistant Principal (refer to page 4), as follows: (a) a meeting may be arranged within three (3) work days; (b) a resolution on the review within ten (10) work days after the meeting, if any; and (c) an extension of an additional ten (10) work days if the matter is unusually complicated or otherwise requires additional time. The CEO, Deborah Lockhart designee may respond by phone or in writing.

All formal grievances must abide by the school's grievance policy available on www.EXCELPcs.org

If you feel your complaint, whether administrative or programmatic, is not addressed properly at the school level, you may file a complaint with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). The most current OSSE complaint form can be found at:

[http://osse.dc.gov/seo/frames.asp?doc=/seo/lib/seo/assessment and accountability/OSSE ESEA Complaint Policy.pdf](http://osse.dc.gov/seo/frames.asp?doc=/seo/lib/seo/assessment%20and%20accountability/OSSE%20ESEA%20Complaint%20Policy.pdf)

If you have a concern or grievance that you wish to share with Excel's Board of Trustees, please contact the Chair of the Board.

Prohibition of Retaliation

Excel Academy PCS will not tolerate or permit retaliation against a grievant that files a complaint pursuant to this policy. Immediate action will be taken against any person found to have retaliated against a grievant that has made a complaint.

Title 1

Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state.

No Child Left behind Parent's Right to Know Teacher Qualifications

(Compliance with P.L. 107-110, Section 1111(h)(6)(A)): The Federal *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child.

As a recipient of these funds, Excel Academy PCS will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

Growth Year

A "Growth Year" is an additional year in the current grade level to allow a student to develop and grow with current expectations in all areas. This will include growth in both academic and social-emotional development. A growth year is determined based on accumulated data regarding a student's academic and social-emotional growth. It should be the last option, once a student has been supported through the RTI and or SST process. The school may recommend your child as strong candidate to benefit from a Growth Year or a parent may make a request. A meeting will be held with all stakeholders to review the data and make a decision in the best interest of the child.



Required Child Abuse and Neglect Law

It is the policy of Excel Academy PCS to ensure the safety and well being of every student. When a concern of possible abuse/neglect arises, the expectation is that we, as a school, will act swiftly and in an organized manner to respond. As preventative measures, each staff member is a trained mandated reporter and are not required to notify the parent of such reporting by law.

When a staff member receives a disclosure of abuse or neglect from a student, or observes something of concern (incident, marking on child, etc.), they are to **IMMEDIATELY** report their concern to the Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Dean. If bruising or markings are observed, or hints of such markings are included in a student's disclosure, the Principal/Designee will **IMMEDIATELY** escort the child to the Nurse's Office to be examined by the School Nurse. The School Nurse will advise the administration.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ("The Age Act"), Excel Academy Public Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Excel does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or age.

Anyone having inquiries concerning Excel's compliance with Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act or who wish to file a complaint regarding such compliance should contact:

Evelyn Hill-Johnson, Director of Special Education

Excel Academy Public Charter School

2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE

Washington, DC 20020

ejohnson@excelpcs.org

Who has been designated by the Excel to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act. Parents, guardians, and students who want to learn more about their rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act can obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards from the Section 504 Coordinator:

Evelyn Hill-Johnson, Director of Special Education

Excel Academy Public Charter School

2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE

Washington, DC 20020

ejohnson@excelpcs.org

Anyone who believes that Excel has violated the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act can submit a complaint with the Section 504/ADA coordinator pursuant to the Excel Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through the Section 504/ADA coordinator:

Evelyn Hill-Johnson, Director of Special Education

Excel Academy Public Charter School

2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE

Washington, DC 20020

ejohnson@excelpcs.org

Appendix A: Grievance, Procedural Safeguards, Notice of Rights

504 Grievance Procedure

Any person who believes that Excel has violated the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Discrimination Act may submit a complaint to the designated individuals below.

Complaints involving students who attend Excel may be submitted to:

Deborah Lockhart, CEO
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020
dlockhart@excelpcs.org

Complaints involving employees of Excel may be submitted to:

Deborah Lockhart, CEO
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020
dlockhart@excelpcs.org

The grievance procedures outlined below establish how complaints will be investigated and resolved. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. These grievance procedures may be used by employees, students, parents, or third parties. These grievance procedures do not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

Excel encourages individuals to discuss their concerns with appropriate school officials before resorting to a formal complaint. However, individuals are not required to do so before filing a formal complaint.

Excel prohibits retaliation against individuals who file a complaint or participate in a complaint investigation. A formal complaint may be filed by following the steps outlined below:

Step 1

Within 90 days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, written notice of the complaint must be filed with the individual designated above. Complainants may use the complaint form attached to the grievance procedure. The written notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence, the desired result, and must be signed and dated by the person making the complaint.

Upon receipt of the written notice of the complaint, the designated individual to whom the complaint was submitted will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation of the complaint. Each investigation will include, as necessary, interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation will remain confidential.

Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the written notice of the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will respond in writing to the complainant. The response will summarize the course and outcome of the investigation, and identify an appropriate resolution. If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that discrimination or harassment have occurred, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken.

Step 2

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision from Step 1, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the CEO within ten (10) business days after receipt of the response. The CEO will review all relevant information and meet with the parties involved, as necessary. Within twenty-one (21) business days of receiving the statement of appeal, the CEO will respond in writing to the complainant summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken.

Step 3

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the CEO he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the school Board of Trustees within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the CEO's response. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board shall review all relevant information and meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within fifteen (15) business days of this meeting.

Grievants also have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html. For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or ocr.dc@ed.gov.

Excel's Grievance Procedure pertaining to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Discrimination Act.

Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Grievance Procedures for Parents and Students

Parents and guardians who want to learn more about their rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act can obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards from the Section 504 Coordinator:

Evelyn Hill-Johnson, Director of Special Education
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020
ejohnson@excelpcs.org

Any person who believes that Excel has engaged in discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or otherwise may submit a complaint pursuant to Excel's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through:

Deborah Lockhart, CEO
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020
dlockhart@excelpcs.org

Notice of Grievance Procedures for Employees

Any employee who believes that Excel has engaged in discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or otherwise may submit a complaint pursuant to Excel's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through:

Deborah Lockhart, CEO
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020
dlockhart@excelpcs.org

Appendix B: Discipline Due Process

The decision to suspend a student shall be made by a school administrator (e.g. Assistant Principal, Dean) without the recommendation of the student's teacher or other staff. The administrator issuing the suspension will determine the number of days for suspension based on the severity of the infraction and previous infractions. The suspension shall become effective immediately unless otherwise stated by the administrator issuing the suspension.

The decision to recommend a student for expulsion shall be made by a school administrator (e.g. Assistant Principal, Dean) without the recommendation of the student's teacher or other staff. In recommending expulsion, the administrator will consider the severity of the infraction, the Code of Conduct, the student's previous infractions, any student Discipline contracts, and the student's age. A student recommended for an expulsion will have a Disciplinary Hearing to review the recommendation. The Discipline Review Panel (DRP) will make a final decision as to the student's expulsion.

When a student commits an offense that is eligible for a long-term suspension or expulsion an investigation into the offense shall be conducted by the Dean or another school administrator. The investigation shall include:

- Notifying the student of the infraction(s)
- Accepting information from the student and other persons who have knowledge of the incident.
- The student involved shall have the opportunity to express his/her side of the incident.

The administrator conducting the investigation will determine the accuracy of the infractions(s) based on this information.

Students for whom suspension or expulsion is being considered will be given notice and an opportunity to be heard before a final decision regarding suspension or expulsion is made. For students facing suspension of less than 10 days, prior to issuing the suspension, the administrator will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. After this meeting, the administrator will issue written notice to the parent detailing the length of and reason for the suspension. The administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the suspension via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Written notification may be given to the student if he/she is under 18 when the parent/guardian is notified by phone/email of the suspension.

For students facing suspension of 10 days or more, including expulsion, an administrator will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe

that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. If necessary, the administrator will conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the student's behavior and any explanation provided by the student. At the administrator's discretion, the student may be suspended pending the results of this investigation and recommendation for further disciplinary action from the administrator. This investigation will be completed within 3 business days and, if necessary, a Discipline Hearing will be scheduled after the completion of the investigation.

After the meeting with the student and any investigation, the administrator will issue written notice to the parent with a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion and the reason for this recommendation. This notice will explain the information that is being relied on as a basis for the recommendation. The administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the suspension/expulsion via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Written notification may be given to the student if he/she is under 18 when the parent/guardian is notified by phone/email of the suspension/expulsion. Any parent/guardian meetings may occur by phone.

Within 10 school days of the recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion, a Discipline Hearing will be held to make a final determination about the disciplinary action proposed.

Discipline Hearing

If a student is recommended for a Disciplinary Hearing, the following process will occur to review the recommendation for a long-term (10+ day suspension) or expulsion:

Three faculty/staff members will serve as the Discipline Review Panel (DRP). The Discipline Review Panel serves as an impartial decision maker. DPR are closed to the public. During the hearing, a school administrator(s) will carry out the following procedures:

1. A statement of the Code of Character violation and summary of the Discipline Hearing procedures.
2. An explanation and review of the evidence or facts for which potential expulsion is being considered. If video footage is available of the incident, the panel will view the footage.
3. The student may be represented by his/her parent/guardian and one additional advocate.
4. The student may present any information that he/she wants to the Discipline Review Panel to consider. The panel may ask questions regarding the matter to anyone present at the hearing. An advocate may speak on the student's behalf. The student has the right not to speak on his/her own behalf. Neither the school's representative at the hearing nor the student nor his/her representative(s) will be given the opportunity for cross-examination during the hearing.
5. Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the hearing, the panel will make a recommendation regarding the consequence. The panel's recommendation will be effective immediately.
6. The student/family will be informed of the decision via phone within 2 school days of the conclusion of the hearing and written notification will be mailed within three (3) school days of the decision. This notice will contain information regarding appeal procedures.
7. If a parent/guardian does not request a hearing, or fails to attend the hearing at the scheduled date, time, and place, the right to a hearing will be waived. Therefore, the school will proceed with its determination regarding the proposed infraction and the ruling of the Disciplinary Review Panel. The findings from the hearing will be approved and take effect immediately. Appeals will not be accepted by students who do not appear at the initial hearing.

In making its decision, the Discipline Review Panel will review evidence presented at the hearing, any statements heard on behalf of the school or student, the Excel Code of Character, and prior conduct and/or academic performance, if applicable.

Discipline Panel Hearing Appeal

Any student who is expelled has the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of Excel's Board of Trustees within five (5) school days of the written notice of expulsion being issued. The following process shall be implemented for all appeals.

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

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

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

If the expulsion is overturned, the cumulative record of the student and any other school-maintained records will reflect that conclusion. If the Appeal Panel upholds the expulsion, the expulsion shall be imposed, and such decision will be final. Decisions made by the Appeal Panel will be final.

Drug Free School Policy

Excel Academy PCS complies with the policies of the District of Columbia regarding a NO drug policy for both students and staff. In addition, it has proclaimed the area around the school as a **Drug Free Zone**. Excel Academy PCS prohibits the illegal sale, purchase, use, or possession of any intoxicating substances. No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute drugs on school grounds.

Smoke Free School Policy

Excel Academy PCS recognizes the danger smoking and passive smoking causes to health, as well as the need for the school and its staff to provide positive role models to students. Consequently, for the protection of staff and students, smoking is not permitted within any area of the school property, nor at any school related activity or function by parents, staff or visitors.



FORMAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE FAMILY HANDBOOK



Parent Agreement

We, the undersigned, understand that this handbook contains important information for parents, guardians and students. We acknowledge that we have received a copy of Excel Academy Family Handbook. We are aware that this handbook contains information and policies for our review. We have reviewed the information and policies contained in this handbook.

We understand that:

- All parents, guardians and students will be held accountable for their behavior and that failure to abide by the guidelines can result in the consequences outlined in this handbook.
- Failure to return this acknowledgment form does not excuse any individual from complying with the provisions of the Family Handbook, Excel Academy policies, regulations and guidelines.

Directions for return of this form throughout the school year:

- 1) Student and Parent/Guardian review handbook.
- 2) Parent/Guardian sign and date handbook acknowledgement below.
- 3) Remove this page from handbook
- 4) Student returns this page to homeroom teacher by **the first day of school**. New and transfer students registering after the start of the school year must return this acknowledgement page within one week after receipt.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____