

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ACADEMY PUBLIC
CHARTER SCHOOL**

*PARENT HANDBOOK
&
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY*



2016 – 2017

Uniquely designed for the young child

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School

Information at a Glance

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School to foster the academic and social/emotional growth and development of each student in a safe and holistic learning environment that will equip all students with the knowledge and tools to become high achievers, proficient readers, and critical thinkers, who will thrive for a lifetime as productive and caring citizens.

www.ecapcs.org
(202) 373-0035 Phone
(202) 373-5586 Fax

Johenning Campus (Main Campus)

4025 9th Street, SE Washington, DC 20032

Walter Washington Campus

4301 9th Street, SE Washington, DC 20032

Administration

Wendy S. Edwards, Executive Director: wedwards@ecapcs.org

Thann Ingraham, Principal: tingraham@ecapcs.org

Pamela G. Faulcon, Director of Curriculum & Instruction: pfaulcon@ecapcs.org

La'Kea Edwards, Director of the K/1 Program: ledwards@ecapcs.org

Amia Johnson, Director of the 2/3 Program: ajohnson@ecapcs.org

Rebecca J. Schultz, Special Education Coordinator: rschultz@ecapcs.org

Debra Robinson-Foster, Financial Manager: dfoster@ecapcs.org

Yesenia Menjivar, Program Administrator: ymenjivar@ecapcs.org

Officers of the ECA Board of Trustees

Dennis M. Sawyers, President: dennis_sawyers@yahoo.com

Rasheda Davis, Secretary

Eric Bellamy, Treasurer

DC Public Charter School Board

3333 14th Street, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20010
(202) 328-2660

Dear Parent:

We welcome you and your child to Early Childhood Academy for the 2016-2017 school year. The ECA faculty and staff are looking forward to an exciting year working with your child. We are committed to providing our students with quality educational opportunities that will help them to become productive citizens in the 21st century.

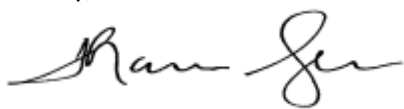
This handbook has been prepared to provide parents and students with specifics about our total school program. It contains additional important information that you will need regarding ECA's beliefs, policies, and procedures. We ask that you take a few moments to carefully review it.

Because we believe that on-going communication between home and school is essential to the student's academic success, you will also receive frequent information and flyers to keep you informed about what is happening at school. Be sure to carefully read all of the notices your child brings home and pay special attention to those that provide information about days when children will not attend school, deadlines for registration requirements, parent conferences, and dates for testing.

All of us at ECA are eager and excited to begin what promises to be the best year ever. This year is going to be awesome as we continue to provide academic experiences for our students that are rigorous, relevant and build relationships. As your Principal, it is important to me that everyone who steps through our doors—teachers, students and parents—are excited to be here! This attitude enables us to meet the challenges of academic excellence in a positive, fun and nurturing environment. My door is always open and I welcome your input. Please feel free to stop in, call or email me to discuss any concerns, suggestions, or ideas to help make this the best year yet!

I feel truly blessed to be the instructional leader of such an awesome school community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thann Ingraham', written in a cursive style.

Thann Ingraham
Principal

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent school attendance is critical to school success. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential for students to reach their goals and achieve academic success. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood for poor academic performance, disengagement from school and behavior problems. One of the most important responsibilities of parents in the home/school connection is ensuring your child's excellent school attendance. Good student attendance positively impacts students' acquisition of new concepts and skills and their rate of growth and development. It is important that all students come to school every day, on time, and remain until the end of the day in order to achieve the most success. ECA requires that students come to school every day unless ill, come on time at 8:05 am, and that students remain at school each day until dismissal at 3:00 pm.

Please do not keep your child out of school for vacations, out of town travel, overnight stays at others' houses, bad weather, oversleeping, lack of clean clothing, etc. These are invalid excuses for student absences. If your child is absent for any of these reasons he/she will be marked as unexcused. We expect all students to come to school every day unless the child is ill. Students who are ill must return to school with a note from the doctor or the parent explaining the reason for the absence. Because class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

The Family Support Coordinator will contact the parent/guardian to address and reduce the absenteeism. A student's progress and learning may be negatively affected by unexcused absences. In addition, the school's overall performance rating as a DC Public Charter School is negatively impacted by excessive absences.

Please note, all students must maintain a 96% attendance rate for the school year. Any student with ten (10) or more absences by December 2016 and each month thereafter will be required to meet with the Family Support Coordinator and school administration to devise a corrective action plan. A minimum of four (4) handwritten notes for absences will be accepted. All written excuses beyond four (4) must be a note from a doctor. Notes must be submitted immediately upon the student's return to school. Notes provided after five days of the student's absence will not be accepted.

It is the school's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success and will explore every possible option to address attendance issues with the family. This policy will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to any protected classification.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

The before and aftercare program is available to all ECA students. Before care is provided at both the Walter Washington and Johnenning campuses. Before care hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 8:05 a.m. After care begins at 3:00 p.m. and ends promptly at 6:00 p.m.

ECA has worked diligently to provide a before and aftercare program that is affordable for parents. The fee for participation in the before and aftercare program is \$150 per month for the first child and an additional \$20 per month for each additional sibling who lives in the same home. December and June payments are reduced to \$75 for each month and August is free when payment has been received for September. There is no discount for other relatives living together or for siblings not living in the same household. The \$150 fee applies to students who attend before and aftercare and students who attend after care only. If you are interested in before care only, the monthly fee is \$60 for the first child and \$20 for each additional sibling who lives in the same home.

Before and aftercare payments must be made before the month begins, by the 20th of the previous month. A late fee of \$10 will be charged for payments made after the 20th of the month. If payment is not received by the first day of the new month, the student may not attend for that month.

A fee will be charged for late pick up from aftercare: \$10 from 6:01 pm to 6:15 pm and \$5 every 5 minutes after 6:15 pm, NO EXCEPTIONS. Students will be excluded from the aftercare program on the fourth late pickup.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

All staff persons will use positive behavior facilitation (PBF) to support students in their self-regulation in the classroom and at school. Positive behavior facilitation requires that the teacher focus on ways to support the child's social/emotional growth and development through thoughtful and appropriate responses to student's behavior. Teachers and teacher assistants will work collaboratively to design procedures and routines, rules, and logical consequences for student behavior that will be implemented consistently. The values of self-control, respect, honesty, empathy, helpfulness, responsibility, forgiveness, hard work, kindness, and peaceful resolution guide ECA's beliefs. The school also maintains five school-wide rules that will be discussed with students and posted in the classrooms and throughout the building:

1. Come to school every day, on time, and in uniform.
2. Follow the directions of all adults in the building.

3. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
4. Keep all body parts to yourself.
5. Respect the school, school property, and the property of others.

In addition, all teachers will post a three-colored (red, yellow, green) traffic signal as a visual cue to support students' positive behavior. All students begin the morning on the green light, signifying that they are ready for the day and prepared to follow school rules. Students are expected to remain on green throughout the school day by following the directions of all adults, adhering to school rules and values, and correcting minor behavior challenges. If a student displays inappropriate behavior that he or she does not correct when given ample opportunity, the child's name will be moved to the yellow light. Students on yellow have the opportunity to improve behavior during the day and return to the green light. Students who demonstrate extremely inappropriate or malicious behavior and are unable to correct behavior when given ample opportunities will be moved to the red level. Students on the red level may not be moved back to green during the day. A parent or guardian will be contacted for any student whose name has been moved to the red level.

All students will receive a personal monthly calendar on which to record their daily behavior. At about 2:50 p.m. daily, students will color their calendar circles green, yellow, or red according to their traffic light placement at the end of the day. Students who are absent from school will not receive a color for that day. Calendars will be maintained in students' files and shared with parents during conferences. At the end of a designated number of days, students who have achieved a prescribed number of green circles will receive special recognition.

Serious offenses may warrant school suspension. Please see the "Suspension" section of this booklet for specific information on the ECA suspension policy. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used by ECA staff for any reason.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, & SNACK

All students will be provided breakfast from 8:05 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. daily in the school multipurpose room or in the classrooms. Lunch will be served daily between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Students who participate in the ECA aftercare program will also receive a snack. All students' eligibility for free meals are determined by our participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

CLASSROOM BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Teachers will be responsible for planning one party celebration each month acknowledging all student birthdays within the month. Students with birthdays in July will be recognized in August. Birthday celebrations will be held in your child's classroom during the last week of each month:

- Parents/Guardians of birthday boys and girls will be notified by the classroom teacher of the date of the celebration.
- **All celebrations will be held at 2:30 p.m. and will not extend beyond 3:00 p.m.**
- No homemade dishes or homemade baked goods may be served at school celebrations. **ECAPCS will furnish cupcakes and drinks for the monthly celebrations.**
- Additional party items such as goodie bags and other treats may not be served at school celebrations.
- Parents/Guardians of birthday students may participate in the celebrations. However, no additional family members and no other children, including children from other classrooms, may participate.
- All students in the classroom will be permitted to participate in all birthday celebrations.

Parents are asked to notify the teacher if religious beliefs or allergies prohibit your child from participating in school parties or celebrations so that other arrangements can be made during these celebrations.

COMMUNICATION WITH APPROPRIATE STAFF

It is important that parents speak with the appropriate staff person if they have questions or concerns. The staff in the front office is responsible for questions regarding entering the building, contacting teachers or the principal, submitting enrollment documents, completing verification forms, or updating student information. Please do not direct complaints or concerns about school policies and procedures or classroom practices to the office staff.

If you have a question or concern about your child's instructional program or classroom practices, please first request a meeting with your child's teacher. If your concern is not resolved, please request a meeting with the director of your child's grade level program. If you have a question or concern about any of ECA's policies or procedures, please request a meeting with ECA's principal.

CURRICULUM

ECA adheres to the Common Core States Standards for reading, mathematics, science and social studies. To view the standards, please go to the website at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>.

ECA uses the Pearson *Opening the World of Learning* (OWL) series for prekindergarten-3 and prekindergarten-4. For students in grades kindergarten through three, ECA uses McGraw Hill *Reading Wonders* and *My Math* and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Social Studies, and Science.

All students also participate in weekly physical education and general music classes. Violin, viola, cello, drum, and xylophone classes are offered to students admitted into the instrumental music program. Additional services are provided to students with Individualized Education Programs based on their identified needs.

If you have any curriculum or instruction related concerns, please speak with your child's teacher or the director of your child's grade level program.

DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. **Students must remain at school until 3:00 p.m. each day**, and must be picked up promptly at 3:00 p.m. Student safety is the highest priority of ECAPCS. Therefore, we make every effort to ensure that all students are under appropriate supervision until they return to you at the end of their school day.

For that reason, we are concerned about students who are left after dismissal time. The school is not, and cannot be, staffed to provide supervision for students in these situations; hiring extra personnel to supervise is beyond our financial resources.

Parents are permitted three late pick-ups per school year and afterward will be assessed a fee of \$20 for each day that the child is not picked up on time.

Students may only be picked up by an adult listed by the parent on the official roster for pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that all adults whom you may ask to pick up your child are listed on the official pick-up list. Please add or delete persons from your child's pick up list as you deem necessary. Under no conditions may a student be picked-up by a minor before the official 3:00 p.m. dismissal time.

Because of the young age of our students, we discourage parents from allowing their children to walk home at 3:00 pm without adult supervision. However, if you choose to have your child walk home alone, we must receive a signed ECA release form before we will permit your child to do so.

The Metropolitan Police Department will be contacted for any student who is not picked up after every attempt has been made by the school to contact the parent or others on the pick-up list on file in the main office.

DRESS CODE

It is mandatory that all ECA students wear the official school uniform every day, Monday through Friday, unless parents have been notified in writing of a special non-uniform day. The ECA uniform consists of navy blue slacks, shorts (to the knee), skirt, or jumper, and a plain yellow button-down or polo uniform shirt (with no words or graphics on the shirt). Blue jeans and cargo pants may not be worn. Plain navy blue sweaters or plain navy blue hoodies may also be worn. However, no clothing displaying writing, drawings, or graphics may be worn. Variations in color such as gold shirts are not allowed.

Students who are not in uniform will not remain in class. We will attempt to identify clothing for the child from the school uniform bank and/or contact the parent to provide the appropriate uniform attire.

DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School intends to maintain a safe, healthy, and drug-free environment for its students, staff, and visitors. Smoking is not permitted in the building, outside on school grounds, or when accompanying students on field trips.

It is the policy of Early Childhood Academy to immediately notify law enforcement and pursue charges against any person or persons suspected of using, distributing, or selling illegal or controlled substances while on school grounds.

MY SCHOOL DC LOTTERY

The My School DC common lottery is a single, random lottery that determines placement for new students at all participating schools. Student-school matches are based on the number of spaces at each school; sibling, proximity, and other lottery preferences; and how each parent ranked his or her school choices. Details regarding the lottery process can be accessed on the My School DC website at www.myschooldc.org.

FIELD TRIPS

The vast resources of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area will be utilized to extend teaching and learning beyond the walls of the school. Teachers will plan field trips that are directly related to goals and objectives being taught in the classrooms. All students in the classroom must attend planned trips during the school day. **Parents cannot request that students be left at school as a punishment for inappropriate behavior.**

ECA will assume the costs for private bus transportation to and from most trips. If the event charges an admission fee, parents will be responsible for the payment by the deadline indicated on the field trip permission form.

Some trips may require adult chaperones to assist with supervision of students. Only children of the class involved, the teachers, and designated adult chaperones are eligible to attend. Children who are not members of the class, including those of chaperones and faculty members, are not eligible to attend. Chaperones are expected to ride the bus when supervising field trips.

For safety reasons, all children participating in school field trips who ride the school chartered bus to the site must also return to ECA on the school chartered bus.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Student safety is our number one priority at ECA. In an emergency medical situation, we will address the immediate needs of the child first, and then contact parents or guardians. It is important that all parents update phone numbers as needed to ensure that the school is able to reach you in an emergency situation. Please be sure to update numbers both with the classroom teacher and with the main office.

Your child should not be in school if he/she has a fever, is vomiting, is experiencing excessive coughing or runny nose, or is lethargic because of illness. If a child is suspected of having conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), ringworm, or any other communicable illness he/she may not attend school. Parents will be contacted to pick up students who are at school and exhibiting these symptoms. Students with suspected flu, ringworm, conjunctivitis, or any other communicable illness may not return to school without a written clearance from the child's doctor.

Medications may not be administered to students by staff members unless ECA has received the required consent forms signed by both the parent and the child's doctor along with a complete and unused

container of the medication. When these circumstances are satisfied, certified staff persons will be able to administer medications as prescribed.

Without this completed written authorization, medications may not be administered. This includes all oral medications including cough drops, cough syrup, aspirin and Tylenol, and all topical medications including medicated creams and ointments, and antiseptic wipes. Students may not carry medications or have them in their backpacks. If your child requires medication during the school day, please contact the principal immediately.

Many students have food or other allergies. It is important that parents alert teachers of all known allergies. This information must be included when completing your child's enrollment form.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned as an extension of classroom learning. Therefore, homework for students in grades kindergarten through three will be designed so that the student has the ability and prior knowledge that will enable him/her to complete assignments independently. Although parents are encouraged to actively facilitate homework completion, ECA asks that parents not complete assignments for their children.

Students who participate in the aftercare program may start their homework at school. However, since homework is designed to give parents and their children an opportunity to review learning at home, homework will not necessarily be completed in aftercare. Parents of children in the aftercare program are asked to carefully review homework assignments with students each night and ensure that it is completed.

Homework will be assigned based on the following completion times:

- Prekindergarten 3 and 4– no more than 15 minutes daily
- Kindergarten and Grade One – no more than 20 minutes daily
- Grades Two and Three – no more than 30 minutes daily

Prekindergarten 3 and 4 homework assignments will include family projects such as reading aloud with your child, exploring family history and the world around us, counting and number games, and identifying and sorting objects according to attributes.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is located in the entrance area of the Johnenning building. Each year many items, particularly clothing, are turned in to the office. Parents are encouraged to go through these items occasionally. To reduce the occurrences of lost items, please write your child's name on every article or personal belonging that is brought to school. This should be done with indelible, non-washable ink so that all articles are easily identified. It is especially important that you write your child's name on sweaters, coats and jackets.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF ABUSE/NEGLECT & RESPONSE TO DC AUTHORITIES

All ECA personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. If child abuse or neglect, including educational neglect (failure to send child to school regularly) is suspected, ECA personnel are required to contact DC Child and Family Services. As required by law, the parent will not be contacted by the school in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

Additionally, ECA is often contacted for information by the DC Office of Child and Family Services, the DC Courts, and sometimes by the Metropolitan Police Department. Please be advised that ECA is required to cooperate fully with all local and federal authorities.

NUTRITION

ECA believes in encouraging student behavior that will result in the students maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Daily physical activity and nutrition education are important components of the early childhood program.

ECA students are not permitted to bring junk food (chips, candy, sugary drinks, sodas) to school for any reason. If a child is found with junk food at school, it will be confiscated. This includes junk food items contained in Lunchables.

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

It is mandatory that the main office of the school maintain accurate and current contact information for you and your child. If your telephone number or address changes, ECA requires that you inform the main office staff immediately so that our records can be updated.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

ECA welcomes and encourages the involvement of parents in the school programs. Parents are always welcome to visit the school, schedule meetings with teachers or the principal, and observe in their child's classroom. Parents are also often invited to assist with field trips and special events. In addition, ECA holds quarterly family nights and PSA meetings to support the home/school connection. Please review the attached "Parent Involvement Policy" for more information about opportunities to work with the school.

REPORT CARDS & QUARTERLY CONFERENCES

Parents will receive report cards detailing their children's achievement four times per year. Report cards provide a description of the student's areas of strength and weakness as well as recommendations for parents to support their children's growth and development.

Parent conferences are scheduled three times per year to provide parents with an opportunity to speak with teachers about their children's academic and social/emotional growth and development and review report cards. Those parents who do not pick up report cards during conference times may pick up their children's reports after the conference date. Report cards will not be issued to students or older siblings. Please refer to the ECA school calendar for parent conference dates. You will be notified of the parent conference schedule.

Parents will be notified in writing by the start of the third advisory if a student is in danger of retention. This notification will be written on the child's report card.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Sometimes students are identified as needing additional support in one or more academic areas or in behavior management. Struggling students are identified through poor performance on class wide or school wide screenings intended to indicate which students may be at risk of academic or behavioral problems. A student may also be identified through other means, such as teacher observation and assessments.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a method of academic and/or behavioral intervention used to provide early, effective assistance to students so that they will have the best opportunities to succeed in school. Once a student has been identified, a team comprised of our grade level director, teachers and other ECA staff will meet to discuss a plan of support. ECA provides the student with tiered instruction of increasing intensity while the student is still in the general education environment and closely monitors the student's

progress (or response to the interventions), and makes adjustments to instruction, given the student's progress. Students who continue to struggle after more intense instruction may be referred for further assessment and evaluation; the data from the RTI process will be used in the evaluation process.

SCHOOL CLOSURE FOR WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

Severe weather or other emergencies may occasionally necessitate school closure or delay. ECA does not follow DCPS weather related closures or delays. ECA weather closings will be announced on multiple sites:

- 1) TV stations NBC 4, Fox 5, ABC 7, News Channel 8 and CBC Channel 9 will list Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School as closed or delayed.
- 2) ECA will send out a phone message and text to parents from our automated system. We will do our best to ensure that you receive information by 6:30 a.m.
- 3) We will provide weather closing updates on our website at ecapcs.org and our Facebook page.

STATEMENT OF PARTNERSHIP

ECA is in partnership with AppleTree Institute for our students in PreK3 and 4. As part of the regular program, your child's teachers will assess your child's academic and social skills. AppleTree Institute reviews the data internally and with your child's teacher to improve instruction. De-identified data are also shared with staff, consultants, educators, and in educational reports. Within this partnership, AppleTree Institute reserves the right to photograph/videotape students, faculty, staff and facilities in connection with the activities of the school and to reproduce such images to promote, publicize, or explain the school or its activities. These images may appear in any of a variety of formats and media now available or that may be available in the future, including but not limited to print, broadcast, videotape, and electronic/on-line media. Parents who do not wish to have their child included in the above coverage should inform the principal in writing.

SUSPENSION / EXPULSION POLICY

It is the intent of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School to maintain a safe and nurturing school climate in which students feel well cared for and academically challenged. The school's goal is to create an environment that promotes mutual respect, cooperation, and teaches appropriate conflict resolution. However, the egregious disregard for school rules and the safety of others warrants disciplinary action for the offending student. Attempts will be made to modify behavior through the implementation of classroom consequences and/or in-school suspension. Students who repeatedly commit serious infractions for which discipline is warranted will receive out of school suspension if attempts to modify behavior through in-school consequences have proven ineffective.

Parents will be notified verbally and in writing within 24 hours of the student offense and in advance of the commencement of any suspension period for the child. Notification to parents will include a description of the infraction, resolutions attempted at the local school level, and outcomes. Students will be provided with appropriate instructional activities to be completed at home during the suspension period. Parents will be required to attend a school conference with the principal and other pertinent staff members before the student's re-admittance to the school at the conclusion of the suspension period.

Students with disabilities may be suspended for infractions and periods that are consistent with suspension guidelines for non-disabled students. However, students with disabilities are not to be suspended for infractions that can be directly linked as a manifestation of the disability, unless it is evident that the student has a clear understanding that his/her actions were inappropriate and subject to disciplinary action. A meeting of the special education coordinator, principal, classroom teacher, and special education teacher will be convened within 24 hours of the student offense to review the infraction and determine the appropriateness of suspension. Students with disabilities may be suspended for a period of less than ten days for a single infraction. Students with disabilities are not to be suspended for a cumulative period of ten days or more within a school year.

Offenses that greatly compromise the health and safety of the staff and students of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School may result in the expulsion of the student. Expulsion may be recommended to the Early Childhood Academy School Board of Trustees by the principal. Parents will be notified verbally and in writing of the nature of the infraction and the recommendation for expulsion. The parents are entitled to a meeting with the principal and school board representative, after which a final decision will be made by the Early Childhood Academy Board of Trustees.

The following infractions may result in suspension of 1 to 10 days:

Acts that destroy, deface, or cause damage to school property.
The documented, repeated failure* to comply with the directions of a school staff member acting within the scope of his/her employment, when said non-compliance results in disruption of the school program or injury to another student or staff person. *Repeated failure is defined as the failure of the student to comply during a third or more incident of the same nature.
The possession of profane material, or illegal or controlled substances while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Trespassing on school grounds during a period of suspension or expulsion.
Causing disruption or being otherwise disorderly on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Participating or promoting gambling on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
The unauthorized possession of electronic communication devices such as pagers and cell phones on school grounds or at school sponsored activities. (Authorization for the possession of such devices must be obtained in advance from the principal.)
Any theft or attempted theft of property belonging to the school, employees of the school, or visitors to the school.
The possession of weapons, tools that could reasonably be used as weapons, or items that give the appearance of being a weapon, such as toy guns, water pistols, etc. on school grounds or at school sponsored activities.
The use of profanity on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Physical or sexual harassment of employees or students on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Any malicious act that could cause injury to an employee, school visitor or another student while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person, or willfully using force or violence upon the person of another.

The following infractions may result in suspension of 11 to 25 days or in expulsion from
Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School:

The use of any weapon capable of inflicting lethal injury to one or more individuals while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Weapons include but are not limited to firearms, knives, and razor blades.
The use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, controlled substances, or illegal substances while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Any malicious act that could potentially result in lethal injury to one or more individuals while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.

In-School Suspension will be determined on a case-by-case basis. It is designed to minimize the need for Out-of-School Suspensions while providing constructive learning experiences for students. Students will be assigned to In-School Suspension by the grade level directors or the principal as a disciplinary action for reasons including, but not limited to:

- 1) Behavior which adversely affects the safety and well-being of other students;
- 2) Behavior which disrupts a class or school sponsored activity;
- 3) Behavior prejudicial to good order, discipline, and safety occurring in classroom or other areas throughout the school; or
- 4) Insubordination or disruption while serving in-school suspension.

For additional information about the ECA suspension policy, please feel free to contact the principal.

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School

Title I

Parental Involvement Policy

2015-2016

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School (ECA) receives Title I, Part A federal funding through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). As part of the school's Title I plan, this parental involvement policy has been developed in collaboration with ECA's Parent School Organization. Please review this parental involvement policy and contact the school if you have any questions or concerns about its content.

Parental involvement is key to ECA's success. Parents are more than our partners; they guide us in our decisions about appropriate offerings for their children. ECA maintains an open door policy; parents are free to visit classrooms at any time during the school day without prior notice and encouraged to contact the principal or vice principal at any time during the day with any questions or concerns. If a conference with the teacher is desired, however, we ask parents to schedule a conference time so as not to disrupt students' instructional time.

Several structured organizations, programs, and initiatives ensure the involvement of and on-going communication with parents.

Parent School Association & Parent Leadership Team

All parents are expected to be a part of the ECA Parent School Association (PSA). The PSA is responsible for planning and implementing activities in support of the students and is led by the Parent Leadership Team, a parent body elected by the PSA. Parents will be notified by email and by the ECA Alert Now automated phone system whenever PSA meetings or events are scheduled. The Parent Leadership Team meets monthly to plan PSA meetings and events. One of the most important jobs of the Parent Leadership Team is to meet with the school leadership each spring to provide input in the development of school programs, policies, and initiatives for the coming school year.

The first PSA Meeting for this school year will be held on Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. Subsequent meetings will be held quarterly, during Family Fun Night and as determined by the members of the PSA.

Quarterly Parent Conferences

All parents are expected to participate in quarterly individual parent conferences with their children's teachers. These conferences are held to give parents the opportunity to privately confer with teachers about their children's progress. Parents will receive their children's quarterly report card at the conference and grades will be discussed. It is important for parents to make every effort to attend quarterly conferences. Please contact your child's teacher to reschedule the meeting, if necessary.

Conferences for the 2016-2017 school year are scheduled for:

November 10th • February 10th • April 28th

Family Involvement Activities

ECA will hold a quarterly PSA/family event, for all parents, students, and ECA staff. The goals of the activities are: to provide ECA parents with information and training to better equip them to support their children at home; to provide PSA updates and information to parents; to distribute new books to students to help build their home libraries; and to encourage communication between parents and school staff in a relaxed atmosphere. Dinner will be held for all in attendance.

ECA Open House

ECA sponsors an Open House in the winter of each school year to allow parents and other visitors the opportunity to observe and/or participate in classroom activities. Parents may visit their children's classrooms and work alongside their own children in morning language, reading, and math activities. This year's Open House will be held on **Friday, December 2, 2016**.

Monthly Newsletters

Each classroom teacher will send home a monthly newsletter informing parents of grade level standards and skills to be taught, planned field trips, and other special activities for the month. The newsletter will provide parents with important tips and strategies to help them support their children at home. Parents are asked to read the newsletter monthly and encouraged to contact their child's teacher with any questions or concerns about planned events and instruction.

Email Communication

If parents wish to speak with a teacher or administrator, they may contact the school at 202-373-0035. In addition, each teacher, associate teacher, and administrator has an email address that includes his/her first initial and last name @ecapcs.org (e.g. tingraham@ecapcs.org). Teachers and staff will respond to your email within 24 hours. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers and administrators by email as an expedient alternative to leaving a phone message in the main office.

Teacher Status

Under the federal No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), all parents have the right to know teachers' statuses as qualified instructors. 100% of ECA teachers (teachers and associate teachers) are Highly Qualified under NCLB. All teachers hold a bachelor's degree or higher; over one-third have earned a master's degree. All associate teachers have either passed the state assessment for teaching assistants (the ParaPro Assessment) or hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Policy for Complaint Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Education Act Programs And Competitive Grants

The purpose of this policy is to describe the administrative procedures of the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for handling and resolving complaints about the operations of programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other applicable District laws in a fair and timely manner.

Parents, teachers, individuals, private schools, local education agencies, and other organizations may file a complaint alleging that a federal statute or regulation has been violated in the administration of ESEA programs at Early Childhood Academy PCS. OSSE shall investigate all allegations of non-compliance with state or federal law, rules or regulations.

This policy serves as the grievance procedures for all ESEA programs and state administered competitive grants, excluding the complaints and hearing process under Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq. administered pursuant to Title 5, Chapter E-30 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations available at <http://www.dcregs.org>.

This policy replaces all previously issued complaint procedures for ESEA programs. This policy is not intended to be a substitute for any federal statutes, regulations or non-regulatory guidance.

Authority

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education has the authority to hear complaints and appeals regarding programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) pursuant to: EDGAR Sec. 76.401, 76.783; Title IX, Sec. 9304 (20 USC 7844); Title IX, Sec. 9503 (20 USC 7883). This policy shall serve as the grievance procedure for all ESEA programs and state administered competitive grants, excluding the complaints and hearing process under Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq. administered pursuant to Title 5, Chapter E-30 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations available at <http://www.dcregs.org>.

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to describe the administrative procedures of the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for handling and resolving complaints regarding the operations of programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other applicable District laws in a fair and timely manner. These procedures describe:

How individuals or organizations may register a complaint that the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA), or other grant recipient has violated laws and/or regulations governing state-administered programs funded under ESEA;

- When private schools may register a complaint with OSSE against the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCSPS); and
- When eligible applicants and subgrantees may request a hearing on an action taken by the state education agency.

The following procedures govern the receipt and resolution of a complaint alleging that the OSSE as the SEA, a District of Columbia LEA or other grant recipient is in violation of any federal statute or regulation that applies to a state-administered ESEA funded program listed in section III, Complaints. Guidance for subgrantees requesting a hearing and the reasons for requesting a hearing are described in section V, Subgrantee Complaints and Hearings.

If you believe that Early Childhood Academy PCS has failed to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) or with a requirement of District of Columbia law regarding special education under Part B of IDEA or a public agency or private service provider with regard to early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, you may file a complaint to initiate an investigation of the matter in accordance with the IDEA complaint policy. A copy of this policy can be found at:

<http://osse.dc.gov/service/policies-and-regulations>:

Complaints

OSSE shall investigate all allegations of non-compliance with state or federal law, rules or regulations. When appropriate, every effort should be made to resolve the issue at the local level before filing a formal complaint with OSSE. This can include meeting with the principal, school head, or central office staff to address the alleged violation. Only once all local remedies have been exhausted should a formal complaint be submitted to OSSE.

Complaints from the Public

Parents, teachers, other individuals or organizations may file a complaint alleging the SEA or LEA is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to any of the programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended. These programs include, but are not limited to:

Title I, Part A, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged;

Title I, Part B, Subpart 3, Even Start Family Literacy;

Title I, Part D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk;

Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund

Title II, Part B, Mathematics and Science Partnerships;

Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education through Technology; Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement;

Title IV, Part A, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities;

Title IV, Part B, 21st Century Community Learning Centers;

Title V, Part D, Subpart 6, Gifted and Talented Students; and

Competitive grants administered with local funds.

Process for Submitting Complaints

1. Complaints must be in writing and should contain:

A statement that Early Childhood Academy PCS has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that concerns a covered program; the facts on which the statement is based; a recommendation on how OSSE would resolve the complaint; the specific requirement of law or regulation allegedly violated, if possible; and be signed and dated by the complainant.

2. Complaints must be mailed or hand-delivered to:

**Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of the State Superintendent of Education
810 First Street, NE – 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20002**

OSSE may, at its own discretion, redirect a complaint which should have been properly filed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) complaint policy.

A copy of this complaint policy can be found online at:

<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/state-complaints-policy-and-procedure>

Complaint Resolution Process

OSSE shall issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of a complaint. If the complaint involves an LEA, OSSE shall send a copy of the Letter of Acknowledgement to the DCPS Chancellor, or corresponding administrator of the LEA.

The letter will include the following information:

- the date the office received the complaint;
- how the complainant may provide additional information;
- the name and contact information of the assigned complaint investigator; and
- timelines for the resolution of the complaint.

OSSE shall investigate the complaint, reviewing the facts and circumstances of the complaint and may request further information from the complainant.

OSSE in its discretion may conduct an onsite monitoring visit.

Once OSSE has determined whether a violation of law or regulation has occurred, the complaint investigator shall develop a Letter of Findings to address whether or not the program in question is in compliance. The Letter of Findings, stating either the need for corrective action or that OSSE does not sustain the complaint, shall be sent to the complainant and DCPS or other subject of the complaint. Each party shall have the right to respond in writing to the Letter of Findings within ten (10) business days from the date of issuance. A party filing a response shall deliver a copy to OSSE as well as each party subject to the complaint.

OSSE shall issue a Final Agency Decision based upon its Letter of Findings and any additional information provided in the responses, as deemed appropriate within sixty (60) business days after the date of issuance of its Letter of Findings.

If OSSE determines a violation has occurred, the subject of the complaint shall submit a corrective action plan. The plan and timelines for its completion must be approved by OSSE.

The Final Agency Decision issued by OSSE may be appealed in accordance with the appeals process.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Early Childhood Academy PCS (ECA) are hereby notified that ECA 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.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;

- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- 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.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Trustees – Dennis M. Sawyers, President ***dennis_sawyers@yahoo.com***

The ECA Board of Trustees is the governing body for the school. The Board of Trustees is responsible for assessing academic achievement; monitoring school improvement; reviewing and approving the school budget; supporting fundraising efforts; approving salaries and program changes that impact budget; pursuing facility improvements; identifying and evaluating the school leadership; addressing the questions and concerns of stakeholders; participating in program reviews; developing long-term strategic plans; and implementing marketing initiatives.

The board may be contacted if you have any concerns related to school governance or management that are not addressed to your satisfaction by the Principal or Executive Director.

Executive Director – Wendy S. Edwards ***wedwards@ecapcs.org***

The Executive Director is responsible for oversight of all programs and operations of the school. The Executive Director analyzes student and teacher data, program reviews, and audits to determine school needs; develops long and short-term strategic plans; facilitates the accreditation process; leads the process of building acquisition; makes recommendations to the board regarding budget, salaries, and staffing; oversees the use of local and federal funding; seeks funding through grant writing; implements marketing initiatives; collaborates with the principal to assess program effectiveness and plan for improvements; and evaluates the administrative staff and school leadership.

The Executive Director may be contacted if you have questions or concerns related to school policies and procedures.

Principal – Thann Ingraham ***tingraham@ecapcs.org***

The Principal is responsible for instructional leadership and school operations and management. The Principal plans and implements professional development and educational initiatives based upon the identified needs of the school; supports and leads the instructional staff; monitors and assesses the teaching and learning process; reviews and analyzes school data; develops and implements school policies and procedures; manages the day to day operations of the school; makes recommendations to the Executive Director for staffing and salary decisions; ensures the school's compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; manages teaching staff, the Special Education Coordinator, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the Response to Intervention Coordinator, and the administrative support staff; and collaborates with the Executive Director on school improvement plans.

The Principal may be contacted if you have any questions or concerns related to educational programs, student achievement, school policies and procedures, or the specific needs of students.

Director of Curriculum & Instruction – Pamela Faulcon
pfaulcon@ecapcs.org

The Director of Curriculum & Instruction is responsible for assisting the Principal in the planning and implementation of professional development, the identification and use of curricula and resources, and the development of educational initiatives. The Director of Curriculum & Instruction identifies formative and summative assessments; facilitates the administration of assessments; disaggregates test data; and supports teachers in implementing effective instruction through the ongoing use of data. The Director of Curriculum & Instruction reviews and identifies new educational programs, resources, and initiatives in support of school improvement and makes recommendations to the principal.

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction is also the Director of the Pre-K3 & 4 Program. The Director of the Pre-K3 & 4 Program is responsible for evaluating grade level instructional staff for the purpose of ensuring that standards are achieved and performance is maximized. The Director of the Pre-K3 & 4 Program facilitates communication between assigned grade level personnel, students and /or parents for the purpose of evaluating situations, solving problems and resolving conflicts; facilitates the development and evaluation of quality learning; intervenes in occurrence of inappropriate behavior of students to assist students in modifying such behavior and develop successful interpersonal skills; and monitors student data collection. The Director of the Pre-K3 & 4 Program provides individualized, classroom-based coaching to support implementation of effective instructional practices. The Director of the Pre-K3 & 4 Program also supervises grade level instructional staff for the purpose of monitoring performance, providing for professional growth and achieving overall goals as prescribed in the PCSB Performance Management Framework (PMF).

Director of the K & 1 Program – La’Kea Edwards
ledwards@ecapcs.org

The Director of the K/1 Program is responsible for evaluating grade level instructional staff for the purpose of ensuring that standards are achieved and performance is maximized. The Director of the K/1 Program facilitates communication between assigned grade level personnel, students and /or parents for the purpose of evaluating situations, solving problems and resolving conflicts; facilitates the development and evaluation of quality learning; intervenes in occurrence of inappropriate behavior of students to assist students in modifying such behavior and develop successful interpersonal skills; and monitors student data collection. The Director of the K/1 Program provides individualized, classroom-based coaching to support implementation of effective instructional practices. The Director of the K/1 Program also supervises grade level instructional staff for the purpose of monitoring performance, providing for professional growth and achieving overall goals as prescribed in the PCSB Performance Management Framework (PMF).

Director of the 2/3 Program – Amia Johnson
ajohnson@ecapcs.org

The Director of the 2/3 Program is responsible for evaluating grade level instructional staff for the purpose of ensuring that standards are achieved and performance is maximized. The Director of the 2/3 Program facilitates communication between assigned grade level personnel, students and /or parents for the purpose of evaluating situations, solving problems and resolving conflicts; facilitates the development and evaluation of quality learning; intervenes in occurrence of inappropriate behavior of students to assist students in modifying such behavior and develop successful interpersonal skills; and monitors student data collection. The Director of the 2/3 Program provides individualized, classroom-based coaching to support implementation of effective instructional practices. The Director of the 2/3 Program also supervises grade level instructional staff for the purpose of monitoring performance, providing for professional growth and achieving overall goals as prescribed in the PCSB Performance Management Framework (PMF).

Special Education Coordinator – Rebecca Schultz
rschultz@ecapcs.org

The Special Education Coordinator is responsible for coordinating assessments, meetings, IEP development, and instruction of special needs students and students in the referral process, in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Special Education Coordinator schedules and facilitates Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings; assists in writing goals for IEPs; supports the special education teachers and service providers in the implementation of services; maintains the special education database; serves as the liaison for special education-related communication with DC Public Schools, Early Stages, the Public Charter School Board and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education; submits reports and documentation for special education funding; and coordinates information between the school and local organizations, federal authorities, and student advocates.

The Special Education Coordinator may be contacted if you have questions or concerns about the special education referral process. The Special Education Coordinator should be contacted for support with students with IEPs or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), or for students in the referral process.

Administrative Assistant – Sharon Maxwell
smaxwell@ecapcs.org

The Administrative Assistant is responsible for oversight of all operations of the main office. The Administrative Assistant enrolls new students and ensures compliance with the enrollment requirements of the Public Charter School Board; makes school purchases; maintains all student records and files; develops documents, flyers, and forms; facilitates time and attendance reporting; prepares employee time sheets for processing; supports and responds to the needs of parents and the community; assists teachers with administrative tasks; receives leave and field trip requests for approval by the Principal; maintains parent payment logs; develops and maintains student databases; complies with reporting requirements of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the Public Charter School Board; and provides direct assistance to the Principal and the school leadership.

The Administrative Assistant may be contacted if you have questions or concerns about the enrollment process, medical needs of your child, or your contact information. Please contact the administrative assistant to schedule appointments with teachers or the principal.

Receptionist – Jasmine Shannon

jshannono@ecapcs.org

The Receptionist is responsible for responding to inquiries, greeting visitors and assisting in the operations of the main office. The Receptionist responds to questions and requests from parents and the community; enrolls new students and ensures compliance with the enrollment requirements of the Public Charter School Board; completes copying requests; maintains student attendance databases; orders and delivers instructional, office, and custodial supplies; and provides assistance to the administrative assistant, the principal, and the school leadership.

The Receptionist may be contacted if you have questions or concerns about the enrollment process, medical needs of your child, or your contact information. Please contact the administrative assistant to schedule appointments with teachers or the principal.

Assessment Coordinator – Kathy Peterson-Prince

kprince@ecapcs.org

Responsibilities include scheduling, preparing, implementing, and collecting data for all school-wide assessments, including but not limited to CLASS and ECR for prekindergarten, NWEA MAP and DRA for kindergarten through third grade, and PARCC for grade three. Coordinator will be responsible for attending related meetings, training teachers on test implementation, notifying teachers of assessment schedule, preparing all materials and technology to be used, monitoring testing periods, recording outcomes on the school database, and printing reports as requested.

Family Support Coordinator – Cortney Mayfield

cmayfield@ecapcs.org

The Family Support Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the attendance of all students. The Family Support Coordinator contacts and meets with parents of students with chronic attendance and tardiness challenges, submits referrals to Child and Family Services, and ensures that accurate attendance is kept by the teaching staff. The Family Support Coordinator serves the educational process by ensuring students develop and maintain excellent attendance practices and that parents support and adhere to attendance requirements of the school.

The Family Support Coordinator implements parent engagement communication projects with responsibilities that include public relations, special events management, advertising, and creating brand awareness. Family Support Coordinator organizes presentations using marketing resource materials for print and Web such as brochures, photographs, and flyers. The Family Support Coordinator fulfills other duties as assigned to ensure efficient and effective promotional communications of school-wide activities.

The Family Support Coordinator is responsible for the oversight of the coordination of the before and after care program in accordance with the policies and philosophy of ECA.

Before and After Care Coordinator – Renesha Alphonso

ralphonso@ecapcs.org

The Before and After Care Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the before and after care program. The Coordinator plans, assists, in the implementation of all aspects of the before and after school program in accordance with the policies and philosophy of ECA. The Coordinator prepares and maintains manual and electronic documents and reports (e.g. attendance, budget, daily activities, program guidelines, and schedules); organizes meetings for the purpose of identifying and addressing issues, providing information and supporting staff. The Before and After Care Coordinator ensures that early childhood education

experiences with a variety of materials in the areas of Art, Music, Reading, Science, Technology and Physical Education are used throughout the program.