

# Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School

## Student/Family Policies Submission Docs

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

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.

Each teacher will use ClassDojo app as behavior management tool for the classroom. Each student has a profile to which teachers can assign positive and negative points (or 'dojos') throughout the school day. The program can be operated by a teacher from their phone, computer or tablet. Parents will have logins so that they can view their child's achievements from home.

ClassDojo is also a great source of communication for the classroom. It connects teachers, parents, and students who use it to share photos, videos, and messages through the school day. It allows families and school staff to work together as a team, share in the classroom experience, and bring big ideas to life in their classrooms and homes.

All students will also 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.

### **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.

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. 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. A manifestation determination meeting must occur within 10 days of any decision to change the child's placement because of a violation of code of student conduct, if the determination is no. If it is determined that the infraction is a manifestation of the student's disability, then a FBA and/or BIP must be completed even if it is evident that the student has a clear understanding that his/her actions were inappropriate and subject to disciplinary action.

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 have a right to appeal a suspension or expulsion which entitles them to a meeting with the principal and school board representative, after which a final decision will be made by the Principal or the Early Childhood Academy Board of Trustees.

The following infractions may result in suspension of up to 5 days:

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 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.
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 up to 5 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.
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 (ISS)** removes a student from his/her classroom for a period of time while allowing him/her to attend school and complete work. ISS will be determined on a case-by-case basis. School staff will notify parents/guardians when the decision to issue an ISS is made. The length of the ISS is directly related to the offense. 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.

## **Suspensions and Expulsion Appeal Process**

### **1) Submit request to appeal in writing.**

- Parents/guardians must submit a written request to appeal disciplinary decision to the Principal within two (2) school days of being notified of the suspension or expulsion.

### **2) Schedule an appeal hearing.**

- The Principal will schedule an appeal hearing upon receipt of the written request. If the parent/guardian fails to appear for the scheduled appeal hearing, the right to appeal is waived and the original disciplinary decision will stand.

### **3) Conduct an appeal hearing.**

- The Executive Director, Principal and Grade Level Director (school representatives) will conduct an appeal hearing that is closed to the public and may include the presentation of evidence, testimony, and questioning of those present.
- Parents/guardians and other adults may represent the student at the hearing.
- During the hearing, the Grade Level Director will take notes and provide a copy to the parent/guardian at the conclusion of the hearing.

### **4) Communicate final decision.**

- After the hearing, the school representatives will review the evidence, make a decision and when possible, the Principal will communicate the final decision within 24 hours to the parent/guardian.
- If the suspension or expulsion is overturned, the student's cumulative record and all other school-maintained records will reflect that conclusion.
- If the school representatives uphold the suspension or expulsion, the original disciplinary decision will be imposed and will be final.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

ECA is committed to providing our students with high-quality education. 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. 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.

### **How do I report that my child will be absent from school?**

Please report all absences to your child's teacher or Grade Level Director as soon as the need for absence is known. If we do not receive advance notice of an absence, we will call the student's parent/guardian to determine the reason for the absence.

### **When is an absence unexcused?**

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 and constitute unexcused absences for students. If your child is absent for any of these reasons he/she will be marked as unexcused.

### **When is an absence excused?**

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. **A maximum of four (4) handwritten notes for absences due to illness will be accepted. All written excuses beyond four (4) must be a note from a doctor in order to be excused. 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. Any child who amasses 30 or more excused or unexcused absences in the school year will be retained.** Because class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians must schedule medical appointments during holiday and intersessions break periods and non-school hours. The observance of religious holidays, death in immediate family, and suspension are other valid reasons for absence.

### **When is a student marked tardy?**

Students who arrive in class after 8:30 AM will be marked tardy.

### **How can families help establish consistent and on-time attendance for their children?**

- Engage with your child about the importance of a good education to their future
- Encourage good sleeping and eating habits
- Work with your child to come up with a consistent morning routine that includes plenty of time to get ready for school
- Leave extra time for transportation issues, like metro delays and traffic
- Make sure your child reports to school at 8:05 am even if he/she is not having breakfast at school
- Schedule medical/dental appointments after school where possible

The Family Support Coordinator will contact the parent/guardian to address 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. We reserve the right to exclude any student in pre-k 3 and 4 with ten (10) or more absences. Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students may be withdrawn after 20 consecutive unexcused absences. Students with ten (10) or more absences by December 2019 and each month**

thereafter will be required to meet with the Family Support Coordinator and school administration to devise a corrective action plan. Child and Family Services will be contacted for students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade with 10 unexcused absences.

Students who are unenrolled from ECA for any reason are not eligible to return during the school year in which they are unenrolled. If an unenrolled student wishes to return to ECA he/she will be required to reapply for enrollment through the My School DC Common Lottery.

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.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

# **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.

An internal (non-OSSE) process for resolving parent/student complaints will be conducted by the Principal or Executive Director. The ECA board of governance may be contacted if you have any concerns related to school governance, management or school policy that are not addressed to your satisfaction by the Principal or Executive Director.

Complaints must be addressed to:

Mr. Dennis Sawyers, Board of Trustees President  
*[dennis\\_sawyers@yahoo.com](mailto:dennis_sawyers@yahoo.com)*

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:](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**

15. 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 – 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

### **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) NOTICE**

### **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 (administrator, instructor, health or medical staff, and contracted service provider) with legitimate educational interest; This includes
    - ✓ Performing appropriate tasks specific to position description or by contract agreement.
    - ✓ Performing tasks related to a student's education.
    - ✓ Performing tasks related to the discipline of a student.
    - ✓ Providing services for the student such as health care or counseling.
  - 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.
- Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

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.

If you do not want Early Childhood Academy PCS to disclose any or all types of directory information from your child's education records without prior consent, you must notify the Executive Director, Principal or Director of Curriculum and Instruction in writing by October 1, 2019.

## **OPEN MEETINGS POLICY**

It is the policy of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School that meetings of the board of trustees, its committees, and advisory boards shall be open to the public.

Meetings or portions of meetings may occasionally be closed to the public when considering matters relating to individual employees, proprietary information or litigation. A written statement explaining the reason for closing the meeting will be placed in the school's weekly bulletin and made available on the website at least a week before the meeting is held.

All meetings are held at the school campus located, 885 Barnaby Street SE, Washington DC 20032 from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Occasionally, some meetings will be held by conference call. You will be notified in advance of these meetings and given conference call dial-in information. Below are the dates of meetings for the 2019-2020 school year:

- August 27, 2019
- October 22, 2019
- December 17, 2019
- February 25, 2020
- April 28, 2020
- June 23, 2020