



STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

THE SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

Mission Statement

At the Academy of Dover Charter School each child is a valued and unique individual. The educational process is student centered and achieved by partnerships involving students, parents, and staff where each child embraces the love, joy, and value of education.

Our Beliefs are:

- Each child can develop the confidence, skills and interests to become a lifelong learner.
- Education is student centered and provides each child with the opportunity to maximize his/her potential by being provided with quality instruction.
- We provide a school that is positive, safe, purposeful, and productive.

Our Vision

Academy of Dover believes that our small school environment, which is characterized by rigorous academic and behavioral standards, high expectations for students and staff, individualized responsiveness to student needs, and a never ending passion for learning, will prepare each of our students with the early foundation necessary to excel both, academically and globally in any future endeavor.

FIRST AMENDMENT

Delaware Code requires the reading of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America in all public schools of the State of Delaware on the first day of each new school year.

First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or to the press, or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

ENROLLMENT

The Academy of Dover Charter School utilizes an open enrollment plan. Any child who is qualified under the laws of Delaware for enrollment to a public school is qualified for admission to the Academy of Dover

Charter School. If more students submit applications than can be accommodated by the School's capacity – class, grade or building, lotteries will be conducted by grade level according to U.S. Department of Education guidelines, after which, a waiting list will be maintained in the order drawn by lot, for each grade level. Applicants submitting enrollment forms after the lottery will be added to the waiting list for their grade in order of receipt of their application, on a first come, first served basis. Sibling preference will be honored as long as there is room in the particular grade. If the grade is full, the sibling will be put on a waiting list for the grade.

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Student Dress Code

It is the responsibility of each student to be clean and dressed in compliance with school uniform policy in an appropriate fashion that will not disrupt classroom procedure and in a manner that conforms to community standards.

Girls:

- Navy blue or khaki slacks, knee-length skirt/skort, or a solid navy blue or khaki jumper
- Collared shirts in white, navy blue, or light blue. Shirts must be tucked in.
- Plain white, black or navy blue socks or blue/white leggings. Socks/leggings with bold colors, stripes, and designs are not permitted.
- Any school appropriate shoe may be worn. High heels and open toe shoes are not allowed due to safety reasons. Pants must not be tucked into footwear, unless it is inclement weather.
- Hair must be kept out of eyes. Hair accessories need to be minimal and cannot be other than barrettes, head bands, hair ties, or bobby pins.
- Undershirts, turtlenecks, and tank tops are allowed but only if solid blue, white or black.
- Solid blue cardigan sweaters can be worn over the required shirt. Sweatshirts and hoodies are not allowed.

Boys:

- Navy blue or khaki slacks (Shorts may be worn during warm weather however, they must be uniform shorts. Cargo shorts are not allowed.)
- Collared white, navy or light blue shirt
- Navy blue, white, or black socks
- Any school appropriate shoe may be worn.
- Shirts must be tucked into dress pants and worn at the waistline.
- Solid blue, black, or brown belt must be worn.
- Sweaters must be navy blue. Sweatshirts and hoodies are not allowed.
- Hats must be removed upon entering the building and are not permitted to be worn unless on special occasions, such as "Hat Day".

****If a student arrives at school out of uniform the parent will be called to take the child home to change or bring a change of clothes to school. Several violations of dress code will result in a disciplinary referral.**

The Academy may offer additional "Dress Down" days on special occasions.

Personal Items

The School will not be responsible for any student's personal items. Students are expected to monitor their personal items, especially money, and should leave anything of value at home whenever possible.

Gum, Candy & Toys

Students may not bring gum, candy, toys or other non-school related items unless approved by the teacher for a special occasion. The student assumes responsibility for any items brought from home. Weapons of any kind, including toy weapons are strictly prohibited. Headphones, radios, games, virtual pets, game consoles, and trading cards will not be allowed and will be confiscated if found.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are permitted for BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL AND EMERGENCY PURPOSES ONLY. They may not be carried on the student during classes. If a cell phone is found on a student during school hours, it will be confiscated. Cell phones may not be turned on during school hours; if a ringing phone is found it will be confiscated. We are not responsible for lost, stolen or broken phones. A parent or guardian must pick up items confiscated from students; they will not be returned to the student.

Bus Transportation

The Academy of Dover Charter School utilizes a private contractor for student transportation. The contractor meets all the standards and requirements of the transportation contractors established by Delaware laws and regulations.

- A. Transportation is provided to all Academy students in grades K-6.
- B. School bus routes are established for students enrolled at the Academy. Transportation will be provided to and from hub stops along established routes.
- C. Students with disabilities are transported in accordance with individualized needs.
- D. Newly enrolled students must complete a transportation request form and a waiting period of 24-48 hours may be necessary to plan the proper route.
- E. The transportation supervisor, in conjunction with school administration, will make decisions on suspending students from the bus for a given period of time.
- F. Parents or guardians must notify the school **in writing** of any changes in transportation.
- G. Last-minute pick-ups will not be permitted. Parents who wish to pick up their students instead of having them ride the bus, must make the change and pick students up by **2:45 PM**. **No early dismissals will be granted after 2:45**. Once students are loaded on the bus, they will not be permitted to get off unless there is an emergency. This is due to safety concerns. At this time of day, there is not sufficient time to do any identification checks necessary.
- H. For your child's safety, ***Kindergarten students must be picked up at the bus stop by an adult (over 18) who has been pre-designated. If no one is at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the school. Multiple occurrences may result in fuel charges.***

Students are expected to observe the following bus regulations:

- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before boarding or exiting the bus.
- Except when assigned by School Administration, Transportation Supervisor, Behavior Interventionist, or driver, there are no reserved seats.
- Students will take the seats that are available as they board the bus.
- State law forbids students to put hands, arms, or head out of the bus windows.
- Eating, drinking, abusive language, pushing, shoving, and/or fighting will not be tolerated.
- Students are not to tamper with, deface, or vandalize any bus or student property.
- Students should talk in a quiet and polite manner, refraining from loud talking or shouting that might distract the driver's attention.

- ❑ When departing from the bus to cross a street, students are **required to cross in front of the bus at a distance visible to the driver, and to be careful of traffic coming from either direction.**
- ❑ No student is permitted to get off the bus at any stop other than his/her own.
- ❑ Students must sit in learner's position while on the bus.
- ❑ When driver says to do so, voices must be at 0 and bodies don't move.
- ❑ Do not move or get off bus until driver says it is safe to unload.
- ❑ **THE BUS DRIVER'S DIRECTIONS SHALL BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES.** Any situation that needs attention should be reported to the bus driver at once, and the driver will bring this infraction to the attention of the Transportation Supervisor who will involve school administrators, if necessary.

Student's Personal Items on School Buses

Students are not permitted to bring any live animals, firearms, explosives, or anything of a dangerous or objectionable nature on the bus. Gym bags, band instruments or any school project shall not be placed in aisles or areas near entrance or emergency door. Items of this nature must not be allowed on buses unless they can be held on the student's lap without endangering the safety of other students. Students who must take **BIG, HEAVY OBJECTS** to school should arrange for private transportation.

Drop Off/Pick Up:

Buses will arrive at 7:45 AM and pick up at 3:15 PM in the front of the building.

Cars will drop off/pick up in the rear of the building, may not drop off before 7:45 AM, and may not be on premise before 3:00 PM.

Car rider students are required to be picked up from school by **3:30**. Picking students up late may result in an after care charge or loss of privilege. In extreme cases, when parents cannot be reached after several attempts, it may be reportable.

*Car Riders will be dropped off in the rear of the building from 7:45-8:00AM. After 8:00AM car riders may drop off in the front of the school.

*Any person picking a child up from school must be an adult and on the pickup list. Students will not be permitted to leave the school with someone under the age of 18. **Individuals picking up students must have a valid picture ID when picking up students.**

Inclement Weather Closing/Early Dismissal:

In the event of inclement weather, please listen to the following stations to determine whether the Academy of Dover is closed:

Radio: 94.7 WDSB

97.7 EAGLE

T.V.: WBOC Channel 2

Web: www.aodcharter.org

Class DoJo

Text/Email Alerts: Parents can sign up for automated text messaging alerts at <https://denotificationservices.bbcportal.com>

SCHOOL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Code of Delaware requires that every person having control of a child starting at the age of five shall send such child to school each day that school is in session. The Code further acknowledges that there are instances when a child's absence is not an illegal act by either the child or the person in control of the child. However, it is clearly the expectation of the State of Delaware that children enrolled in school shall be in regular attendance.

The Board of Directors expects those in control of students enrolled in the Academy of Dover be responsible for regular and punctual patterns of attendance and such is expected of all enrolled students.

The Board recognizes that occasionally there is a need for students to not be in attendance during school hours. Every minute of instructional time is important; each minute lost cannot be regained. Parents are reminded to limit absences, late arrivals and early dismissals. **The official instructional time for school is 8:15-3:10.**

The Head of School is charged with maintaining a comprehensive system of attendance records. Classroom teachers are to maintain an accurate record of student attendance, absence, and tardiness.

The Board classifies absence from school as either "excused" or "unexcused."

Students who are absent or tardy from school are responsible for school work missed. It is the student's responsibility to take advantage of opportunities provided by the teacher to make up work. The student's grades could reflect failure to make up work missed as a result of absence or tardiness. It is the responsibility of the person in control of a child to send a note to the school on the first day of return from an absence of two or fewer days describing the reason that caused the student to miss instructional time. **Absence for three or more consecutive days requires a doctor's note.**

The following conditions are recognized as "**excused**" absences:

- Absences associated with student illness
- Absence associated with a family emergency
- Absence associated with a religious holiday
- Absence associated with a subpoenaed court appearance
- Absence associated with an appointment for treatment by a doctor or dentist
- Absence associated with other reasons pre-approved by the Head of School. (Educational family trip, child/parent court ordered meeting, etc.)
- Absence associated with suspension.

The following are recognized as "**unexcused**" absences:

- Absences for which no written note was provided
- Absences for more than three days for which a note from a doctor was not provided
- Absences not listed as "excused."

Being prompt to school goes hand-in-hand with a responsible attendance record. Tardiness can affect student performance. **Tardiness that results in a student arriving to class after 11:30 am or an early pick up that occurs before twelve noon will be counted as an absence.**

A student who is absent from school for unexcused reasons a total of **ten (10) days** will be referred to truancy court. Warning letters will be sent home to the guardians when the child reaches five (5) unexcused absences.

Consistent attendance is the key to a great education. We rely so heavily on parents and guardians to send students to school and to instill in them the importance of not just attending every day, but coming to school prepared with materials, dressed properly and with learning in mind. Because this is such an important issue, the following policies and guidelines have been put in place:

**Three or more absences due to illness require a written excuse signed by a health care professional in order for the student to return to school.

*** Families with excessive absences will be referred to Truancy Court.

**** **A student who has unexcused absences totaling 20 or more days will be subject to mandatory retention. No Exceptions. Please note: 20 days of school missed throughout the year is equivalent to one (1) month of instructional time missed.**

Methods of Determining Excused Absences

The method of determining excused and unexcused absences shall be left to the discretion of the Head of School or designee. The following are generally accepted:

- a. Doctor's note for sickness (including therapy appointments).
- b. Dentist's note for treatment.
- c. Parent/guardian note to match a bona fide signature.*

* All absences totaling three (3) consecutive days or more require a doctor's note on office letterhead.

** Dental and medical appointments scheduled after school hours are more desirable, but the administration will make concessions if appointments must fall during regular school hours. Children should return to school following such appointments if there is time remaining.

Make Up Work

1. Students who had an **excused** absence by the terms outlined above, will have one day to make up work for each day absent. For example, a student absent 2 days will have 2 days to make up work. Any work not made up during the time allowed without prior arrangements will receive a zero (0).
2. Students with extended absences or hospital stays will be given appropriate time, to be determined on an individual basis.
3. Students with an **unexcused** absence will need a parent or doctor's note explaining the reason for the absence prior to making up the work.

Tardiness

1. Students must be in their classroom by 8:15 AM or they will be considered late. ***Parents must come in to office to sign in their chil(ren) after 8:15.***
2. A written explanation is required for each tardy. **Any arrivals after 11:30 are an absence and will need a note to be excused. This marks the half way mark for the school day. The same thing applies if a student is picked prior to noon and is not returning for the day.
3. Tardy students must be signed in by an adult, not simply dropped off.

4. Students with consistent and/or excessive tardiness may be referred to truancy court and will be asked to meet with the Head of School regarding the issue.

Student Vacation Requests

All vacation requests must be submitted to the school in writing and include:

- ❑ Dates when student will miss school
- ❑ Reason for student missing school
- ❑ How the requested vacation ties into education

Administration will carefully review all requests, as well as the attendance and grades of the student, prior to approval. If a vacation is approved, the days will count as excused absence and work will be provided prior to the vacation. If the vacation is not approved (due to poor attendance, poor grades) the days will be counted as unexcused absences.

Families are encouraged to limit vacation times to Summer break, Winter break or Spring break when the students are not in school.

School Hours

- ❑ School opens at 7:45 A.M.
- ❑ Students should be present by 8:15 A.M.
- ❑ Classes begin at 8:15 A.M.
- ❑ Students are dismissed at 3:15 P.M.

Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up

Entry to the building begins at 7:45 AM. Students are not permitted to be in the school building prior to 7:45 and after 3:30, unless student is participating in a school sponsored activity.

EMERGENCY

Fire Drills

During the first days of school, each teacher will practice with students the proper methods for evacuation. Throughout the school year, drills will be held monthly. Students are expected to treat each fire drill as though it were a real emergency and behave accordingly.

Crisis Response Plans

In response to any natural or man-made emergency, we will have a comprehensive crisis response plan in place. All staff and students will be familiar with the plan. It will be practiced in classes and Academy of Dover will conduct at least one full drill annually. In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians/emergency contacts may be notified by phone/text message alert and/or Class DoJo.

Telephone Use

Telephoning to speak with the teacher – Our priority at Academy of Dover is to maximize the amount of time our teachers spend on instruction. When calling to speak to a teacher, please understand that a teacher cannot be excused from class to speak with a parent/care giver. Parents/guardians may leave messages with the office for the teacher, and as soon as available, the teacher will return the call. We encourage parents and guardians to schedule appointments for phone calls or meetings with teachers so that all are informed of progress and needs or use other means of communication such as email or Class DoJo.

Telephone: Student Usage – If parents/guardians find it necessary to telephone a message to their child, someone will be available for relaying the message. When possible, all instructions should be given to a child before the child leaves for school. **Student use of office telephone will be restricted to emergencies only.** Forgotten items such as lunch, instruments, homework, money, etc., do not constitute an emergency.

Emergency Information

An Emergency Contact Form is required for each child. It is a way of facilitating care for a child who is injured or becomes ill at school. Parents are asked to designate one or more adults in the **immediate** vicinity who may assume responsibility for the child if the parents cannot be reached. **Parents MUST keep this information current.**

The school does not have the facilities to keep children who are not well. Facilities are provided for temporary care only. Parents should develop a plan that will enable the child to be picked up from school soon after notification of illness or accident has been given. Anyone picking up a child must be over the age of 18, **(Plan for your child to leave school within one half hour of the notification of an accident or illness).**

Failure for a parent to respond to pick up their ill student may result in the student being sent to the hospital at the parents' expense. Children should also be given accurate information as to where parents can be reached throughout the day. For younger children, this written information could be placed in their backpacks or lunch boxes. The school's nurse (along with the administrator) is responsible for monitoring all entering students for their health records. The nurse will be available during the day to administer medications and monitor student health.

DISCIPLINE

Every student is entitled to the right to receive an education. However, education itself is a privilege gained by those responsible individuals who reflect the behavior and attitudes which are beneficial in obtaining a quality education. There are times when disciplinary measures become necessary in order to modify or change behavior and are not to be considered or serve as punishment. In the attempt to modify behavior, those acts that are recognized as unacceptable behavior, must be communicated to the concerned and involved parties.

Each student is entitled to due process according to set procedures which must be followed. These procedures are:

- ❑ Student must have prior knowledge of the conduct which is prohibited.
- ❑ Student must be made aware of specific infraction(s) which give rise to any proposed penalties or discipline.
- ❑ Student must have the opportunity to express or convey to the proper authority, views or rebuttal regarding the incident(s).
- ❑ The decision-making authority must base the outcome on the incidents, or matters about which the student has been apprised as indicated.

ACADEMY-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

Just as we have very high academic standards for our students, we expect our students to maintain high standards for behavior. We are committed to having the school focused on learning. We expect that:

- All rules and policies are followed.

- School property is treated with respect.
- Students value themselves and others.
- Parents do their best to support school/teacher policies.
- Students come to school prepared: dressed properly, neat and orderly, with all materials, and with learning in mind.

As we expect these things from our students, certain things can be expected of Academy of Dover. With regard to behavior, Academy of Dover will:

- Keep the safety of our students and staff in mind.
- Maintain fair, firm consequences and procedures.
- Reward positive behavior
- Properly train teachers in procedures and effective strategies.
- Respect all children.

Our staff will provide a caring, nurturing environment for children. Teachers will be polite, helpful, and will believe in the potential of each child to succeed.

Positive Behavior Support

PBS is a system recognized by the Delaware Department of Education as a positive way to monitor student conduct. Staff members have participated in training for this program and have done the following:

1. Developed understandable and achievable expectations for student conduct.
2. Developed a curriculum with which to teach students the expected behavior in the areas of:
 - Hallway transition (Hallway position)
 - Cafeteria
 - Instructional time
 - Bus
 - Restrooms
 - Playground
 - Related Arts time
3. Developed attractive incentives to reward positive behaviors.
4. Developed appropriate instructional consequences, which will deter further infractions.
5. Formed a team of staff members to work with severe student behavior.

Cafeteria:

All school rules and disciplinary procedures apply to the lunchroom as well. We expect students to be courteous to kitchen staff and respectful of others eating in regard to voice levels, language and food handling. There is no cutting in line and no saving places in line. Students must be seated until the signal at the end of lunch, except for returning trays or throwing out trash. Permission must be obtained from a staff member before leaving the lunchroom. This includes restroom visits.

Weapon/drug policy

In accordance with state law, the possession, use and/or distribution of alcohol, a drug, a drug-like substance, a look-alike substance and/or drug paraphernalia are wrong and harmful to students and are prohibited within the school environment. General searches of school property, including student cubbies, may be conducted by the school administration whenever there is appropriate cause (for

example, to ensure sanitation standards, suspected of theft and possession of illegal substances or weapons).

State law also prohibits the use of or distribution of tobacco products in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-leased or owned vehicles and at all school affiliated functions.

The Gun-Free Schools Act requires that we have a written policy requiring the expulsion from school of not less than one year of any student who brings a weapon to the school.

Academy of Dover Expectations

A strong set of PBS (Positive Behavior Support) school-wide expectations are necessary to maintain a focused learning environment. We expect students to:

BE SAFE

BE RESPECTFUL

*** BE RESPONSIBLE***

****In addition to these school-wide expectations, homeroom and related arts teachers will construct and implement specific rules for their classroom which students are expected to follow.**

Students will recite the Academy School Pledge every morning following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Positive Reinforcement

As a school community, it is our duty to see that students learn appropriate behaviors and are encouraged to continue them throughout life. To do this, positive reinforcement is necessary. Individual homeroom teachers will develop incentives unique to their class.

Consequences

Although we expect that our students will adhere to PBS rules and will practice positive behavior, it is important to have consequences in place for infractions. Individual homeroom teachers are encouraged to use instructive consequences, which help students identify what behavior was inappropriate and what would have been a better choice.

Teacher Responsibility

Teachers are first in the line of student discipline in the classroom. Teachers are expected to use a variety of appropriate responses to negative student behavior. Teachers will document use of such intervention strategies as a basis for future action with the student. Teacher intervention strategies include, but are not limited to:

- A. Verbal Warnings
- B. Positive Reinforcement
- C. In-Class Time Out
- D. Teacher-Student Conferences
- E. Teacher-Parent Conferences
- F. Loss of Privileges
- G. Teacher Assigned Consequence
- H. Behavior Contracts
- I. Request for Student Observation by the Behavior Interventionist

- J. The Implementation Recommendations as Shared by the Behavior Interventionist
- K. Referral to the Office

Bully Free School

The Academy is a bully free school. There is zero tolerance when it comes to bullying. Any incidents will be immediately addressed and proper action will be taken.

Exceptions to the Above Procedures

1. Fighting
2. Possession of Weapons
3. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs of any kind.
4. Legal Issues
5. Bomb Threat
6. Theft
7. Terroristic Threat

**These offenses will result in immediate removal from the school outlined in the suspension procedures.

Range of Disciplinary Actions

1. Behavior Cards
2. Teacher-Student Conference
3. Teacher-Parent-Student Conference
4. Classroom Intervention Strategies
5. Involvement of Behavior Interventionist
6. Inter-Class Time Out
7. Removal of Student from Classroom
8. Involvement of Administrator Assigned to Discipline
9. Referral to the Discipline Advisory Board
10. Referral to the Head of School
11. In or Out of school suspension

Suspension Procedures

Students will be suspended from school for the following reasons:

1. Insubordinate behavior (Disrespect toward staff members, peers, and refusal to follow directions.)
2. Physically Dangerous Behavior (Fighting, assault, verbal assault, physical or sexual intimidation.)
3. Illegal Acts (Theft, vandalism, use of illegal substance, use or possession of dangerous items or weapons.)

Note: This list is not all inclusive.

*The length and type of suspension will be determined on a case by case basis, however, no student who is a danger to themselves or others will be allowed to remain in the classroom. Federal and State laws and regulations are followed for students with disabilities.

** The Head of School may decide to assign a more stringent consequence from the chart if it is deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the students.

Parent/guardian will be immediately notified by the appropriate party regarding student discipline. Parent/guardian must immediately pick up the student from school.

The parent/guardian must agree to help develop and implement a Student Improvement Plan if the student is to re-enter the building.

The student or parent/guardian has the right to appeal decisions of any level to the Head of School.

According to State Law, while a student is entrusted in the care of the school, public school teachers and administrators have the same authority to control the behavior of the student and to discipline or punish the student as a parent, custodian, guardian or other person similarly responsible for the care and supervision of the student. The authority includes removing a student from a classroom or school-sponsored activity.

Corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited.

If a student's behavior warrants consideration for placement outside the Regular School Program into an Alternative Program, then **DOE Regulation 616** will be followed. Please go to the link for reference: <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/600/616.shtml#TopOfPage>

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Contact

Teachers are expected to establish and maintain contact with the families of each student they teach. If parents call the office and ask for a staff member to return a call, it is expected that the employee will return the call within 24 hours. Similarly, staff members should respond to written notes as soon as possible. When a parent requests a conference, a conference should be arranged. Telephone conferences are acceptable.

Any teacher who desires an individual parent conference should contact the parent, use sound judgment to resolve any dispute with parents, and to treat all parents respectfully. Teachers may ask the Head of School to participate in a parent conference.

Teachers will be expected to meet with all parents after the first marking period to go over student grades. Other conferences will be scheduled as needed.

Video and Film Viewing

Instructional staff members may use videos to enhance instruction and correlate with the curriculum. Rented videos are subject to administrative approval prior to viewing by students. **The use of illegally copied and/or purchased videos or any R – or X – rated videos is prohibited.**

The following guidelines will aid in proper selection and use of these materials:

- ❑ A teacher or team of teachers must preview each film/video prior to student viewing.
- ❑ The length of the video must be considered and weighed against other teacher use of valuable instructional time. Excessive use of film/video should be avoided.
- ❑ All films/videos used must relate to specific curricular goals/objectives and significantly enhance the topic being taught. Some films/videos may be reviewed as part of the curriculum design

process for various content areas. Teachers are encouraged to select viewing material early in the year and share the film/video titles with parents.

- ❑ Appropriate films/videos rated “G” may be shown to all audiences.
- ❑ **In accordance with CIPA, Children’s Internet Protection Act, all computers our students might access will be fitted with a filter for inappropriate material. Unfortunately, some inappropriate material still gets through and some legitimate material gets blocked. If a child runs into any inappropriate material, it will be immediately reported and the website will be blocked.**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Special Education

The Academy is committed to providing an education that is as inclusive as possible, while still meeting your child’s needs. Specially designed instruction, inclusive of accommodations and modifications are provided through a continuum of services. At the Academy of Dover, special education is a service, not a location. Thus depending on your child’s needs, services met be provided along such continuum in varied ways inclusive of in class support, and specialized programming.

Federal law guarantees every student the right to a free and appropriate public education regardless of handicap or disability. The law goes on to guarantee the right to an education in the “least restrictive environment.” That means a typical classroom setting where children with learning challenges are educated alongside students without disabilities.

The Academy of Dover is responsible for ensuring that qualifying students receive an individualized education program (IEP), the chief mechanism for administering the provision of educational services for students with disabilities. Created by a team of teachers and other specialists along with the child’s parents or guardian, the IEP describes the developmental, social and learning goals for that student and is intended to promote equal opportunity and eventual economic independence. The plan also delineates the specific services that the school must offer in order to help students meet their goal(s). Those services may include specialized academic instruction and, as appropriate, related service supports, such as physical, speech, and occupational therapy.

Section 504

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States ... shall solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance ...”.

To qualify for Section 504, a student must be determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Student Cumulative Records

Parents have the right to:

- A. Inspect and copy any and all information contained in the student record.
- B. Challenge the contents of the records, by notifying the Head of School or records custodian of an objection to information contained in the record.

GRADING POLICY

We have high expectations of our students and because of this our grading ranges are more stringent. In the event of unsatisfactory progress, teachers will contact the parents personally and/or in writing to discuss the situation and propose directions to be taken to correct the problem. The range of grades is as follows:

90-100= A (Well Above Standard)

80-89= B (Above Standard)

70-79= C (Meets Standard)

60-69=D (Below Standard)

59 and below= F (Well Below Standard)

The granting of grades or the withholding of grades shall not be used as a basis for any disciplinary action or punishment or threat, and grades shall not be arbitrarily scaled down or limited for the purpose of motivating an individual or an entire class.

We believe in encouraging and recognizing outstanding academic achievement. **Students carrying a 90% average and above will be recognized on the Honor Roll.**

HOMework POLICY

Homework is an integral part of the learning process in that it provides practice and extension of those skills taught in the classroom. Since it is considered a strong component of education, it is in a student's best interest to view homework as serious and necessary to put forth consistent efforts to complete it to the best of his/her ability. Parents/guardians, too, need to lend support to the homework effort by actively supervising. For example, parents should provide a setting conducive to study, encourage students, and demonstrate a genuine interest in the students' progress. In essence, a partnership should be formed between the home and the school in the hope that the education of the student can be enhanced.

Academics, Testing, and Levels of Support

Students in Kindergarten will be screened near the beginning of each school year to determine their skills upon entering Kindergarten. All grades Kindergarten through 6th grade will participate in progress monitoring assessments throughout the school year to determine their current levels in Reading and Math.

All students at the Academy of Dover participate in Response to Intervention (RtI). Ongoing progress monitoring helps determine which level of support students require in Reading and Math. Students may receive support at one of three tier levels: Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III for both Reading and Math. Tier I consists of universal support available through the general curriculum. Tier II consists of a higher level of supports including focused strategies and interventions. The highest level of support, Tier III, includes intensive interventions specifically focused on the student's individual needs.

The Smarter Balance Assessment will be administered to grades 3-6 at the times designated by the state of Delaware. Parents/guardians play an important part in students' preparedness for these tests. We ask that parents/guardians make sure their children have a good night's sleep and a well-balanced breakfast on testing days.

Insurance

The Academy of Dover Charter School Board makes student accident insurance available to all regularly enrolled students. This option is available to you early in the school year. Parents/guardians are responsible for purchasing this policy if desired.

Illness/Health

First aid is the only service that school personnel can administer. Nurses neither diagnose nor treat; therefore, students should not be sent to school if there are any signs of illness: fever, sore throat, inflamed eyes, rash, nausea, respiratory infection, etc. Some illnesses can be very contagious. Students must be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Any child with an inflamed eye or rash must be kept home until the rash or inflamed eye is diagnosed as not contagious.

Prior to entering school, Kindergarten students are required to have a lead test. Students have 25 days in which to get this test or they will be excluded from school.

The school nurse is the only employee who is permitted to administer medication. When prescription or non-prescription medication is sent to school, it must be in the original container. A written order from the child's physician is required to administer prescription medication and the original container constitutes such authorization. Parental permission is required to administer non-prescription medication. All students shall take prescription drugs or non-prescription medications brought into the school environment to the school nurse. Failure to do so may result in the student being treated as if he/she were in possession of a drug or a drug-like substance. Students who need such medications for emergency purposes may obtain written permission from the Head of School or designee authorizing the possession of such prescription drugs or medications; such authorizations shall be for a specific period of time. Students who share, sell, or otherwise distribute such authorized medications shall be subject to the appropriate penalties.

Access to Building

Private vehicles are not allowed to enter the front driveway while buses are entering and unloading students. Parents/guardians bringing their children are requested to enter the rear parking lot and drop off students prior to 8am. After that time, students can be dropped off in the front of the building. After 8:15, the parent must come in to sign in the student. Students are not allowed to ride bicycles to or from school due to the heavy volume of traffic. Visitors during school hours must report to the school office to receive a visitor's pass.

Food Services

A quality food service provider will prepare meals. Free/reduced lunches are provided as required by federal, state and local code. Breakfast is served every morning except for delayed opening days. Carbonated drinks and drinks in glass containers are not permitted. School lunch menus are sent home monthly.

Children may bring a bag lunch with a drink or purchase milk. Students need proper nutrition in order to think, learn, and grow. We encourage all students to participate in our school lunch program. Please keep nutrition in mind when packing your child's lunch for school.

Students become exposed to different fruits and vegetables through our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Three days a week students are provided with a nutritious snack. Students are not made to eat the snack but are encouraged to try it. Such foods include carrots, grapes, broccoli, pineapple, etc.

Birthday Celebrations

Since we encourage healthy nutrition at all times, we have limited the amount of sweets provided during the school year. Birthday celebrations are held the last Friday of every month. Classroom teachers send home information regarding these celebrations monthly.

Field Trips

Field trips will be related to school curriculum according to classroom instruction. Teachers will submit a field trip request form to administration for approval. Once a field trip is approved, signed parental permission slips will be necessary. Nominal fees will be charged.

Religion

Whereas we respect the religious affiliation of the diverse student population, the Academy of Dover Charter School adheres to the policies as mandated by the state of Delaware.

MANDATED CONTRACT

Current regulations regarding school attendance and conduct states:

Each Parent/Guardian of a student shall sign a contract with the district (in this case the Charter School) agreeing they will make every reasonable effort to (1) have their child or children abide by the school code of conduct, (2) make certain their child attends school regularly, and (3) provide written documentation for the reasons for any absence.

Please read the attached contract, sign it, and return it to the school. If you have any questions, please contact the Head of School. Thank you for your attention and cooperation. We are excited to work together with you to build our school family and ensure success for all of our students.