



Family & Student Handbook

For 2023-24 School Year

Last reviewed/approved February 21, 2023

PEACE Academy Charter shall distribute a copy of this handbook and enclosed policies to all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s), in a language they can understand. It shall also be posted on the [school website](#) and available for review in the Main Office.

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SECTION 1: ABOUT PEACE Academy Charter

Welcome Letter

We are excited to welcome you to our team and family for the 2023-24 school year! It is an immense privilege to do this important work alongside each of you; you are the ones who make it all possible.

Every day, we're grateful for the opportunity to work with your children. It is our sacred charge to ensure they know they're safe, loved and learning at school, and we are committing to partnering with you to support their academic, social and emotional growth throughout the school year.

The family-school partnership is so important, and we've put together this handbook as one expression of that partnership. In it, you'll find policies that will help us work together to best support your children. We look forward to the partnership with you and your family, to the school year ahead, and to all that your children will do in this school year and beyond!

If you have any questions after reading this handbook, please reach out to the School Leader, Associate Director of Operations & Community. Thank you for joining us in the sacred work of educating children and empowering them to design a better and more equitable world.

Mission & Vision

- **Mission:** At PEACE Academy, we Promote Educational and Cultural Empowerment to ensure all of our students are breaking records by ending each year on or above grade level, are gaining exposure to a complete curriculum that has an Afrocentric focus that will push their academic development and strengthen their cultural awareness, and are working in partnership with our community through events and experiences that invite parents into our community.
- **Vision:** At PEACE Academy, we will develop an Inclusive Community of Students, Families, Educators, and other Community Members who celebrate our heritage and culture, who experience a holistic understanding of our impact on this world, and who are exposed to opportunities that widen our perspectives and help us develop a positive awareness of self that prepares us to lead within our communities.

Commitment to Equity

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the core of PEACE Academy Charter's vision to ensure that each child will know and leverage their unique brilliance to critically analyze the world around them and to design a better and more equitable future. We honor and empower every student, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation, linguistic diversity, or other cultural characteristics.

Specifically, we have set two goals for our approach to building an equitable school:

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1. Our board and staff understand their own identities, build their skills in breaking down biases, embrace diversity as a strength, and engage in activism to build an anti-bias school.
2. Our board and staff ensure that students and families are empowered to engage critically with meaningful social issues within and outside of school.

Our efforts to build an equitable school that empowers our students as leaders come to life through:

- **Community collaboration:** Our team is driven to open a school that does more than our existing models to treat our families as experts on their children, leverage the power and professional expertise of our community leaders, and honor the brilliance of our students.
- **Diverse leaders:** In addition to hiring a diverse team that is representative of our community, our school design expands students' visions for their futures by forming partnerships that give students access to experiential learning with diverse experts both that they can relate to and that are leading in high-impact careers.
- **Representative governance:** Student, family, and staff advisory councils will have representation at governing board meetings to ensure we can continually learn from our community. Advisory Councils will meet independently each month to discuss topics and determine topics to bring to the full board. One representative from each advisory council will report to the board, as well as participate in discussion and questions of all board topics.
- **Affirming environment:** Students cannot learn in environments where they do not feel safe physically, emotionally, and socially. Our school will ensure students' identities are affirmed in every part of the school environment. The pictures and quotes on our walls will represent diverse leaders, our families, and our communities, that reflect students' identities and communicate to students they belong at school and deserve to be leaders across all fields.
- **Values-driven Community:** Our school will center around our core values which were co-designed with our community. Students will learn explicit habits connected to the values in a morning meeting ("circle") at the beginning of each day, and each academic lesson will contain an SEL learning objective tied to our core values. Classrooms will have a daily closing meeting ("circle") focused on a core value, in which teachers will facilitate a discussion on how that core value presented in the classroom community that day.

We monitor progress toward these goals through review and accountability to major drivers of student/staff/family experience (e.g. policies, curriculum) and through data and feedback mechanisms (e.g. student/staff/family surveys, student/staff turnover data, student discipline data) to ensure an anti-bias approach.

Governing Board

The PEACE School Board of Directors is charged with the management of the affairs of the not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation, PEACE Academy Charter, Inc., and must pursue such policies and principles in accordance with law, the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, PEACE Bylaws, and any written charter entered into by the Board. As trustees of public funds, The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring the school's long-term financial stability and integrity of the charter. The board sets the strategic plan and is responsible for overseeing the effective, faithful execution of the mission through the school's program and operations. Directors recognize that in order to fulfill these obligations, they pledge to personally contribute needed resources and/or

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talents to maintain the school's success. Please visit our board information page <https://peaceacademycharter.org/governing-board/> for more specific information regarding the duties and obligations of the Governing Board of Directors as well as a list of current members.



Leadership Staff

Ebony Payne Brown, Co-founder / School Leader

Ebony has been in education for over 16 years. She started her career at the University of Delaware where she studied Early Childhood Development and Education. She then joined the 2006 Metro Atlanta Teach For America Corps and taught 8th-grade science for five years at Long Middle School in Atlanta Public Schools. In 2008, she obtained her Masters of Art in Education in Curriculum and Instruction. In 2010, she studied Middle Grades Math & Science for a Teacher Certification Program. She recently ended her 10+ year career with Teach For America where she designed curriculum for new teachers and summer staff as the Managing Director of Institute Program . As the founder of PEACE Academy in Atlanta, GA, she has built a school that is intentional about creating a liberatory educational experience for every student. Ebony wears many hats but mother, partner, sister, mentor, and friend are the hats that keep her most grounded in this work.

Angelique Harris, Co-founder / Associate Associate Director of Operations & Community

Angelique has over 20 years of successful experience working in the nonprofit educational field. She has coached and developed leaders in the field and managed community engagement with key stakeholders. A native of Atlanta and product of both Atlanta Public and DeKalb County schools, she has a deep commitment to the South DeKalb Community and the success of its youngest citizens.

Complete List of Public Policies

Our current list of public policies can be found in our [PEACE Final School Policies](#) folder, and is continuously updated as new policies are passed.

Charter Information

Georgia law grants groups the right (or “charter”) to start new public schools that report to the local school district and to their own independent governing boards. By freeing charter schools from many of the constraints of traditional public schools, charter school law in Georgia intends for charter schools to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation.” Charter schools are public schools funded through national and state funds, as well as local school fundraising. The current PEACE Academy Charter agreement is through the State Charter School Commission and runs from July 1, 2022-June 30, 2027. Please visit the [PEACE website](#) to view the complete charter agreement ([current PEACE charter is here](#)).

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SECTION 2: THE FAMILY EXPERIENCE

School Hours

8:00 AM-4:00 PM Monday - Thursday

8:00 AM-1:45 PM Fridays

Who to Contact with Questions

Question area	Who to contact
I have questions about my child's academic and/or social-emotional progress	Your child's teacher
I have questions about homework	Your child's teacher
I have questions about school activities (field trips, etc.)	Your child's teacher
I have questions about after-school or enrichment programming	Main Office
I am worried that my child is being bullied. If your child experiences bullying, contact their teacher or administrator, especially if the harassment or bullying involves another PEACE Academy Charter student, occurs during school, and/or occurs during a school-related activity. Please also see our bullying policy for more information.	Your child's teacher or any administrator
I have a question about my child's IEP/504 plan	Associate Direct of Specialized Services & Teaching
I think my child may have special needs	Associate Direct of Specialized Services & Teaching
My child has an allergy	Main Office
My child needs medication during the day	Main Office
I don't know whether to send my child to school because they may be sick	Main Office
My child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness	Main Office
My child will be absent or late	Main Office

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I will be picking up my child early on a given day	Main Office
I need to get an emergency message to my student during the day	Main Office
I need help ordering uniforms	Main Office
I need help with free/reduced lunch	Main Office
I have general questions about transportation	Main Office
I need a copy of the calendar or other materials	Main Office
I would like to enter my student's siblings into the lottery for next year	Main Office
I would like to join the Family Advisory Council	School Leader
I would like to volunteer	Associate Associate Director of Operations & Community & Community
My family would like support with housing, food, clothing, or community resources	Main Office
I know a community partner and/or leader that would benefit the school's Project-based Learning or Field Experiences	Associate Director of Operations & Community & Community
I would like to make a donation of goods, services, or money to the school	Associate Associate Director of Operations & Community & Community
<p>I would like to escalate my question or concern.</p> <p><i>Please see our Grievance Policy. We ask that you start with your child's teacher and then go on to the School Leader, because it is most likely that they can solve the problem directly.</i></p>	

All members of the PEACE staff will make every effort to respond to phone calls and emails during the school week within 48 hours or two business days, though circumstances may arise that delay a response. Please never hesitate to be in touch with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

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Enrollment and Attendance Zones

The PEACE Academy Charter will accept applications for Kindergarten, First, Second and Third Grades for the 2023-2024 school year.

The attendance zone for eligible applicants is any residence within the State of Georgia. Class size is at the discretion of the School Leader, with Board approval, as long as within legal limits.

Proof of Residency

What documents are required to prove residency?	
<p><i>The person with whom the student(s) lives must attach proof of residency, dated within the last thirty (30) days and must show parent/guardian legal name and street address. Please note that a P.O. Box is not acceptable as a residence address. Please carefully read the scenarios listed below and provide the documentation that applies to your student's living situation.</i></p>	
<p><u>Possible Living Situation #1</u> - If you own and live in the resident property, you will need to provide:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian photo identification (<i>must be current</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> A deed or a Mortgage Statement in your name showing residence property address <input type="checkbox"/> A current Georgia Power Bill in your name for the current month showing the residence property address <input type="checkbox"/> Notarized Affidavit of Residency (<i>top portion only</i>)
<p><u>Possible Living Situation #2</u> - If you rent and live in the rental property, you will need to provide:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian photo identification (<i>must be current</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the lease/rental agreement (or current HUD Certificate of Compliance/Annual Renew Notice) <input type="checkbox"/> A current Georgia Power Bill in your name for the current month showing the residence property address. <input type="checkbox"/> Notarized Affidavit of Residency (<i>top portion only</i>)
<p><u>Possible Living Situation #3</u> - If you are living at a property with the owner or being rented by another person, you will need to provide:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian photo identification (<i>must be current</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> A Deed, Mortgage Statement, or Lease/Rental Agreement (or current HUD Certificate of Compliance/Annual Renewal Notice) in the owner or primary renters name and showing residence property address <input type="checkbox"/> Georgia Power Bill (current within the last 30 days) <input type="checkbox"/> One document in your name showing the residence property address. <input type="checkbox"/> Notarized Affidavit of Residency (<i>*both* top and bottom portions</i>)
What can I bring in as supporting documents?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank statement, loan documents, credit card statement, voided check • Health Insurance. Previously issued W-2 or Form 1099, pay stub • Voters Registration Documentation • A current motor vehicle registration (tag receipt) • Cable Bill, telephone or cell phone bill, gas bill 	

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- Receipt to have utilities connected
- Mail delivered by the United States Postal Service

Lottery

If the number of timely applicants received by PEACE Academy Charter exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building, PEACE Academy Charter shall ensure that such applicants have an equal chance of being admitted through a random-selection lottery. The lottery will be open to the public and advertised in advance. An unbiased third party will witness and certify the validity of the lottery.

A detailed description of the PEACE Academy Charter lottery policy and procedures can be found in the [Enrollment & Lottery Policy](#).

Withdrawal From School

In the event that a student needs to withdraw from school, an email should be sent to PEACE@PeaceAcademyCharter.org one week before withdrawal, stating the date of the child's last day in school, new address, and new school. This will allow the office to prepare the necessary forms, so the child's records can be sent to the new school. Additionally, PEACE Academy Charter is authorized to withdraw a student who has missed more than 10 consecutive days of school due to unexcused absences or is no longer a resident of the local school system.

Annual Calendar

Our current annual calendar can be found on the website and on our [PEACE Calendar 2022/2023](#).

Attendance

PEACE Academy Charter's priority is for every child to be with our community every day. Attending school and being on time are critical to our children's and our school's success. Students of school age have a right to a free public school education; they have a responsibility to attend school. Unless excused by the Office Assistant, students are expected to be in school on time every day.

The State Legislature has recognized the importance of regular attendance by enacting a compulsory attendance law for students under the age of 16. In addition to the importance for our students' success, student attendance rates impact the school's College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) State accountability score and goals in our charter contract with the State.

Absences

If a student must be absent, families must notify the Main Office prior to 8:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. Upon returning to school the student should bring a note explaining the absence. As well, if a student is going to be absent for medical appointments or family-related reasons, the Main Office should be notified prior to the absence and any prolonged absences (defined as three days or more) should be communicated to the Main Office.

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Defining excused/unexcused absences

In accordance with the provisions of state board rule 160-5-1-.10, Student Attendance, PEACE Academy Charter defines **acceptable excuses for being absent from school as:**

- Personal illness of the student and/or a situation in which attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others.
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family of the student that would reasonably necessitate absence from school.
- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student that necessitate absence from school.
- Mandates by the school or other governmental agencies, such as pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, a court order or out-of-school suspension.
- Weather or other environmental conditions preventing a student from getting to school or rendering school attendance hazardous to the health or safety of the student.
- Voter registration or voting in a public election, not to exceed one (1) day per school year.

Upon return to school from any absence, the student shall bring to the school a note, signed by the parent/legal guardian, stating the reason for the absence. A student who has an emergency necessitating absence from school for a portion of the school day must be present at school at least for one-half of the instructional day

Notice of Compulsory School Attendance Law

Pursuant to state law O.C.G.A § 20-2-690.1 each parent and student shall receive notice of the Compulsory School Attendance Law, which our school shares as part of student registration, as well as in this handbook. Each parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of any child between the ages of 6 and 16 are required to enroll and send said child to a public school, private school, or any home study program that meets the requirements for public school, private school, or any home study program. Consequences & Penalties for Failure to Comply with the Compulsory School Attendance Law:

- Any parent, guardian, or person who has control or charge of children and violates the Compulsory Attendance Law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of a child or children shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of the penalties at the discretion of the Court.
- Each day absence from school in excess of five (5) unexcused days of absence after notice has been given to the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of a child or children shall constitute a separate offense of Georgia's Compulsory School Attendance Law.
- After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of a child or children of five (5) unexcused absences without response, the school system shall send a notice to the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of a child or children by certified mail return receipt requested.
- Violation of Georgia's Compulsory School Attendance Law shall be referred to the Juvenile Court of competent jurisdiction.

Our Office Assistant calls all students with unexcused absences to determine the reason for their absence, troubleshoot any barriers to attendance (e.g. transportation), encourage/affirm the



importance of having the student at school each day. See [our Attendance Policy](#) for more detailed information regarding attendance procedure.

Late Arrival

A student is tardy when he/she arrives at school after 8:15 AM and this is indicated on the student's record. Students arriving late must be signed in by their parents or guardian. The Office Assistant will issue a late pass to students who arrive late.

Early Checkout

Early checkouts are also indicated on student's records. When possible, we encourage families to make any daytime student appointments on Friday afternoons after 1:45 PM when our school does weekly early release. In the event that a student must leave early, the authorized adult picking up the student must come to the Main Office to pick up the student, show their ID, and sign them out.

Late pickup

Dismissal is from 3:45pm-4:00pm. At 4:00pm all remaining students will be dismissed to late pickup.

Student Abandonment Procedure

PEACE Academy Charter is committed to ensuring the safety of all students. If a student is not picked up by the designated end time the school will make every effort to contact the parent or guardian. In the event that a student has not been picked up after all attempts have been made to reach a parent guardian or emergency contacts the following measures will be taken. In the event that a student is abandoned at a school or at a PEACE Academy Charter-sanctioned activity and a parent or guardian cannot be reached at the close of the day or event the following steps should be implemented after a one-hour grace period:

- Step 1: Every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian and all emergency contacts. ***If family cannot be reached after the first 30 minutes after the school or activity end time, the staff member will leave a message advising the guardian that the police department will be contacted as a next step per the Student Abandonment Procedure.***
- Step 2: If the parent/guardian cannot be located after 30 minutes, the Associate Director of Operations & Community will notify the School Leader.
- Step 3: If after 1 hour the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the School Leader or his/her designee will contact the police department and Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS).
 - Staff member is required to remain with the student until the police arrives or until student has been released to a guardian or local authority
 - Staff member will provide details of the event and parent contact information to the officer and/or case manager
 - Staff member will record all contact information of the police officer and case manager which should include name badge/ID number and phone number
 - Staff member will release student into the custody of the police officer or DFCS case manager if necessary

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- Staff members will document the event using the Student Incident Report Form. A copy should be provided to the school social worker and placed in the student's permanent record folder
- The police department and DFCS will follow their internal protocols which may include a visit to the child's home for further investigation. The School Leader or social worker will follow-up with the family, police department, and/or DFCS.

After School and Enrichment

Participation in school-sponsored enrichment activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation. Any after school extra curricular activities will be established by the school's leadership and based on the interest of the students and the school's program. Such experiences may require participation and supply fees to be paid by the families. They will operate outside the school day and will not occur on days in which school is canceled. .

Staff will add details of after school offerings when programs have been selected and notify families of any experiences offered.

Activities and Field Trips

Classes will participate in field trips throughout the year. As part of our rigorous academic program, students often participate in learning experiences off-campus, such as trips to local and state companies and college campuses in alignment with our program. During school-sponsored events and/or activities off-campus, all school rules and policies, including those outlined in this handbook, are applicable. Students are required to adhere to the same rules, policies, and behavioral expectations at an off-campus school-sponsored event or activity as if they were in the school building. In other words, student misconduct during an off-campus school-sponsored event and/or activity may result in corrective actions, and may result in the same corrective action as such misconduct on school grounds.

Each field trip will require a permission slip for the experience that will be distributed via email and hardcopy with the students. Families are asked to sign, date and acknowledge permission. A parent or guardian must provide written consent in order for a student to attend. Please note that verbal consent is not sufficient and the student will not be allowed to participate in that experience. Students must be in the PEACE uniform unless otherwise noted by the staff.

A student may be considered ineligible for a trip/event for reasons including, but not limited to involvement in a recent disciplinary incident (level three infraction in our [code of conduct](#)). Students who are considered ineligible for attending a trip will be notified at least 48 hours in advance, and be required to attend school that day, and provided alternative academic assignments.

Student Counts

Before transporting students to or from any field trip, the teacher and at least one other adult will do a complete roll call to ensure all students are accounted for before leaving. At any given time

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each staff member and chaperone should know the number of students they are currently responsible for monitoring. Similar to in school policies, our field trip chaperoning class sizes will not exceed a 1:25 ratio.

Financial Limitations

There are no required field trip fees upfront and the costs for many field trips will be covered by the school. In the case that there is a cost associated with a trip, students cannot be excluded from a field trip based on the inability to pay the accompanying fee. If a family would like support paying any accompanying field trip fees, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) can contact their teacher or the Main Office prior to the date the field trip permission slip is due back to school so the school has sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

Inclement Weather/Emergency Dismissal

When severe weather creates hazardous conditions, the regular school schedule may be suspended to ensure the safety of students and staff. PEACE Academy Charter is not a part of DeKalb County School District and will not always have the same decisions on weather emergencies. If a potentially hazardous event occurs prior to the beginning of the school day, we will communicate with families via email as well as publicize via internet platforms (school webpage (www.peaceacademycharter.org), social media ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), etc.), and local radio or television broadcasts. If emergency early dismissal is necessary, we will communicate dismissal instructions with families via email, text, and phone calls as well as publicize via internet platforms (school webpage, social media, etc.).

Emergency Drills

In each classroom are posted charts that indicate the exits and safe areas to be used for safety drills. A fire drill is held twice in the first month of school and then once every month thereafter. Students are expected to file out of the building in an orderly manner without talking or running. Everyone will remain out of the building until the "all clear" signal is given from the Associate Director of Operations & Community or a member of the leadership team. All schools participate in the state-wide tornado drill, and each school has a safety plan for other emergencies with corresponding drills planned throughout the year. For more information, please review the staff emergency preparedness procedure [here](#).

In summary, our emergency procedures cover:

- **Lockdown Protocols:** In the event of a lockdown, Administration or Operation staff will inform school staff in-person and/or via the intercom feature on class telephones.
 - **Lockdown (Interior):** Threat is inside the building; close and lock all exterior and classroom doors; open exterior window blinds or curtains to allow exterior visibility into the classroom.
 - **Lockdown (Exterior):** Threat is outside the building; all students and staff must remain in their location from the time the lockdown is announced until it is lifted.
 - **Lockdown (Full):** Threat is inside the building; all students and staff must remain in their location from the time the lockdown is announced until it is lifted.

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- **Shelter in Place:** Used to protect school occupants from external threats such as tornadoes, some chemical plumes, other natural disasters, and man-made threats.
- **All Clear:** No longer at risk. Resume normal school day.
- **Bomb and Fire Evacuation Protocols:**
 - The teacher(s) brings their student roster/backpack that includes updated emergency contact information for students and parents.
 - The teacher(s) will be the last person to exit a classroom, and will ensure that all occupants have safely evacuated after an alarm.
 - The teacher(s) will assist any physically or otherwise disabled students in exiting safely.
 - The teacher(s) will bring students in an orderly fashion to the designated exit and meet the rest of the school in the designated meeting place.
 - The teacher(s) will take student attendance using roster and record on green/red cards.
- **Shelter in Place/Tornado/Earthquake Drill:**
 - All teachers and students will go into the hallway by the wall closest to their door, and get in the "DUCK, COVER, and HOLD ON" position as close as possible to a wall, no one will be allowed to move or leave until the all clear is called. Head should be towards the wall with hands covering the back of the head.
- **Medical Emergency:** see [Medical Emergency Response section](#).

When possible, depending on the threat level, we will try to maintain instructional activities to minimize chaos and control student fear and panic. Out of safety drills, we will always notify families of any emergency situation at the earliest opportunity.

Illness, Injury, Health, and Wellness

General Health Guidance

Health and safety are a top priority at PEACE Academy Charter. Before a student can enroll in the school, the school must have on file the following forms:

- Medical Requirements Checklist. This form contains records showing that the student has: 1) up-to-date immunizations; and 2) permission to receive screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis.
- Health Information Form. This form provides important information about a student's emergency contacts, health care providers, and insurance. Most importantly, it gives the school permission to initiate emergency medical treatment in the event that a parent or guardian cannot be reached.
- [Physician's Request for Administration of Medication Form](#). If a student requires medication while in school, the school must have on file an Authorization to Dispense Medication form, completed by the student's physician and parent. No student is allowed to bring medication to the school without the school's full knowledge and the appropriately completed form.

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Nursing Policy

PEACE Academy Charter will contract a licensed nurse to be on duty for the several hours of the daily instructional schedule. Students, staff, and families will be able to share medical concerns with the nurse, and the nurse will contact parents/guardians if there is a medical issue with a student in the course of the school day.

Sick Policy

When a child becomes ill at school with any of the symptoms listed below, PEACE Academy Charter contacts the parent/guardian immediately so that the child can be picked up within one hour. This ensures prompt medical attention, when necessary, and minimizes the spread of infection and communicable diseases. Please keep contact information updated on school records to include current phone numbers for home, work, cell, or a nearby friend or relative.

If the illness is contagious, a doctor's note is required before the student is allowed to return to school. The child may return to school 24 hours after his/her symptoms have subsided without the use of fever-reducing medication.

To prevent the spread of illness, please keep children at home if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever – 100.4°F or greater.
- Vomiting – two or more occasions within the past 24 hours.
- Diarrhea – three or more watery stools, or any bloody stool, within the past 24 hours.
- Rashes – especially with fever or itching.
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis (pink eye) – eye is not clear or 24 hours has not passed since antibiotic treatment began.
- Change in behavior – child expresses not feeling well and/or is not able to keep up with program activities.
- Head lice – live bugs are present and/or head has not yet been treated

Infectious Disease Policy

Definitions

“Communicable Disease” means a disease that can be directly or indirectly transmitted from one person to another.

Protections

1. No student shall be denied access to nor shall an otherwise qualified individual be denied employment in educational programs of the School solely because he or she is infected with a Communicable Disease.
2. A student or employee who is infected with a Communicable Disease will remain in his or her educational or employment setting unless he or she presents a significant risk of contagion as determined by the School after consultation with the student's or employee's physician or other public health official knowledgeable about the disease if in the judgment of the School Leader it is necessary to consult a private physician.

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Prevention of Transmission

1. Each year the School Leader shall provide educational opportunities and review this policy for all employees to become informed concerning transmissions of Communicable Disease infection.
2. Education and policy review shall include procedures to reduce the risk of transmitting infection of Communicable Diseases, including precautions to be taken in handling bodily fluids and blood whenever necessary. Handling blood and body fluids shall be in a manner consistent with the Center for Disease Control's Universal Precautions for Handling Blood and Body Fluids.
3. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be made available and shall be appropriate to tasks with exposure potential.

Identification of Potential Risks

1. When there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee or student has a Communicable Disease, the school nurse and/or the School Leader shall counsel that person immediately, or if the person is a minor, shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the need to obtain an appropriate medical evaluation.
2. Whether or not an infected individual presents a significant risk of contagion shall be determined based upon reasonable medical judgment given the state of medical knowledge about:
 - a. The nature of the risk; i.e., how long the disease is transmitted;
 - b. The duration of the risk; i.e., how long the carrier is infectious;
 - c. The severity of the risk; i.e., the degree of potential harm to third parties; and
 - d. The probability that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm.
3. Once the student's or employee's medical condition has been determined, the School Leader shall consult with the student's or employee's physician or other public health official knowledgeable about the disease.
4. If an accommodation that does not impose undue financial hardship or administrative burdens can be made, then neither student nor employee shall be denied the right to participate in School programs or to be employed by the School.
5. In order that the School Leader may have time to obtain a reasonable medical judgment concerning the student or employee who is infected by a contagious disease, the School Leader is authorized to remove the infected student or employee from School programs or employment for a period not to exceed ten days during which time the School shall make a decision as to whether the student or employee can be accommodated and does not pose a significant risk to others.
6. The student or employee shall be excluded only if the School Leader determines after consultation as provided above that the Communicable Disease is of such nature or at a stage that the individual should not be in an educational setting.

Privacy Rights

Neither the School nor its employees shall disclose medical information about a student or employee with Communicable Disease without the consent of the employee or the student or his or her parent or guardian, whichever is applicable, or only as required by law or court order.

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Immunization Policy

The PEACE Academy Charter follows DeKalb County requirements for childhood vaccinations. Georgia law requires children attending daycare or school to be protected from certain vaccine preventable diseases. The DeKalb County Board of Health offers vaccines to protect children and prepare them for school at clinics throughout the county. Georgia law states that families who move to Georgia from another state and enroll their child in a Georgia school for the first time must provide the child's daycare center or school with a Certificate of Immunization (Form #3231) within 30 days of enrollment. This certificate verifies that the child has received the immunizations recommended for his/her age.

Families can obtain this certificate from the child's private physician or the DeKalb County Board of Health. Families should bring a complete record of the child's immunizations in order to complete the certificate. For more details, call the DeKalb County Board of Health immunization information line at (404) 294-3762 or call a local health center.

Vision, Hearing, Dental, and Nutrition Screening

The parent or guardian of a child being admitted for the first time to a public school shall furnish to the school a properly executed Department of Public Health Form 3300: Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening. The screenings reported on the certificate shall have been conducted within one year prior to the time that the child is admitted for the first time to a public school. Any child admitted to a public school without a Certificate shall present a Certificate within three months following admission. When a child transfers to another school within Georgia, the Certificate and any related follow-up documentation must be forwarded to the new school.

Hearing, Vision, and Scoliosis Screening

Periodically during the school year, students' hearing and vision may be tested by qualified professionals. If any screening indicates that further diagnosis is needed, families will be advised immediately. Consent for these screenings is requested from families as part of their registration paperwork when enrolling at PEACE Academy Charter.

Medications at School

In order to ensure the health and safety of children requiring any medication during the school day, the following procedures must be followed:

- [Physician's Request for Administration of Medication Form](#) must be signed by the child's physician and parent/guardian. The medication form should be taken to the child's licensed prescriber (doctor, nurse practitioner) for completion and returned to the school Office Assistant. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.
- The medication dispensation authorization form requirement applies to all medication, including Children's Tylenol and ibuprofen. If a student needs to take Tylenol, ibuprofen or another over the counter (OTC) medication during the school day, he/she must have on file the authorization signed by a parent or guardian, giving the school permission to administer the medication during the school year.

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- No student is allowed to bring medication to school without the school's full knowledge and the appropriately completed form.
- Students are not permitted to transport medications in their backpacks. Families must personally hand all medications to the Main Office or School Nurse.
- All medication must be brought to school by an adult in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container that is properly labeled with the child's name. Students who have provided the school with medication dispensation authorization forms should bring the medication to the school on the first day, or contact the school to make other arrangements. All medication must be presented in its original container from the pharmacy and must be brought in by a parent or accompanied by a note from the parent. No student may carry either prescription or over-the-counter medication, including inhalers and EpiPens, at school without the written permission of the PEACE Academy Charter Office Assistant.
- The medication dispensation authorization form requirement also applies to asthma inhalers, which will be stored in a locked space in the school building. If a student needs to use his/her asthma inhaler during the school day, he/she should go to the main office to self-administer the inhaler.
- Self-administration of inhalers and EpiPens are allowed when approved in writing by the student's physician, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the PEACE Academy Charter Office Assistant.
- If the medication is required to be stored in the refrigerator, this must be clearly labeled and communicated to the school. We will keep it in the medical refrigerator in the school Clinic.

Medical Emergency Response

At PEACE Academy Charter it is our number one priority to keep all staff, and students safe. In an emergency situation, borderline situation, or a situation where it may be unclear whether an emergency exists, we will err on the side of caution and contact 911. PEACE Academy Charter has developed a Medical Emergency Response Plan in consultation with members of the school community, including the school nurse, local medical and other emergency responders, and other community partners. Please see below for a high-level summary of that plan:

- **For Minor Emergencies:**
 - Staff will notify the nurse and Associate Director of Operations & Community and escort an injured person to the school nurse's office.
 - Nurse, School Leader, or other designated school staff will administer first aid procedures as indicated by the nature of the accident.
 - Staff will notify parents, always.
 - Staff witnessing the accident and/or providing first aid care complete an incident report as soon as possible.
- **For Major or Life Threatening Emergencies** (*any injury deemed by school staff to need immediate physician care, EMS or transport to a healthcare facility*)
 - ***Either the first school staff person attending to the student or another school staff person calls 911 immediately.***
 - Staff will notify the nurse and Associate Director of Operations & Community

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- Staff will escort an injured person who is ambulatory to the school nurse's office or notify the school nurse if the person cannot be moved.
- Main office personnel will ensure that designated individuals are directed to remain with the injured or ill person until medical assistance arrives.
- Provide first aid or other Basic Life Support (CPR, rescue breathing, etc.). If CPR or rescue breathing is required, school staff must also retrieve or send other staff to the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). All staff are required to have Basic Life Support training.
- The School Leader or designee calls the parent or guardian immediately.
- The Associate Director of Operations & Community will notify the School Leader and Board Chair with a summary email of the incident.

Guidelines for Students with Life-Threatening Allergies

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. The PEACE Academy Charter cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

The goal of the PEACE Academy Charter regarding life-threatening allergies is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prevent any occurrence of life-threatening allergic reactions.
- Prepare for any allergic reactions.
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise.

The Office Assistant, in conjunction with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the primary care provider/allergist, will prepare an [Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan](#) for any student with a life-threatening allergy.

The plans will be reviewed by the Office Assistant, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and primary care provider and/or the student's allergist, and signed off by the child's physician indicating that he/she deems it to be adequate. Multiple copies of the [Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan](#) will be kept at the school for quick access in the clinic, main office, the student's homeroom, and in the homeroom teacher's emergency binder/backpack.

EpiPens will be available in the Main Office and those prescribed for individual students will be kept in that child's homeroom emergency kit or, with written permission, carried by the child at all times. Staff will be trained to identify and respond to reactions from life-threatening allergies, including the use of EpiPens. Any staff involved with students who have life threatening allergies will be provided information from the [Allergy Action Plan](#) of each of these students.

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School staff will take steps to ensure that these classrooms and instructional areas are as allergen-free as possible. During lunch, PEACE Academy Charter will encourage “NO FOOD TRADING” and “NO UTENSIL SHARING” to minimize accidental exposure to allergens.

It is requested that each family of a student with a life-threatening allergy inform the Main Office of the child’s allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis). Families must arrange to meet with the Office Assistant to develop an [Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan](#) for the student and provide medical information from the child’s treating physician as needed to write the plans.

In addition, parents should do the following:

- Provide the Main Office with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including EpiPens), so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.
- Complete and submit all required medication forms.
- Provide a Medic ALERT ID for their child.
- Provide EpiPen to be taken on field trips, prior to the date of the trip.
- Encourage their child to wash hands before and after handling food.
- Teach their child to recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction and to communicate clearly as soon as she/he feels a reaction is starting.
- Encourage their child NOT to share snacks, lunches, or drinks.
- Encourage their child to take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety.
- Help their child understand the seriousness of allergies and the potential consequences of children with allergies by being exposed to allergens.

Any insect sting, food allergy reaction, or other allergic reaction in students known to have such reactions is an EMERGENCY and staff will CALL 911. All rapid onset (within a few minutes) breathing problems or swelling of the tongue and face are considered EMERGENCIES and staff will CALL 911.

Nut-Free School Policy

PEACE Academy Charter is committed to offering safe educational environments for all students including students with food allergies. Food allergies can be life-threatening. Cooperative efforts between students, families, physicians, and school staff members can help minimize risks. To protect the safety of students who have life-threatening anaphylactic allergies to peanuts and tree nuts, all food products must not contain nuts. Students who have documented anaphylactic reactions to peanut butter and other nut-related products can react not only by ingestion but also by contact with nuts. This means that just by touching a small amount of peanut or tree nuts, these children could suffer a severe or life-threatening anaphylactic reaction, possibly leading to death. This means that NO peanut butter or products including peanuts or tree nuts will be permitted at PEACE Academy Charter during school hours and at any before/after school functions or trips.

Additional guidelines are as follows:

- Do not send any nuts or foods containing peanuts or tree nuts to be eaten for lunch or as classroom snacks or treats.

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- If a food containing peanut butter or nuts is brought in, the food will be Ziploc bagged, labeled with a reminder, and sent home with the child at the end of the day.
- All food offered through school activities (including before care, aftercare, and enrichment) will not contain nuts. An ingredient label should be included, as many foods are processed in a facility that also produces nut products. This information is vital for nut-allergic individuals.
- Teachers will not be doing any classroom projects that involve nuts or nut shells.
- Food in the Classroom (including celebrations): Food can be an important part of the curriculum for learning about other cultures, the environment, and healthy lifestyles. If teachers include food as part of a lesson (e.g., planting vegetables and herbs in the school garden and then sampling the produce), they will work to avoid the known food allergies in the classroom and notify all families of the lesson at least one week ahead of time. It is important for parents to alert teachers of allergies at the beginning of the school year.
- Schoolwide Celebrations: PEACE Academy Charter hosts many school-wide celebrations involving food on evenings and weekends (summer picnic, fall festival, family potluck, etc). The campus continues to be a nut -free campus during these events,

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training: In accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-324.5, PEACE shall hold information meetings twice per year regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. At such informational meeting, an info sheet on sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs shall be provided to each student's parent or guardian. For purposes of the statute, "student" is defined as being in all active grades based on the current school year.

COVID-19

PEACE Academy Charter will use the outline below as the basis for our plan for operating in the COVID-19 pandemic (if still ongoing), or a similar situation (should it arise). The outline below will be built into a complete playbook, based on public health data, federal, state, and local data, and surveying our staff and families to be able to meet the exact needs of our community. Our plan will be designed in collaboration with our family and staff advisory councils and will be approved by our Board of Directors prior to being enacted. Our Associate Director of Operations & Community will serve as the COVID-19 plan coordinator, under leadership from the School Leader. Our plan exhibits an abundance of caution. For all scenarios below, we will ensure students required to stay home because of symptoms will be provided with virtual learning options to continue learning (as allowed by their health).

COVID-19 Plan Options: Our COVID-19 plans will account for three options to be able to ensure the safety of our community and accommodate the needs of our families and staff. While all decisions will be made independently by the school leadership, PEACE Academy Charter will follow public health guidance and guidance from the DeKalb County School District.

- **Fully remote:** fully virtual instruction five days a week leveraging a) shorter full-group live virtual instruction and b) targeted, small-group live virtual instruction. Families will receive 1:1 check-ins every two weeks at a minimum.
- **Full in-person:** fully in-person instructional model will be prioritized for children of essential workers, students receiving Special Education or English Language Learner services, or will be phased in when public health data warrants. This model will still require modifications

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from normal operations, such as all meals and specials classes taking place in classrooms, and increased safety and sanitation protocols.

- **Hybrid:** a combination of remote and in-person models, with students attending in person two days/week to reduce group size and building capacity levels. Wednesdays would remain remote to allow for building deep cleaning.

Health and Hygiene

- **In-person Screening:** There will be a mandatory symptom-check question screening and temperature check of any person before entering the school using non-contact thermometers. If anyone presents a temperature higher than 100.0°F, they will not be permitted to enter the school building.
- **Face Coverings:** All persons entering the building will be required to wear face masks for the entire day, with the exception of meals. Back-up, disposable masks will be provided for any students or staff that have forgotten their masks.
- **Hand Washing:** Hand washing lessons, signage and scheduling will be implemented on a daily basis. In areas where appropriate access to sinks is not possible, touchless hand sanitizer dispensers with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% or greater) will be installed. We will also ensure access to hand sanitizer in offices, school entrances etc.

Facility Cleaning & Disinfecting

- **Cleaning Protocol:** PEACE will increase the frequency of deep cleaning and sanitizing all common spaces including and with an emphasis on frequent contact surfaces such as classroom desks, lobby counters, door handles etc. These deep cleans will be taking place on a daily basis and our custodial contractor will wear the appropriate PPE.
- **Cleaning Supplies:** Cleaning supplies, PPE, hand soap, hand sanitizer and all other crucial equipment or supplies that ensures the ability to keep our facility clean and safe will be inventoried on a daily basis by our Office Assistant to ensure appropriate quantities remain in house. We will use cleaning and disinfecting products approved by the CDC.
- **HVAC and Ventilation:** The frequency of the air filter replacement within our HVAC system cleaning will be increased to once a month. As allowable by our selected facility, windows out of students' reach will also be cracked to increase circulation.
- **Shared Equipment and Materials:** Shared equipment and materials will transition to 1:1 wherever possible. Where it is not possible, they will be sanitized before, during and after every use or anytime the equipment is transferred to someone else.

School Operations

- **Transportation:** PEACE Academy Charter will continue the same drop off and pick up method as our normal operations.
- **Arrival to School:** All families will be required to complete a safety screen at the time of dropoff. If a child has any of the symptoms outlined in the safety check, it is recommended that the student remain at home. During the school day, if a student has a temperature above 100.0°F, the student will be placed in the isolation room. Their family will be contacted immediately to be picked up within the hour.
- **Student Meals:** Breakfast, snack and lunch will continue to be made available to all families based on their free and reduced lunch status or paid status. Our meal program will switch to

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cold bagged meals for all students to decrease individuals handling food. Families will also be permitted to send their child to school with food from home as long as it is nut free. Sharing of food or beverages will continue to be prohibited for the safety of our students.

- **Late Student Arrival:** Only one adult may accompany students for late drop off. Only 2 families will be permitted in the lobby for late sign in at a time. All late students will receive health screening from the front office.
- **Visitors/Families:** All non-essential visits to the school building will be limited until further notice. Any essential visitors must be announced to school leadership in advance with a clear purpose and destination. The individual must complete the screening survey when they arrive at the front office. If any of the screenings prevent the visitor from receiving clearance to enter, they will be turned away. Per our usual protocol, all visitors will continue to be asked to sign in and wear a visitor name tag at all times.

COVID Case Response Plan

In the event of a presumptive case of COVID-19 we will follow the following procedures, as well as any additional guidance from the Department of Health.

- **Containment:** The student or staff member will be assessed by the Office Assistant or School Nurse who will determine whether the individual needs to be sent home or is in need of a follow up with a healthcare professional.
- **Facility:** Once the steps below are followed to appropriately clean and disinfect impacted areas, those areas can be reopened for use. Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the impacted areas and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- **Closure:** We will follow metrics as set by the Center for Disease Control when cases in DeKalb County are increasing beyond an appropriate level and modify in-person instruction as necessary. We will use the same metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing within our school. We will consult with the local department of health when making such decisions.
- **Triggers:** We will work with the Department of Health to determine what conditions (i.e. number of positive COVID-19 cases in the building) would trigger a pod, section, or full school closure and the amount of time of the closure. Our school will implement contact tracing to determine who is an "exposed" individual and must stay out of school.
- **Procedure:** If the Department of Health or school leadership determines the need for a closure based on triggers and guidance, PEACE Academy Charter will:
 - Communicate to all staff/families via multiple communication methods (phone call/text message/email in the appropriate home language) about any confirmed cases (without disclosing student/staff information) and closure plan details.
 - Schedule for the appropriate deep cleaning of the facility.
 - Transition to fully remote instruction.
- **Return to School Plan for Positive Cases:** PEACE Academy Charter will follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. with a negative test result for test-to-stay protocol).

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Diabetes Medical Management Plans

As part of PEACE Academy Charter's student health services program and in accordance with O.C.G.A. §20-2-779, the School Leader is responsible for designating at least two employees to serve as trained diabetes personnel when a student with diabetes is enrolled in the school, when appropriate.

The School Nurse in collaboration with the School Leader shall develop rules and procedures for the implementation of any diabetes medical management plan submitted by any parent/guardian of a student with diabetes who seeks care while at school or school-sponsored activities.

A student who has been diagnosed with diabetes must have a [Diabetes Medical Management Plan](#) (DMMP), signed by a parent/guardian and physician, on file with the school to receive or administer the related medication or treatment while at school or school-sponsored activities. The DMMP must contain all items covered in the plan, including how, when, and under what circumstances the student should receive blood glucose monitoring and injections of insulin as well as steps to take in case of an emergency.

Upon written request by a parent/guardian and if authorized by a student's DMMP, a student with diabetes shall be permitted to perform blood glucose checks, administer insulin through the insulin delivery system the student uses, treat hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and otherwise attend to the monitoring and treatment of his or her diabetes in the classroom, in any area of the school or school grounds, and at any school related activity, and he or she shall be permitted to possess on his or her person at all times all necessary supplies and equipment to perform such monitoring and treatment functions.

Mandated Reporter Policy

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, School employees or volunteers having reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred are required to make a report of such abuse. The statute defines "child abuse" to include physical abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation. Under this law, failure to report such abuse is a misdemeanor. For more details, see PEACE Academy Charter's [Mandated Reporter Policy in our staff handbook](#).

Bullying Policy

Definition of Bullying

The term "bullying" means an act that occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school drop off and pick up areas,, or at school-related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology provided by PEACE, and includes the following:

- Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so.
- Any intentional display of force that would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

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- Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that has any one of the following effects:
 - Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1.
 - Substantially interferes with a student's education
 - Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
 - Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school

The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

Retaliation against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process is also prohibited.

Reporting, Investigation, and Notification Procedures

All students and/or school employees shall immediately report incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation and retaliation to the School Leader.

- The School Leader shall maintain a method for anonymous reporting of such incidents.
- Each report of bullying shall be documented and promptly investigated, and result in consequences given appropriate to the situation and in accordance with state law.
- Parents/legal guardians shall be notified upon a finding that a student has committed an act of bullying or been a victim of an act of bullying.

Reported incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation that have occurred outside the jurisdiction of the school and have not disrupted the school environment shall be reported to the students' parents/legal guardians.

Disciplinary Procedures

Disciplinary actions for incidents of bullying will be decided according to the guidelines set forth in the [Student Discipline policy](#). Students found responsible for committing the offense of bullying for the third time in the same school year will be assigned to an alternative educational program.

Suicide Prevention Policy

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to PEACE Academy Charter. The Governing Board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

- Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This curricular content will occur in all health classes throughout the school year, not just in

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response to a suicide, and the encouragement of help-seeking behavior will be promoted at all levels of the school leadership and stakeholders

- The Associate Director of Specialized Services & Teaching is designated as the suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.
- When a student is identified as being at-risk, a risk assessment will be completed by a trained school staff member who will work with the student and help connect the student to appropriate local resources
- Students will have access to national resources that they can contact for additional support, such as:
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255),
 - Suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386 thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now
 - Trevor Lifeline Text/Chat Services, available 24/7 Text "TREVOR" to 678-678
 - Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741-741 crisistextline.org

All school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support, in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. PEACE Academy Charter will provide annual training in the area of suicide awareness and prevention, and mandated reporter training for all personnel. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they or a friend are feeling suicidal, or are in need of help. While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should know that when there is risk of suicide, safety comes first.

Transportation

School Buses

PEACE Academy Charter does not provide bus transportation for students.

Eligibility for Public Transportation Stipends

PEACE Academy Charter will offer bus stipends for \$200 per semester for any eligible student. Eligibility state is based on student need and free and reduced lunch status. Families can make this request by sending a written request to the Main Office.

Student Drop-Off

Students who are being brought to school must be dropped off between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM. Due to the lack of supervision, students will not be permitted to enter the building prior to 7:30 AM, and students will be marked tardy if they arrive after 8:10 AM.

Students should be dropped off at the main school entrance.

Student Pickup

Students will only be released to individuals authorized and listed as authorized pick up contacts in the student registration documents. Families may change an authorized individual (or indicate

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individuals that are not authorized to pick up) on this list by submitting an [Authorized Student Pick Up Form](#) account at any time. PEACE Academy Charter uses PikMyKid to ensure an authorized adult is picking up each child. Both within the first two weeks of school, and whenever a new individual picks up a child, their ID will be verified by PEACE staff.

Students should be picked up:

- Times:
 - Regular pick-up: between 3:45 PM and 4:00 PM Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays and between 1:30 PM and 1:45 PM on Fridays.
 - Aftercare pick-up: between 4:00 PM and 6:30 PM Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays and between 2:00 PM and 6:30 PM on Fridays.
- Methods of pick up:
 - By car: During normal pick-up time, families who pick up students by car must wait in the car line by the PEACE Student Pick Up Car Line Sign. ***Please do not enter the pickup line earlier than 3:30 PM Monday - Thursday and 1:20 PM on Friday - this will help us to avoid creating long traffic lines. Please wait in your car for your child; do not leave your car in the parking lot and enter the building to pick up your child.***
 - On foot: Families who pick up students on foot should check in with a staff member **by door on the right side of the building (closest to Autozone).**

Map

Rideshare and Taxi Service Policy - Students Only

PEACE Academy Charter does not permit the use of taxis and other for-hire personal transportation or rideshare services including but not limited to Uber or Lyft to get to and from school. Additionally, many of the rideshare services including but not limited to Uber or Lyft have policies explicitly prohibiting minors from riding unaccompanied. All families are required to sign a rideshare and taxi service policy acknowledgement and waiver as part of registration documentation.

Parking Lot Requirements

PEACE families entering the school building must park in our designated PEACE Academy Charter parking spots as outlined by parking signs and are prohibited from parking in front of other stores within the shopping plaza. Parking in front of other stores is only allowed, if you are a paying customer of that store before you enter PEACE. All families are required to sign a parking policy acknowledgement and waiver as part of registration documentation.

Communication

We know our families are critical partners in our children's success, and consider communication an essential part of that partnership. Our communication structures are:

- As-needed:
 - Please accept your invitation to join our school's Parent Square account. Parent Square should be your primary way of communicating with your teachers.
 - Parents who need to leave urgent messages for their child or their child's teacher may call the Front Office and the message will be delivered.

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- Annually: At the beginning of each school year, all families will receive a Family Welcome Visit and will work with their child's homeroom teacher to set goals for each child in a PEACE Power Plan.
- Quarterly: Families can expect a call at least once a quarter from their child's homeroom teacher to discuss each child's progress.
- Monthly: Families can expect an email and/or text communication at least monthly from their child's homeroom teacher to discuss each child's progress.
- Weekly: A Weekly reminder email goes to the entire school community with important news and information. It is also posted on the school's family portal at JoinOurClass. If anyone is not receiving these communications, please contact the Main Office to make sure the office has updated contact information.

For staff contact information, visit JoinOurClass. Parents should not use email in the case of an emergency; rather, they should call the School front office directly. While Parents may use email to communicate, the demands of the School staff may limit their ability to address such communication or concerns immediately. Should the matter be urgent, please call the Main Office at 678-632-5869

Change in Student Information

It is imperative that the school office be notified immediately if a family has a change in address, telephone numbers, or emergency information during the school year. Please email StudentInfo@peaceacademycharter.org with updates to this information.

Collaborative Family Conferences

Our Family-Teacher Collaborative Conferences occur three times per year. Conferences will have both in-person and virtual options, and be offered at multiple time slots to accommodate differing family work schedules. In addition to sharing progress in our standards-based progress reports, families, teachers, and students will revisit the PEACE Power Plans established at the beginning of the year to understand student progress to their academic, social-emotional, and community goals, and determine next steps for how the student, family, and school can support progress to those goals.

Volunteering

Research has shown that children who see their families engaged in their school perform better in school. This is why family involvement is a critical element of PEACE Academy Charter, and participation at every level is welcome. Many volunteer opportunities can be done from home, in the evenings, or on weekends.

Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 (b) (5)) now requires volunteers in schools (including field trips) to be mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Language in the law specifically spells out the definition of child service organization personnel (those required to report child abuse/neglect) as "persons employed by or volunteering at a business or an organization, whether public, private, for-profit, not-for-profit, or voluntary, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs, or shelter to children." O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 (b)

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(5). Georgia law requires all volunteers to complete a training session on being mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. To meet the requirements of the law, an online training course is offered at the following link: [Child Abuse and Neglect: Mandated Reporting Requirements for Employees, Volunteers, and Contractors of Georgia Public Schools.](#)

Once the online course is completed, please sign the PEACE Academy Charter Volunteer Information Form certifying that the training has been completed and the volunteer's obligations are understood. The form can be located on PEACE's website at peaceacademycharter.org.

Visiting

All visitors (including students' families) must enter through the main doors and are required to sign in at the Main Office and wear a visitor's tag, which must be worn while on school grounds. On selected and communicated days, families are welcome to come and eat lunch with their child. However, families and other visitors may not visit the classroom without an appointment. If a family needs to speak to a teacher or School Leader regarding their child, please call the school or email the teacher or the front office asking for a conference.

Birthday Celebrations

Families that do not wish the school to acknowledge or celebrate their child's birthday should notify their teacher and the school Office Assistant. In all other cases, teachers are encouraged to recognize student birthdays in a creative manner that is meaningful to the child but does not infringe upon instructional time.

If families would like to celebrate with their child during the school day, we ask that families notify the front office and homeroom teachers at least one week in advance to avoid conflicts and to ensure that all stakeholders are kept in the loop, and limit their celebrations to visiting during their child's lunch. We ask that you keep celebration materials to a minimum to ensure that all students may continue growing their brains after lunch.

Families should not feel any pressure to bring in (or send in) treats or desserts for their child's birthday. We ask that families who send snacks or desserts (e.g. cupcakes) be mindful of sending in items that allow for easy distribution and clean up for staff. We request that there are enough snacks and/or goodie bag/party favors for every child in the class. Please coordinate with your child's teacher to ensure that an inclusive experience happens for every classmate and that you get an adequate head count of every child in the class. All food and treats must be store bought and unopened until they enter the classroom.

If you choose to bring items to celebrate, please choose only from the following items:

- Cupcakes, cookies, or small treat bags for the entire class (please be prepared to provide your own plates/napkins). We ask that any families who make the choice to do so refrain from bringing in food containing nuts. Be advised that we are a nut-free campus. Please check the label on all goods to keep our students healthy and safe first.
- Individual juice boxes or water for the entire class.
- 1-2 guests (only 2 adults allowed including the parent(s)/and or guardians)

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If you choose to bring items, please do *not* bring the following items to ensure that an inclusive experience happens for every classmate: balloons, gifts, banners, noisemakers, cake instead of cupcakes, soda, music, gametrucks, ice cream trucks, etc.

PEACE Parent Collective

PEACE Academy Charter has a PEACE Parent Collective Meeting where our families meet each month to collaborate on school policies and procedures. Based on the Collective's desires, they may select an Advisory Council that reports directly into the PEACE Academy Charter governing Board of Directors. The purpose is so this Advisory Councils' representation at governing Board of Directors meetings will ensure we can continually learn from our community. If you are interested in joining the PEACE Parent Collective please contact the School Leader at e.keys@peaceacademycharter.org.

Supplies

PEACE Academy Charter will purchase all of the school supplies needed for the classroom. Families are asked to provide an appropriate backpack.

Students do not need to buy supplies for school. The school will provide each student with supplies needed at school. We recommend that students have access to the following supplies at home in order to successfully complete their homework:

- Lots of pencils
- Erasers
- Pencil sharpener
- Crayons and markers Lined paper
- Notebooks
- Blank Paper

Lost and Found

We strongly urge families to label all personal possessions with their child's name. Clothing or items lost at school are taken to the school lost-and-found located in the front office until claimed on the schools lost and found website. To claim items, parents will be able to comment on the posted photo(s) with their child's name and homeroom and items will be sent home within one business day. Parents will have 30 days to claim items. All unclaimed articles will be donated to a charitable organization or the PEACE School closet at the end of each quarter. PEACE Academy Charter will not be held liable for loss or damage of any property belonging to the student.

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SECTION 3: THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Profile of a Graduate

Each 8th grader graduates from PEACE Academy Charter equipped with:

High School Preparation Mentor: Our mentors will ensure our students are able to smoothly transition into High School and are able to apply their leadership skills in this next phase.

Field Experience Portfolio: Our students will enter high school with a portfolio of each of the Field Experiences they have engaged in throughout each year.

College & Career Plans: Our students will clearly define options they may want to engage in post high-school and the strategies they need to engage in during High School to achieve these goals. The plans will include research of a network of contacts in the field, required schooling/training, timeline, and financing required for each path.



Core Values

<p>Love</p>	<p>We show love to every member and part of our community. If our actions are not done with love, they are not done correctly.</p> <p>I love myself, my community, and others because I know that love is the foundation for liberation.</p>
<p>Self-Awareness</p>	<p>Reflection on my identity, actions, and beliefs are a requirement of every member of our community.</p> <p>I will embrace curiosity, development, growth, and evolution as critical tools toward the continual enhancement of Self-Awareness.</p>
<p>Inclusive</p>	<p>Every member of this community is special, unique, and must be treated with equity, dignity, and respect.</p> <p>It is my responsibility to make sure that all of our actions are inclusive so every member of this community is shown compassion and feels welcomed, valued, and important.</p>
<p>Community</p>	<p>Our community is not governed by Power but out of a mutual respect, love, and understanding of each other, our ancestors, and our culture. No one member is more important than another.</p> <p>I operate in community because I understand that my liberation is deeply connected to all of the members of our community.</p>
<p>Excellence</p>	<p>Excellence is the only choice and it requires critical thinking, proper planning, effective collaboration, strong execution, and a high level of self-agency. Without these experiences we are planning for mediocrity and we know that is not accepted.</p> <p>I give 100% effort to everything I do because I know that anything worth having is worth working hard for.</p>

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Sample Daily Schedule

Times and courses are subject to change based on grade levels and days

Period	Actual Time	Length	Section
Before	7:30 - 8:00	30	Arrival/ Breakfast
1st Prd	8:00 - 8:10	10	Whole-School Ubuntu
1st Prd	8:15 - 8:45	30	PEACE Time Community Meeting
2nd Prd	8:50 - 9:30	40	Cultural Studies
3rd Prd	9:40 - 10:20	40	Reading Development (Phonics, Writing, Cursive, Small Group Reading Skill building)
4th Prd	10:30 - 11:10	40	Math
5th Prd	11:15 - 12:05	50	Lunch & Recess
6th Prd	12:15 - 1:05	50	Cool Down & Creative Exploration
7th Prd	1:15 - 2:05	50	Genius Hour "Specials" (MWF - The Arts, TR - Instruction*)
8th Prd	2:15 - 2:45	30	Reading/ELA
9th Prd	2:50 - 3:20	30	Science & Social Studies
10th Prd	3:25 - 4:00	35	Inquiry Based Learning
After School	4:00	15	Dismissal

Uniforms and Dress Code

Our policy is intentionally written to minimize the risk of students missing instructional time as a result of dress code. It is also written to minimize the time spent by teachers in addressing dress code.

Dress Code Philosophy and Equity Statement

Our values are:

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- Student dress code enforcement should not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- School staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.
- Teachers should focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.

Our uniform policy is designed to accomplish several goals:

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- Relieve social pressure to wear certain brands or styles that might not be viable or sustainable options financially for all families
- Provide students and families with a predictable option of clothing choices for school each day
- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as science lab (eye or body protection), dance (bare feet, tights/leotards), or PE (athletic attire/shoes).
- Allow students to choose from a variety of cost-friendly uniform options.
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, invade the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar or obscene, or that reasonably can be construed as containing fighting words, speech that incites others to imminent lawless action, defamatory speech, or threats to others
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Uniform Policy

PEACE Academy Charter students are required to wear a uniform daily. We will provide assistance to any families who are unable to afford the cost of the uniform.

The school is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

- **Basic principle: certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.** Clothes must be worn in a way such that undergarments, buttocks, upper thighs, and chests are fully covered with opaque fabric.
- **Students must wear**, while following the basic principle above:
 - A top that meets the criteria below, AND
 - Uniform shirts must be purchased through our uniform vendor. Our uniform shirts are red or green polo with the school logo stitched into the fabric or red T-shirts with the PEACE logo printed on the shirt. Shirts are available in both long-sleeve and short-sleeve. Shirts should be the appropriate size, fitting the child without being too tight to restrict movement, and should be completely tucked in.

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- Bottoms (pants, skirt, dress, shorts) that meet criteria below, AND
 - Plain black twill pants
 - Plain black twill shorts
 - Plain black skirts
- Shoes that meet the criteria below: Because students walk a lot during each day and have exercise time each day, we ask that students wear sneakers instead of dress shoes.
 - Students are encouraged wear sneakers daily
 - Heels that do not inhibit the movement of students
- **Students may wear:**
 - Any shirt with the school logo produced by the school
 - School logo pullover sweater vest
 - School logo cardigan sweater
 - Head coverings: students may wear cultural and religious headwear, headwraps, and hairbands; however, students are not allowed to wear casual head coverings such as hats or bonnets in the building during instructional time (unless expressed in writing from the school). Such items worn inside the building will be taken from students and stored at the front desk for parents to pick up.
- **Students cannot wear:**
 - Violent language or images
 - Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity)
 - Hate speech, profanity, pornography
 - Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups
 - Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments
 - Swimsuits (except as required in class or athletic practice)
 - Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon
 - Hats inside the building.
- **Physical education shirts:** There is no gym uniform and students are not encouraged to change clothes for P.E. or recess.
- **Uniforms on field experiences:** Due to safety reasons, students must wear their uniform on field experiences. In the event of an emergency, wearing the uniform will allow staff to quickly identify a student.

Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School leadership and staff shall not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- To ensure consistent implementation of the dress code policy, the School Leader and designated Leadership Team staff members will be responsible for completing an informal uniform check as a part of Morning Arrival. If a student is wearing an item that is not in compliance with the uniform policy, the student will be provided with a temporary uniform (that will be returned at the end of the day for laundering).

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- If a student repeatedly needs a temporary uniform, the school will conference with the family to understand and resolve any hindrances to consistent uniform use.
- If a teacher notices a student is not in compliance with the uniform during instructional time, they will notify the Main Office to provide a temporary uniform for the student.
- If necessary, students' parent(s)/guardian(s) may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- School staff shall not enforce the school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.
- Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parent(s)/guardian(s), or staff) in school. "shaming" includes, but is not limited to:
 - kneeling or bending over to check attire fit;
 - measuring straps or skirt length;
 - asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or in hallways in front of others;
 - calling out students in spaces, in hallways, or in classrooms about perceived dress code violations in front of others; in particular, directing students to correct sagged pants that do not expose the entire undergarment, or confronting students about visible bra straps, since visible waistbands and straps on undergarments are permitted; and, accusing students of "distracting" other students with their clothing.

Nutrition Program

PEACE Academy Charter offers nutritious meals to the students. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are available daily at all schools. Meals served at PEACE Academy Charter meet nutrient standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for students of all grade levels. Food items meet high quality standards and are served by caring, committed adults.

Packing Meals

Families may also choose to pack a lunch for their child. Please note that students will not have access to a microwave or refrigerator. We ask that families pack healthy lunches for students that help us ensure our students get the variety of foods (protein, grains, vegetables, and fruits) needed to sustain their energy for the remainder of the school day. Please refer to the Nut-Free Policy listed in the Illness, Injury, Health, and Wellness section for more information regarding food items that are not allowed at PEACE Academy Charter if packing a lunch from home.

Purchasing Meals

School lunch can be ordered and pre-paid through The PEACE's selected vendor, Preferred Meals. Parents/guardians must sign up via XX. Staff will update based on selected vendor.

Meal prices:

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Families will be notified XX regularly if the student's lunch account gets below zero. Also, parents may set up alerts to notify them if their lunch account balances falls below a parent designated threshold.

Free or Reduced-Price Meals

Free and reduced lunches are available. Free and reduced lunch applications will be made available to all students before the first day of school. All families are expected to complete and return the forms regardless of eligibility for the program. Only one application needs to be filled out for all members of a family

Accommodating Students with Disabilities and/or Special Dietary Needs

PEACE Academy Charter will make accommodations for children with disabilities whose disability or special dietary need restricts their diet, when that need is certified by a licensed physician. For modifications or substitutions to the school meals, the school's Associate Director of Operations & Community must have a written [Medical Statement to Request Accommodations for Disabilities in the School Meal Programs Form](#) on file that is signed by a licensed physician or licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. The Physician's medical statement must identify the specific nutritional needs of the student. This includes listing all dairy, peanut, shellfish, or other types of food allergies.

Responsibility of Parents with Students requiring Special Dietary Meals

- Notify the Associate Director of Operations & Community of any food allergy, disability, or special dietary need regarding their child.
- Provide [Medical Statements](#) completed by a licensed physician or licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law.
- Participate in any meetings or discussions regarding the student's meal plan.
- Maintain a healthy line of communication with the Associate Director of Operations & Community, and others as needed.
- Notify the Associate Director of Operations & Community of any changes relating to the special dietary need, or needs (a new [Medical Statement](#) is required if the diet changes).
- Submit a new medical statement each year or verify the accuracy of the medical statement yearly that a child requires special dietary meals or substitutions.

Eating Lunch with Your Child

On select days, we will notify families that they are able to eat lunch with their child. If family members would like to eat lunch with their child, please sign in at the front desk and receive a visitor's badge at the child's designated lunchtime. In order to encourage healthy eating, parent(s)/guardian(s) should not bring in fast-food items for their child to eat during school lunch.

Student Support Services

PEACE Academy Charter is committed to ensuring that all students have the resources that they need to become impactful leaders in the field of their choosing. Thus, PEACE Academy Charter will evaluate and support students who are suspected of benefitting from additional supports or accommodations in order to access the curriculum, in accordance with its child find obligations.

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Annual Information Session

We recognize that parents are important partners in their children’s education. We want to make sure parents have information to help them understand special education at PEACE. One way PEACE provides this info is via a “Supporting Exceptional Learners Session”. These sessions are recorded and posted on our school website. During this session families will receive information about special education at PEACE, including:

- how PEACE (and families) may decide to refer a student for evaluation for special education services,
- what happens during the evaluation process,
- how PEACE and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) work together to provide special education supports to students,
- what types of academic and behavioral supports are available at PEACE,
- how parents may request behavioral supports, and
- formal and informal ways that parents can communicate any concerns about special education.

Much of the information that will be discussed in the information session is also provided here, in the Family Handbook, as another resource to help families understand special education and partner with PEACE in support of their child.

Multi-tiered System of Supports

Our approach to multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) follows GaDOE guidance. Any students that do not have pre-existing IEP or 504 plans but are both a) below grade level and b) in the bottom 30% in each grade in ELA, math, or behavior will be considered for additional supports through MTSS:

- Select and Administer Universal Screener: Our teachers will conduct universal screeners in math and literacy for all students.
- Determine Intervention Groups: Grade-level teams will review visual reports of data in monthly MTSS meetings to determine cut scores for intervention groups. Leadership and grade-level teams will also review behavior data weekly, looking for students with patterns of behavior challenges each week. For students that are confirmed as benefiting from interventions, teams will make appropriately-sized groups, and plan and execute interventions. For each group identified, grade-level teams will design appropriate interventions, such as phonics, math fluency, reflection space protocol for student de-escalation, etc.
- Use Multiple Data Points to Verify: In the monthly MTSS meetings, grade-level teams will use additional data points (e.g. progress monitoring assessments) to determine if multiple data points confirm that the student would benefit from additional support. For behavioral supports, teams will review historic data to confirm trends or areas that require additional data collection to understand triggers and antecedents.

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- Use Progress Monitoring Data to Determine Next Steps: In monthly grade-level MTSS meetings, we will review data to determine if students would benefit additional interventions (moving from Tier 2 to Tier 3), are showing that they no longer need as many interventions through improved data (moving from Tier 2 to Tier 1 or moving from Tier 3 to Tier 2), or are showing they should stay in the same intervention.

Special Education Services

Existing Special Education Services

Any student with an IEP or 504 plan will receive all appropriate services through Special Education-certified staff and contracted vendors. PEACE Academy Charter will serve students on the full continuum of services required by mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. Students will be served through the least restrictive environment (LRE) possible. To ensure the integration of special education into the general education programming, teachers will plan together during common planning sessions. When families enroll, our Office Assistant will ask about IEP/504 plans in their enrollment packets, as well as check the State Longitudinal Data System to confirm any pre-existing plans.

New Special Education Evaluations

Any time a parent/guardian requests an evaluation, or the school suspects a disability, the student would be recommended for evaluation, regardless of whether or not the student is receiving MTSS interventions. Additionally, for students in Tier 3 of MTSS that do not show progress, we will recommend a Special Education evaluation. Under GaDOE SBOE 160-4-7.09-6, we will communicate the recommendation for evaluation to parent(s)/guardian(s) for them to consent to or decline testing through a meeting and parental consent to evaluation (PCE) form. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) declines evaluation, the student will remain in Tier 3 MTSS support. Special Education evaluations will be conducted by a licensed psychologist through a contracted vendor. The initial evaluation must include at least two measures of cognitive intelligence and intelligence-based testing. Students will be tested in all areas of suspected disability.

After an evaluation, the results will be shared with the IEP team (parent(s)/guardian(s), classroom teacher, Special Education teacher, and School Leader) at the eligibility meeting. Parent(s)/guardian(s) participation is critical in the determination of eligibility for special education and in the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP - see below). Every reasonable effort will be made to schedule meetings such that parent(s)/guardian(s) have the opportunity to participate. Parents may also participate by phone if unable to attend the meeting. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are welcome to invite others to attend the meeting. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should notify the school at least three (3) school days in advance of the meeting the name(s) and role(s) (i.e., family, friend, advocate, attorney) of each individual that will be attending the meeting at their invitation.

Eligibility for Special Education

In order to be eligible for special education services, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

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1. The student has a disability, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")
2. Due to the disability, the student is not making effective progress in the general education program
3. The student requires specifically designed instruction or related services (examples include occupational therapy, speech therapy, or physical therapy)

Students with disabilities requiring specialized support may qualify for a support plan under either Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or an IEP under the IDEA. An IEP must include present levels, goals with input from classroom data and the child's teacher(s), special educator(s), external evaluation results, the family, Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP - as needed), and any related services. After IEP/504 creation, all modifications and accommodations will be implemented by school personnel, and, as appropriate, contracted service providers.

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

The IEP is a legal document that identifies the services and accommodations that are necessary for students to make effective progress.

An IEP is reviewed every year by a team that includes the student's teachers, any specialists involved in the student's education, the parent, anyone the parent invites, and the student if the student is of an appropriate age to participate.

504 Accommodation Plans

Upon completion of an evaluation, a 504 Accommodation Plan may be developed for a qualified student with a disability which "substantially limits one or more major life activities," such as learning and who requires accommodations in order to access the general education curriculum. A 504 Plan is a legal document, which is primarily a classroom accommodation plan. It is not an IEP.

Related Services

Sometimes students with disabilities may need support in areas other than just instruction. For example, if a student has been evaluated and determined to have challenges with speech, then that student should also work with a speech therapist to help them develop important skills for communicating within school. This type of service is called a related service, and is provided by a specialist who is trained in a specific area (for example, a speech therapist rather than a classroom teacher). PEACE works with external contracts to provide different related services, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, counseling, and paraprofessional support.

Manifestation Hearing

In cases where a student with an IEP or 504 plan has a long-term suspension (more than 10 days at once or cumulatively throughout the year), our school will follow the manifestation meeting protocols outlined in the IDEA law. A team of family members, teacher, special educator, Associate Director or Specialized Services & Teaching, School Leader, and any other involved staff will convene for the manifestation hearing. The team will analyze antecedents, perceived motives,

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reactions, and outcomes of the behavior resulting in the disciplinary infractions, to determine the answers to two questions: “Was the behavior caused by or directly and substantially related to the child’s disability? Was the behavior a direct result of the school’s failure to implement the child’s IEP?” If the behavior was a result of the student’s disability or the school’s failure to implement the student’s IEP, then the behavior was a manifestation. No further disciplinary actions may be taken, and the school will evaluate improvements to support plans and implementation. If the behavior was not a manifestation, the need for a functional behavioral assessment and a behavioral intervention plan should be considered to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Disputes

PEACE Academy Charter will make every effort to resolve any concerns from families through IEP team meetings to make the best decision for our students. Please note, parent(s)/guardian(s) always have the right to file complaints regarding special education in accordance with O.C.G.A 20-2-1160. directly with the State Department of Education, the Office of Civil Rights, or filing an administrative complaint. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a copy of their parental rights at the beginning of every special education meeting, which will detail the right parent(s)/guardian(s) to file complaints.

Counseling Services

The school counselor provides a safe, nurturing environment to foster a trusting relationship with students. Parental permission is not required for students to see the counselor or to participate in classroom guidance activities. In this confidential relationship, students can explore their feelings and experiences in hopes of finding a meaningful, positive solution to their personal issues. In many cases, the school counselor works on problem solving, decision-making, and goal setting with the student. The school counselor, like all school personnel, is a mandated reporter under Georgia law.

English Language Learner Services

PEACE Academy Charter will identify students learning English and deliver programming to ensure student success in accordance with GaDOE SBOE Rule 160-4-6-.02. All students will be placed in general education classrooms and taught in English.

Enrollment

All information will be provided to families in a language that the parents understand. Upon enrollment at PEACE Academy Charter, all families will complete the Home Language Survey. The Home Language Survey is used to determine whether a language other than English is used in the student’s home and is not used to determine a student’s language classification or immigration status. The information provided on the Home Language Survey is kept in the student’s cumulative record. The Home Language Survey consists of three questions 1) Which language does your child best understand and speak? 2) Which language does your child most frequently speak at home? 3) Which language do adults in your home most frequently use when speaking with your child? If the answers to all questions on the Home Language Survey are “English”, then no further action is

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taken. If there is evidence of significant non-English exposure, then the pupil must be assessed for ELL status.

English Language Learner Identification

For all families that indicate a language other than English is spoken in the home on the home language survey, students will be assessed using the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 to determine English language proficiency levels in the domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing within two weeks of enrollment. PEACE Academy Charter will utilize qualified staff or external evaluation vendor to conduct assessments.

English Language Learner Programming

The results of the assessment and the programming plan will be communicated with families in their preferred language, as indicated on the home language survey. If a student is identified as ELL, they will be provided with Sheltered English Immersion instruction – Sheltered Content Instruction and/or Direct ESL instruction depending on the ACCESS data. This instruction will be provided during our reading block.

Progress Monitoring

PEACE Academy Charter will utilize the WIDA suite to monitor progress and adjust appropriate instruction, accommodations, and modifications to ensure student progress. Students will be exited from the ELL program when indicated by ACCESS exam scores or general education assessments indicate language proficiency. Upon exiting the ELL program, students will be monitored with ACCESS for two years, and will be provided services again if regression is measured.

Students whose primary language is not English have equal rights of access to all academic and non-academic components of the PEACE Academy Charter experience.

Homeless Student Services

In accordance with the Education for Homeless Children and Youths: Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) PEACE Academy Charter adheres to the principle that all eligible children and youth, including the homeless, are entitled to a free, appropriate public education.

Students identified as homeless or “in transition” will be given full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards and will be included in state and district wide assessments and accountability systems. Our school will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment. Homeless students will be provided all district services for which they are eligible, including limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and after school programs where applicable.

Definitions

In accordance with the Act and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.28, the term “homeless child and youth” is defined as individual who lacks a fixed, adequate, and regular nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:

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1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason.
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Who are living in emergency shelters.
4. Who are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement.
5. Whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation.
6. Who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
7. Migratory students who qualify as homeless because the children are living in any of the above described circumstances.
8. Unaccompanied and are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Clarification of associated terms:

- A child shall be considered to be experiencing homelessness for as long as he or she is in a living situation as described above.
- "Unaccompanied youth" means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is in transition as defined above.
- "Immediate" means without delay
- "School of origin" means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Identification

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the school's homeless liaison (Associate Director of Specialized Services & Teaching) will identify children and youth experiencing homelessness within our school. The liaison will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as experiencing homelessness, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison. The liaison will also instruct school registrars and secretaries to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison. Community partners in identification may include: family and youth shelters, soup kitchens, motels, campgrounds, drop-in centers welfare departments and other local social services agencies, faith based organizations, truancy and attendance officers, local homeless coalitions, and legal services.

Admission of Homeless Students

Students are immediately admitted to PEACE Academy Charter even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. PEACE Academy Charter will make all efforts to update and keep these records current. Unaccompanied youth must also be immediately enrolled in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, or PEACE Academy Charter's homeless liaison.

Education of Homeless Students

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All students, including those students who are homeless or in transition have a full and equal opportunity at PEACE Academy Charter. Parents and guardians of homeless students are informed of the educationally related opportunities available to their children and are provided with the opportunities to participate in the education of their children. Homeless families and students will receive educational services for which all students are eligible. Referrals to health care and immunization services, dental services, health services, and other appropriate services will be made available to all families and students.

Program Procedures

1. PEACE Academy Charter is responsible for identifying a homeless liaison (Associate Director of Specialized Services & Teaching).
2. Homeless students will be identified based on the definition prescribed by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and via a numeric code in the school's student information system. All staff in the school will be trained in the identification and recruitment of homeless students.
3. The homeless liaison will provide annual training for all school staff having contact with homeless students.
4. School leadership will receive annual training on the identification and needs of homeless students.
5. The school will display flyers, brochures, and posters that identify the Homeless Liaison contact information.
6. Services for homeless students will be evaluated based on student academic achievement.

Enrollment/Withdrawal

Enrollment of Homeless students occurs at the appropriate grade level. School Operations team is trained and attentive to the identification of homeless students during the enrollment process. Any identification of a homeless student/ family will be immediately identified to the Homeless Liaison for investigation. If PEACE Academy Charter is contacted by another school for a homeless student's records, requested information will be provided and sent to the requesting school district within 10 days of receiving the request.

Program Training and Information Dissemination

The Homeless Liaison or designee annually conducts training and sensitivity/awareness activities each fall to heighten the awareness of the following personnel of the specific needs of unaccompanied and homeless youth: school leadership, teachers, and support personnel. Homeless liaison will lead and coordinate the schools' compliance with this policy and will receive training annually. Meeting documentation includes the PowerPoint presentation, agenda, and sign-in sheets. The Homeless Liaison or designee distributes posters and brochures throughout the school and in the Family Resources center which is located in the lobby. Posters and brochures are also distributed to the community throughout the year at various locations including but not limited to the following: Department of Family and Children's Services, Community Centers, Local Churches, Health Department, Fire Department, Hospital, Soup Kitchen, Local Law Enforcement, Safe Haven, and Local Doctor Offices.

Transportation

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PEACE Academy Charter will put into place a transportation plan for any identified homeless students (e.g. existing busing route, MARTA cards, or other supports).

Academic Credit

A student's homeless status shall not be a barrier to receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

Disputes and Resolution of Complaints

Any complaints will be submitted in writing to the Governing Board who will resolve the issue. The parent and the student will be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. If a dispute arises under the McKinney-Vento Act over eligibility, school selection, or school enrollment, the Act requires LEAs to take the following steps:

1. The child or youth shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless education liaison (Dean of Special Services - hereafter local liaison) must ensure that the youth is enrolled immediately in the school in which the youth seeks enrollment pending final resolution of the dispute. While disputes are pending, students have the right to participate fully in school and receive all services for which they are eligible.
2. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth must be provided with a written explanation of any dispute-related decisions made by the school/LEA involved, including the right of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal such decisions
3. The LEA (Governing Board) must provide this written explanation, including the reasons for its determination and information regarding the right to appeal, in a manner and form understandable to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
4. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth can file a complaint to the Georgia Department of Education at:

Georgia Department of Education
Federal Programs Director
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
1854 Twin Towers East
Atlanta, Georgia, 30034

Homework

Philosophy of Homework

At PEACE Academy Charter we believe children should be provided with rich learning opportunities in and out of the classroom setting. As such, we are intentional about what homework is assigned, frequency and time commitment needed for completion.

Our homework is designed to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, to build good student study habits, and to teach students responsibility and accountability. We also seek to ensure that our homework allows for our students and families to have time to deepen their relationship with one

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another, and that our children have time to participate in extracurricular activities that enrich their lives and nurture their unique talents, skills and interests.

Amount of Homework

Homework is assigned Monday-Thursday and excludes Friday and weekends. It will be provided in a homework packet that will be sent home each week in the Homework Folder or via technology. Homework is reviewed for completion and quality by teachers each morning. All students are provided with their own Homework Folders, which include a nightly or weekly Reading Log.

Homework consists of the following:

- **Homework Time Commitment: 35-45 minutes total/nightly**
 - **Reading Log and Sight Words:**
 - Kindergarten: 15 minutes of reading (parent(s)/guardian(s) read to students; halfway through the year, students should read 1-2 leveled books to parent(s)/guardian(s), but students still benefit greatly from being read to by parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - 1st and 2nd grade: Minimum of 20 minutes of reading (students should read independently each night, but students still benefit greatly from being read to by parent(s)/guardian(s)). Families reading independently in the same time/room increases students' reading stamina.
 - 3rd grade: Minimum of 25 minutes of reading (students should read independently each night. Families reading independently in the same time/room increases students' reading stamina.
 - K-3: 5-10 minutes weekly sight word drills.
 - **Social-emotional Learning Discussion and Writing Prompt:**
 - K-3: 10 minutes of written/discussion prompts rooted in social-emotional and/or cultural learning skills (i.e. recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing and regulating emotions and historical figure's impact on the world). Families and students will be provided a prompt or activity nightly to discuss or practice with one another. After the discussion or practice, students will be asked to write or draw about what they discussed or practiced.
 - **Math Fluency Work:**
 - K-3: 5-10 minute review of math facts.

Homework Expectations

Assigned homework needs to be completed by the student by the due date. Homework is considered complete only when it is done, shows effort, and meets the teacher's requirements. We ask that families support their children with their homework in the following ways: read with younger students, create routines at home for students to follow each day, provide a quiet, organized place to work, and sign your child's Homework Log every night. If students repeatedly do not complete homework, the school will conference with the family to understand and resolve any hindrances to consistent homework completion. Parents should not complete homework for their child(ren).

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Students Needing Additional Support

We encourage families to take advantage of additional, cost effective resources to support their children's academic success. If your child needs additional support, we recommend using Khan Academy (khanacademy.com). Khan Academy's goal is creating a set of online tools that help educate students. The organization produces short lessons in the form of videos. Its website also includes supplementary practice exercises and materials for students. Families can also reach out to their child's teacher to seek additional strategies for support.

Classroom and School Technology

Student Cell Phone Policy

Students are not allowed to use cellphones in school, at school-sponsored activities, or on school field trips, unless specified by a staff member or chaperone in specific circumstances. This includes any cell phone features and applications such as camera, video recorder, calculator, texting or social media. If, during these times, a cell phone is used, rings, vibrates, flashes, or is seen by a staff member or chaperone, your child will be asked to turn it off and place it in the child's backpack.

For repeated instances, and at the school's discretion, the cellphone will be confiscated (secured in a locked location) and returned to either the student by the end of the day or to a parent/guardian at an agreed upon time. The school may pursue disciplinary consequences found in the [Code of Conduct](#) depending on how disruptive the incident is and/or if a student has had multiple violations. Cell phones brought to school must have the volume and ringer turned completely off, stored away in a locker or backpack and cannot be taken out until the end of the instructional day unless directed by a staff member.

PEACE Academy Charter assumes no responsibility or liability for the theft loss or damage to a cellular telephone (even if it is confiscated by a staff member) nor does it assume responsibility for the unauthorized use of any device.

Student Toy, Game, & Special Item Policy

At PEACE Academy Charter students are permitted to bring toys, board games and loveys (small reminders of home like small teddy bears, blankets, or photos) to the class from home. If your child is interested in doing so please speak to them about the potential ramifications that could occur (eg: lost, taken, or broken) and help them to select an item that will not cause significant distress if lost, taken/stolen, or broken. All items must be shown to their homeroom teacher before or during community meetings to ensure the item is appropriate.

Because this is the student's personal item and is not communal, they will not be required to share the item with classmates. However, students should not incite feelings of exclusion (eg: "Only boys are allowed to play with my action figures. No girls allowed" or "Only 'cool' kids can play with my item").



Students will only be permitted to play with these items during recess time. Otherwise items should remain in their backpacks until the appropriate time. If a student mishandles this privilege the item will be confiscated, locked for safety, and returned to them before departure from school. They will be asked to not return items and will lose the privilege if repeated breach of the rule.

While we strongly urge families to label all personal possessions, PEACE Academy Charter assumes no responsibility or liability for the theft, loss, or damage of children's personal possessions.

Technology

Technology is used as a learning tool throughout PEACE Academy Charter. Monitored computer access is available to students on a daily basis both in the classroom through laptops and/or tablets. All technology use must comply with PEACE Academy Charter's [Acceptable Use Policy](#).

Media in the Classroom

The organization will use various media to educate students. Teachers are welcome to occasionally use videos in the classroom and at school sponsored events, provided that the following policies are adhered to:

- Copyright: Teachers are required to follow the legal copyright requirements of videos and media within the classroom.
- Elementary Students: Elementary students may be shown "G" rated movies without parental permission. Movies which are "PG" require that the teacher notify parents at least one week in advance using the school's online communication system, giving parents the option to opt their students out of watching the video.
- Middle School Students: Students in grades six through eight may be shown "G" or "PG" rated movies without parental permission. Movies rated "PG-13" require that the teacher notify parents at least one week in advance using the school's online communication system, giving parents the option to opt their students out of watching the video.
- "R" Rated Movies: No "R" rated movies may be shown to students during school events.

Media at Home

To support the safe use of media at home, families can utilize the following resources:

- Internet Access:
 - The Georgia Department of Community Relations has [compiled internet connectivity resources](#) from Georgia telecom companies.
 - The [Emergency Broadband Program](#) can support families in purchasing high-speed internet and/or a home device.
 - The DeKalb Public Library has [prepaid hotspots available for checkout](#) to cardholders aged 18+ for up to 21 days.
 - [Comcast Internet Essentials](#) is a \$9.95/month option that is free for 60 days.
- Managing family technology:
 - Non-technical adult actions that have a positive influence on students' healthy use of technology:
 - Adults role modeling healthy use of technology.
 - Clear, regularly-reviewed expectations about acceptable technology use.
 - Regular conversations about children's online experiences.

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- Adults and students exploring together the positive ways technology can connect families, support learning, and contribute to society.
- [Common Sense Media](#) provides resources for families to vet a variety of content, including apps and online resources.
- [Google's "Be Internet Awesome"](#) is designed to "teach kids the fundamentals of digital citizenship and safety so they can explore the online world with confidence."
- [National PTA "PTA Connected"](#) strives to help children act safely, responsibly and thoughtfully online.
- [Stay Safe Online](#): Published in partnership with the National Cyber Security Alliance, this site provides articles and tips regarding basic online security and privacy.
- Devices and apps: Apple, Google, and Microsoft develop the operating systems that run on most of the computers, phones, and tablets that all have family controls for filtering content, managing screen time, accessing apps, etc.
 - [Apple](#): For iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, and Apple TV
 - [Google](#): For Android, iPhone, and Chromebooks
 - [Microsoft](#): For Windows 10 devices, Android, and Xbox.
- Staff will add information about accessing student email addresses/Google workspace accounts when available.
 - All students will have a google username and password.

Grading & Progress Reports

PEACE does not use numbers, ranks, or traditional A–F grades for grades K through 4. Rather, student academic performance is documented in relation to a student's progress towards the standards for each performance area at each grade level (1-4 learning scale below, which is aligned to the GA Milestones state performance levels). As students transition to middle school (grades 5–8), standards-based assessments are concurrently scored with letter grades to ensure student GPA information can be established for high schools that require that information as part of a student's application or portfolio. Detailed information regarding the breakout of PEACE Academy Charter's grading system is communicated to families prior to the first reporting period.

Four times a year (see [calendar](#)), students and families in all grades receive standards-based reports. The standards-based reports provide academic and related information on a student so that support and attention may be enhanced, maintained, or altered to help the student achieve maximum growth and learning. These reports provide a detailed picture of a student's performance in each subject area or class by featuring a narrative that describes the student's skills and habits relative to class and/or the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for the course.

We recognize that learning is on a spectrum and want that to be reflected in the language we use with how we describe a child's trajectory in their learning process and in how we describe them as learners. The following language and scale will be used on a student's report card. To be considered on grade level, students should be averaging a "3" in core subjects.

Learning Scale

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E	Exceeds Standards - Distinguished Learners demonstrate exceeding proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are already exhibiting skills and knowledge required for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for college and career readiness.
M	Mets Standards Expectations - Noble Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are well prepared for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for college and career readiness.
P	Progressing Towards Expectations - Progressing Learners demonstrate some proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards but the learning is not consistently demonstrated. With targeted support, the students have the skills necessary to make progress and move into the next grade level or course..
D	Developing Learners demonstrate partial or no proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students need additional academic support to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.
/	Knowledge or skills have not yet been accessed in this area.

Retention, Promotion, and Academic Acceleration

We recognize that academic acceleration (“skipping a grade”), promotion (progressing to the next grade level at the end of the year), and retention is a major decision that has important ramifications for a student and family. Our academic acceleration and retention decisions are made with solid evidence of academic progress and social growth, and are consistent with developmentally appropriate practices that support the whole child. We believe that academic acceleration and retention if not carefully evaluated and considers the child’s academic progress and social-emotional needs, can have a negative impact overall. When a student’s academic performance is below grade-level, we would rather have a student stay with their grade level peers (promotion) instead of repeating a grade (retention) while with PEACE Academy Charter so that we can provide intensive support and work in close partnership with families. If the learning gap is too large, remaining in the current grade (retention) may be the most appropriate plan of action to set the student up for success. If a student is exceeding in the majority of the standards in the current grade level and shows signs that they may be able to manage the social adjustment, we may recommend that the student gets placed in the next grade level during the current school year (academic acceleration). We only reserve academic acceleration and retention in rare circumstances and family, student and staff input is always considered.

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Academy	Criteria for Retention Consideration
Gr K-3	<p>At the elementary school level we generally do not retain unless in extreme circumstances. In the rare instance where retention is a consideration, we will consult with the family and student to support each other in making an informed decision that does not have a significant adverse impact on the child and will lead to academic and social-emotional growth. This decision will be discussed with families at the Collaborative Learning Conferences, and must be flagged to families no later than the mid-year conference. Any decisions around retention will take into account the parent and student's input.</p>
Gr 4-8	<p>Only students meeting the following criteria will be considered for retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing 2+ Classes (Math, History, ELA/Humanities, Science) • >250L below grade level average in reading at end of the year • Yearlong assessment average in bottom 10% for Math or ELA <p>In the rare instance where retention is a consideration, we will consult with the family and student to support each other in making an informed decision that does not have a significant adverse impact on the child and will lead to academic and social-emotional growth. This decision will be discussed with families at the Family Conferences, and must be flagged to families no later than the mid-year conference. Any decisions around retention will take into account the parent and student's input.</p> <p>In accordance with Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 (Academic Acceleration, Promotion, and Retention), students at PEACE in grades 3, 5, and 8 must demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading and mathematics, as measured by statewide standardized tests, in order to be promoted to the next grade level.</p>

In an instance where a student does not pass the statewide standardized tests required for promotion in the above-referenced grade levels, the following procedures will be followed:

Step	Description
Step 1	The parent/guardian of the student will be notified in writing. The student will be retested.
Step 2	If the student passes the specified subtests in a retest administration, the student will be promoted to the next grade level.

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Step 3	If the student does not pass the specified subtests in a retest administration, a placement committee meeting will be held within 10 business days of the retest results to determine the placement of the student for the following school year. The parent/guardian of the student will be notified in writing of the time and location of the committee meeting. The placement committee will be comprised of the School Leader (or designee), teacher of the student, and the parent/guardian of the student (for students receiving special education services, the IEP team will serve as the placement committee). The placement committee must make a unanimous decision regarding the placement of the student for the following school year.
Step 4	A parent/guardian has the right to appeal the outcome of the placement committee meeting to the PEACE Board of Directors. This appeal must be made to the Chair of the Board in writing within 10 business days of the decision. Within 10 business days of the appeal request, the Board will convene to hear the appeal. At the hearing, faculty members and/or the School Leader will also be able to present their recommendation. Following the full hearing, the Board will make a decision on the appeal and notify the parent/guardian in writing within 10 business days. The Board's decision is the final decision of the school.
Step 5	Copies of all correspondence concerning this matter will be placed in the student's permanent record folder.

Discipline¹

The PEACE Academy Charter staff takes a positive approach to discipline that promotes teaching students to be good choice makers. It is a compassionate accountability approach that helps children develop the intrinsic decision-making skills that will empower them to become impactful leaders. Disciplinary actions will never exceed the [DeKalb County School's Code of Conduct](#).

Discipline Philosophy and Equity Statement

- Right to a High-Quality Education: All students have a right to a high-quality education. As such, school disciplinary measures should not be used to exclude students from school or otherwise deprive them of such an education, unless it is necessary to preserve the safety of students and staff.
- General Principles: The goal of student discipline is to teach students to conduct themselves in ways that contribute to our school's community and success. Successful school discipline is guided by the following principles:
 - Positive relationships amongst students and staff are the foundation of our school and set the tone for a safe and successful learning environment.
 - Effective and engaging instruction and well-established routines within a classroom community are the foundation for effective discipline.
 - School discipline is best accomplished before a community infraction occurs, and using effective interventions after they occur.

¹ Adapted from Dignity in Schools [Resources](#)

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- Students should be at the center of restoring any harm done to the learning environment.
- School personnel should promote high standards of behavior that supports our community by teaching, modeling, and monitoring behavior that is consistent.
- School discipline that is paired with meaningful instruction and guidance, offers students opportunities to learn from their mistakes and to contribute to the school community, and is more likely to result in the student re-engaging with the learning community.
- Effective discipline maximizes the amount of time students spend learning and minimizes the amount of time students are removed from their classroom.
- We value partnering with families to collectively make the best decision regarding any corrective action that may be needed.
- Reasonable Consequences: The School will make every reasonable effort to teach student community-affirming behavior and repair community infractions through school-based responses at the lowest possible level, and to support students in learning the skills necessary to enhance a positive school environment and avoid negative behavior. The vast majority of disciplinary issues should be addressed at the classroom level by teachers. In all instances, school discipline should be reasonable, timely, fair, age-appropriate, and should match the severity of the student's misbehavior. When mediation is needed, it should include peer and staff mediation.
- Use of Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions Should be Minimized: Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions should be reserved for infractions that cannot be appropriately addressed through other interventions and disciplinary responses. Absent rare exceptions, expulsions will only occur in cases of state or federal mandates involving weapons and illegal substances.
- Limited Role of Law Enforcement: involvement should be limited to situations when it is necessary to protect the physical safety of students and staff or appropriate to address criminal behavior of persons other than students. Police involvement should not be requested in a situation that can be safely and appropriately handled by the School's internal disciplinary procedures.
- Addressing Racial Disparities in School Discipline: While overly harsh school discipline policies can affect all students, they have disproportionately impacted students of color. Historically, Black, Latino/Hispanic, and Native American students, in particular, are far more likely to be suspended, expelled, and arrested than their White peers, even for the same behavior. Students of color also tend to receive harsher punishments than their peers receive for the same offenses. School staff is responsible for implementing this Policy and eliminating disparities for students from racial and ethnic groups or other protected classes that have historically been over-represented among those students who are suspended or expelled.
- Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities have too often had their education needlessly interrupted by inappropriate out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, referrals to alternative schools, and referrals to law enforcement. This is especially concerning when the behavior resulting in the punitive response was a manifestation of the student's disability. School staff is responsible for implementing this Policy and eliminating the over-punishment of students with disabilities, along with ensuring that any disciplinary

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consequences are in accordance with students' individualized education plans (IEPs), behavior intervention plans (BIPs), and 504 plans (as applicable).

- **Non-Discrimination:** School staff is responsible for implementing this Policy without discrimination based on ethnicity, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- **Due Process:** PEACE Academy Charter will ensure due process for any students facing long-term suspension or expulsion (see [due process section](#)). For students with IEP or 504 plans, PEACE Academy Charter will hold Manifestation Hearings (see [Manifestation Hearing section](#)).
- **Staff Training:** All PEACE Academy Charter personnel will receive specific training on positive discipline approaches and our approach to the Code of Conduct.
- **Community Involvement:** Meaningful parent, student, and community involvement in the creation and application of school policy is essential for building effective schools with positive and inclusive learning environments. As such, the Parent Collective Meetings and PEACE Councils (inclusive of staff and students) will review and provide input on school policies - including this discipline policy on an annual basis.

Code of Conduct & Discipline Responses Matrix

At PEACE Academy Charter, we categorize child misbehavior into three levels. We then use these levels to respond in different ways with the use of our systems. These behaviors and our responses are outlined in our [Code of Conduct & Discipline Response Matrix](#).

SECTION 4: STUDENT & FAMILY RIGHTS

Policy Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation

PEACE Academy Charter does not tolerate the harassment of applicants, employees, students, parents, vendors, or any other member of or visitor to the School community. Any form of harassment relating to an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship status, service member status, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law is a violation of this policy.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

At a minimum, the term "harassment" as used in this policy includes:

- Offensive remarks, comments, jokes, slurs, or verbal conduct pertaining to an individual's race, color, religion, genetic information, national origin, sex (including same sex), pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship status, service member status, sexual orientation, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law;
- Disseminating or displaying Offensive pictures, drawings, photographs, figurines, or other graphic images, conduct, or communications, including e-mail, faxes, and copies pertaining to an individual's race, color, religion, genetic information, national origin, sex (including

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same sex), pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship status, service member status, sexual orientation, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law;

- Offensive sexual remarks, sexual advances, or requests for sexual favors regardless of the gender of the individuals involved; and
- Offensive physical conduct, including touching and gestures, regardless of the gender of the individuals involved.

PEACE Academy Charter absolutely prohibits retaliation, which includes: threatening an individual or taking any adverse action against an individual for (1) reporting a possible violation of this policy, or (2) participating in an investigation conducted under this policy.

Our managers, supervisors, and administrators are covered by this policy and are prohibited from engaging in any form of harassing, discriminatory, or retaliatory conduct. No manager or supervisor has the authority to suggest to any applicant or employee that employment or advancement will be affected by the individual entering into (or refusing to enter into) a personal relationship with the supervisor or manager, or for tolerating (or refusing to tolerate) conduct or communication that might violate this policy. Such conduct is a direct violation of this policy.

Similarly, no employee has the authority to suggest to a student that the student's continued attendance, grade, or promotion will be affected by the individual entering into (or refusing to enter into) a personal relationship with the employee, or for tolerating (or refusing to tolerate) conduct or communications that might violate this policy. Such conduct is a direct violation of this policy.

Non-employees are also covered by this policy. PEACE Academy Charter prohibits harassment, discrimination, or retaliation of our employees in connection with their work by non-employees. Immediately report any harassing or discriminating behavior by non-employees. Any employee who experiences or observes harassment, discrimination, or retaliation should report it using the guidelines listed below.

Reporting

If you have any concern that our Policy Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation may have been violated by anyone, you must immediately report the matter. Due to the very serious nature of harassment, discrimination and retaliation, you must report your concerns to the School Leader. If your concern is about the School Leader, you must report your concern to the Board Chair. You should report any actions that you believe may violate our policy no matter how slight the actions may seem.

PEACE Academy Charter will investigate the report and then take prompt, appropriate remedial action. PEACE Academy Charter will protect the confidentiality of employees reporting suspected violations of this or any other School policy to the extent possible consistent with our investigation. However, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

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You will not be penalized or retaliated against for truthfully reporting improper conduct, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other actions that you believe may violate this policy.

An individual who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

PEACE Academy Charter is serious about enforcing our policy against harassment. We cannot resolve a potential policy violation unless we know about it. You are responsible for reporting possible policy violations to us so that we can take appropriate actions to address your concerns. Managers and supervisors are required to report possible policy violations and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Any questions about this policy should be addressed to:

Angelique Harris
Associate Director of Operations & Community
1954 Candler Rd, Decatur, GA 30316
678-632-5869

For complaints that fall under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), please refer to the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Grievance Policy](#).

Rights Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students.

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/ or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.

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6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.

You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA")

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day PEACE Academy Charter (the "School") receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the Associate Director of Operations & Community a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for

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access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend their child's or their education record should write to the Associate Director of Operations & Community, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School or the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a school board member or director; a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by School, performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. (Note: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student).

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education

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Washington, DC 20202

Directory Information

FERPA allows the School to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a student's education record without written consent. "Directory Information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The School has designated the following as "Directory Information:" the student's name, address, email address, grade level, date and place of birth, telephone number, and his/her parents' or guardians' names, mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, awards and honors received, photographs and videos of students participating in school or school-sponsored activities that have appeared in school publications, and dates of attendance. Student social security number or student identification or unique student identifier will not be designated as Directory Information.

The School may disclose Directory Information to the general public, including military recruiters, the media, colleges and universities, prospective employers, and other outside organizations, such as companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, the School may reach out to parents to inform them of, and/or connect them with, opportunities to engage civically, including to advocate for educational issues that impact their student and school. The School may release Directory Information, namely parent names and contact information (mailing addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers), to contractors and partners involved in those efforts. The School does not engage directly in any electoral activities, and does not support or oppose any political party or candidate for public office.

Parents can object to the release of Directory Information regarding their student, which includes parent contact information. Please contact Mrs. Cidnye Crawford (c.crawford@peaceacademycharter.org) within 14 days of provision of this notice if you do not wish for your student's Directory Information to be released.

Rights Under Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- **Consent** before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 - Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 - Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 - Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;

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- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- **Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out** of –
 - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)
- **Inspect**, upon request and before administration or use –
 - Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
 - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

PEACE Academy Charter has adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. PEACE Academy Charter will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. PEACE Academy Charter will also directly notify, such as through the U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. PEACE Academy Charter will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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

Safety

Security and Emergency Procedures

During the school day one front door will be the sole entrance for students and families. Visitors will need to ring the security buzzer to enter the school. All visitors must sign in and out.

Emergency exits have been identified for each room. Maps indicating these exits will be posted in the rooms. Regular emergency drills—including fire, tornado, and lockdown drills—will take place during the year on campus. All areas of the PEACE Academy Charter campus are on an intercom system. Teachers are issued walkie-talkies for daily dismissal and emergencies. Families are notified of emergencies via ClassDojo and via text/email to the information in our SchoolMint system.

- **Lockdown Protocols:** In the event of a lockdown, Administration or Operations staff will inform school staff in-person and/or via the intercom feature on class telephones.
 - **Lockdown (Interior):** Threat is inside the building; close and lock all exterior/classroom doors; open exterior window blinds or curtains to allow exterior visibility into the classroom.
 - **Lockdown (Exterior):** Threat is outside the building; all students and staff must remain in their location from the time the lockdown is announced until it is lifted.
 - **Lockdown (Full):** Threat is inside the building; all students and staff must remain in their location from the time the lockdown is announced until it is lifted.
 - **Shelter in Place:** Used to protect school occupants from external threats such as tornadoes, some chemical plumes, other natural disasters, and man-made threats.
 - **All Clear:** No longer at risk. Resume normal school day.
- **Bomb and Fire Evacuation Protocols:**
 - The teacher(s) brings their student roster/backpack that includes updated emergency contact information for students and parents.
 - The teacher(s) will be the last person to exit a classroom, and will ensure that all occupants have safely evacuated after an alarm.
 - The teacher(s) will assist any physically or otherwise disabled students in exiting safely.
 - The teacher(s) will bring students in an orderly fashion to the designated exit and meet the rest of the school in the designated meeting place.
 - The teacher(s) will take student attendance using roster and record on green/red cards.
- **Shelter in Place/Tornado/Earthquake Drill:**
 - All teachers and students will go into the hallway by the wall closest to their door, and get in the “DUCK, COVER, and HOLD ON” position as close as possible to a wall,

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no one will be allowed to move or leave until the all clear is called. Head should be towards the wall with hands covering the back of the head.

- **Medical Emergency:** see [Medical Emergency Response section](#).

Court Orders

In the case that families have court orders (e.g. custody agreement, restraining order), they should both a) share with the Office Assistant ASAP, and b) update adults authorized to pick up students in Infinite Campus and PickMyKid. In the case of ongoing custody disputes, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide a copy of the most recent court order, including any temporary orders.

Computers and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

By virtue of using a school computer, network, or online tool, the students and parents of PEACE Academy Charter agree to abide by PEACE Academy Charter's Acceptable Use Policy.

PEACE Academy Charter offers Internet access for student and staff use at school, and various online tools for staff, student, and parent use. This policy is the Acceptable Use Policy for use of online tools and Internet use at PEACE. The Internet system and online tools have been established for a limited educational purpose to include classroom activities and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities as well as research. It has not been established as a public access or public forum, and PEACE Academy Charter has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material students access or post, the training students need to have before they are allowed to use the system, and enforce all rules set forth in the school code and the laws of the state of Georgia. Further, students may not use this system for commercial purposes to offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the system or use the system for political lobbying. Access to the Internet is available through this school only with permission of the School Leader (or his or her designee) and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) permission. This policy applies to the use of school equipment at school, or the use of services established or maintained by the school which may also be used off property.

The following uses of the organization's Internet are acknowledged:

Personal Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not post contact information (e.g., address, phone number) about him- or herself or any other person. • In general, students will not interact online with anyone they do not know personally. They will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parents' approval. Any contact of this nature or the receipt of any message a student feels is inappropriate or makes him or her feel uncomfortable should be reported to school authorities immediately.
Illegal Activities (see Student Code of Conduct for consequences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to PEACE's computer system or go beyond their authorized access by entering another person's account number or accessing another person's files.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not deliberately attempt to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. • Students will not use PEACE Academy Charter's system to engage in any other disruptive or illegal act, such as cyberbullying, arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of a person, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If your child experiences bullying online, contact their teacher or administrator, especially if the harassment or bullying involves another PEACE Academy Charter student, occurs during school, and/or occurs during a school-related activity. Even if the other party is not connected to PEACE Academy Charter, your student's support team wants to know of anything that impacts your child's wellbeing. If the harassment or bullying is happening via a social media platform, use that platform's reporting tools to alert the company to the violation of its terms of service. Additional information about recognizing and preventing cyberbullying is available at from StopBullying.gov.
System Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are responsible for their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their accounts. Under no condition should students give their password to another person. • Students will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. • Students will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following virus protection procedures when downloading software.
Inappropriate Language (see Student Code of Conduct for consequences)	<p>On any and all uses of the Internet, whether in application to public or private messages or material posted on web pages, students will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language. Students will not post information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks. Students will not harass another person by a persistent action that distresses another person, and they must stop if asked to do so.</p>
Respect for Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not repost a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message. • Students will not post private information about themselves or another person.

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<p>Respecting Resource Limits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will use the system only for educational and career development activities and limited, high-quality, self-discovery activities. • Students will not engage in “spamming” (that is, sending an unnecessary message to a large number of people).
<p>Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement (see Student Code of Conduct for consequences)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not plagiarize materials that they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. • Students will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when work that is protected by copyright is inappropriately reproduced. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, students should follow the expressed requirements. If they are unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner. Direct any questions regarding copyright to a teacher.
<p>Inappropriate Access to Material (see Student Code of Conduct for consequences)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not use the organization’s computer system to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography) or that advocates illegal acts or violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature). A special exception may be made for hate literature if the purpose of the access is to conduct research with both teacher and parent approval. • If a student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, they should immediately tell their teacher or another staff member. This will protect them against a claim of intentional violation of this policy. • Parents should instruct their child(ren) if there is additional material they think would be inappropriate for him or her to access. The school fully expects that students will follow their parents’ instructions in this matter.
<p>Students' Rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Speech. Students' right to free speech, as set forth in the school disciplinary code, applies also to their communication on the Internet. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the school may restrict students' rights to free speech for valid educational reasons. The school will not restrict rights to free speech on the basis of its disagreement with the opinions expressed. • Search and Seizure. Students should expect no privacy of the contents of their personal files on the school system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that they have violated this policy, the school code, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion

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	<p>that a student has violated this acceptable use policy, the school disciplinary code, or the law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due Process. The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the organization's Internet system. In the event of a claim that a student has violated this policy, the school disciplinary code, or the law in a student's use of PEACE Academy Charter's system, he or she will be given written notice of suspected violations and an opportunity to present an explanation according to school code and/or state and federal law (see due process section). Additional restrictions may be placed on his or her use of their Internet account.
Other Acknowledgments	<p>The school makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the system will be error-free or without defect. The organization will not be responsible for any damage a student may suffer including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of the system. Anyone caught breaking these rules will be subjected to disciplinary procedures depending upon the severity of the infraction. Additionally, any student caught intentionally damaging or vandalizing a school computer may be disallowed from utilizing computer resources. Any such act may result in partial or full restitution being required by the student and/or family. PEACE Academy Charter is not responsible for repair or replacement of family's or student's damaged, lost, or stolen equipment.</p>

Cybersafety Notice for Families

As a potential recipient of e-rate funds, PEACE Academy Charter is required to have in place a versatile cyber safety system. PEACE Academy Charter will:

- Enhance learning through the safe use of technology, and do its best to keep the students and their data safe online. This includes working to restrict access to inappropriate, illegal, or harmful material when students use, on- or off-campus, PEACE-owned equipment/devices and/or PEACE-issued service credentials (e.g. Google Workspace). At a minimum, this involves using a content filter as required by the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) (for all PEACE-associated devices and accounts).
- Work with children and their families to develop an understanding of the importance of cybersafety through education designed to complement and support the use agreement.
- Provide children with cybersafety strategies.
- Respond to any breaches in an appropriate manner.
- Welcome inquiries from students and families about cybersafety or privacy issues.

Parent/guardian responsibilities:

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- Read the [acceptable use agreement section](#).
- Discuss the information with my child and explain why it is important.
- Support the school's cybersafety program by encouraging my child to follow the cybersafety rules, and to always ask the teacher any questions about technology use.
- Contact the school to discuss any questions you have about cybersafety and/or this use agreement.

Student responsibilities:

- Review [acceptable use agreement section](#) with a parent/guardian.
- Follow the cybersafety rules and instructions whenever using the school's technology.
- Follow the cybersafety rules whenever using privately-owned technology on the school site or at any school-related activity, regardless of its location. PEACE Academy Charter is not responsible for repair or replacement of family's or student's damaged, lost, or stolen equipment.
- Avoid any involvement with material or activities that could put at risk the safety or privacy of any student, the school, or other members of the school community.
- Take proper care of school technology, with an understanding that being involved in the damage, loss, or theft of PEACE-owned equipment/devices can lead to the student/family being responsible for the cost of repairs or replacement.
- Ask a teacher if they have any questions about this agreement.

Additional information

- [Cybersafety from the Georgia Department of Education](#)
- [CIPA consumer guide from the FCC](#)

Searches by School Personnel

In accordance with state and federal law, should a school staff member have reasonable suspicion that a crime or violation of school rules has occurred, a member of the administrative team has the authority to conduct an appropriate search.

Reasonable suspicion is defined to mean that the person initiating the search has a well founded suspicion—based on objective facts that can be articulated—of either criminal activity or a violation of school rules. Reasonable suspicion is more than a mere hunch or supposition.

If reasonable suspicion exists, and if the school staff can justify the search at its inception, a reasonable search can be conducted to prove or disprove the stated suspicion.

Student lockers and desks may be searched by school administrators or staff who have a reasonable suspicion that the lockers or desks contain drugs, alcohol, material that violates school rules, stolen properties, weapons, items posing a danger to the health or safety of students and school employees, or evidence of a violation of school policy.

Students or student property may be searched based on reasonable suspicion of a violation of school rules, policy, or state law. The privacy and dignity of students shall be respected. Searches shall be carried out in the presence of adult witnesses, preferably both the individual conducting

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the search and the witness will be of the same gender as the student. Students may be asked to empty pockets, remove jackets, coats, shoes, and other articles of exterior clothing for examination if reasonable under the circumstances. No employee shall perform a strip search of any student at any point.

As a requirement of GA Law, Law enforcement officials shall be contacted if the search produces a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, weapons, stolen goods, or evidence of a crime, or in any case involving a violation of law. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will also be contacted.

Due Process Procedures

Our school will implement logical consequences and limit suspensions and expulsions as much as possible.

The following due process procedures only govern the suspension or the expulsion of a student from the school's regular educational program. For students receiving services documented through an IEP or 504, please see the [Manifestation Hearing](#) section.

If a student charged with violation of this [Student Code of Conduct](#) has been returned to the regular school program pending a decision, then such action of reinstatement shall not limit or prejudice the school's right to suspend or expel the student following that decision.

- A. Suspension of Ten (10) School Days Or Less: As a general rule, prior to any suspension of the student, the school administration shall provide the student with the following due process:
 - a. The student will be informed of the charges against him/her, and, if the student denies the charges, the school administration shall provide the student with an explanation of the evidence.
 - b. The student shall be provided an opportunity to explain his/her version of the facts.

If a student's presence in school poses an immediate danger to students or staff, the school administration may immediately suspend the student, and as soon thereafter as reasonable, provide the student with his/her due process rights as set forth in this section.

If, after providing the student with his/her due process rights, the school administration determines that the student has engaged in a prohibited act under this [Student Code of Conduct](#), then he/she may impose a disciplinary penalty of a suspension not to exceed ten (10) school days. The school administration shall inform (in person or by phone) the student's parent of the suspension and of the reasons and conditions of the suspension. A decision to suspend a student for ten (10) or fewer school days is final and not subject to further review or appeal.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-742, students in Pre-K through 3rd grade will not be suspended for more than 5 consecutive or cumulative school days in a school year without first receiving a multi-tiered system of support, such as RTI, unless the student possessed a

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weapon or dangerous instrument, possessed illegal drugs, or the student's behavior endangers the physical safety of other students or school personnel.

- B. Suspension for Eleven (11) or more school days and Expulsion: The School Leader has the discretion to recommend a long-term suspension or expulsion upon referring a matter to hearing. Hearings shall be heard before a hearing officer designated by the Board of Directors. Such hearing officer shall meet the training requirements of the State Board of Education and Georgia law.

If a student's presence in school poses an immediate danger to students or staff, the school administration may immediately suspend the student, and as soon thereafter as reasonable, provide the student with his/her due process rights as set forth in this section.

Acts of misconduct warranting expulsion require that the student be immediately placed on suspension for up to ten (10) school days pending the hearing.

1. Hearing for Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion: If a student is charged with a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) carrying a consequence of long term suspension or expulsion, the student and his parent shall be notified of such in writing by registered mail, as well as the student's rights of due process as set forth herein.

The written notice of violation shall state the nature of the violation, the proposed consequence, and the student's and parent's right to a due process hearing at a specified time and place to determine (i) whether a violation occurred and (ii) whether the consequence of such violation merits the imposition of a long-term suspension.

The notice shall also set forth the right of the student and their parent and an advocate of their choice and at their expense to participate in the hearing, the right of the student to review and observe the evidence offered against their during the hearing and the right of the student to present written evidence or testimony on the student's behalf. The hearing shall be held in closed session and a written record of the hearing shall be recorded. The student shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Directors if the hearing was not originally held before the Board of Directors.

The hearing officer shall preside at the hearing for long term suspension, at which time the student and parent shall be advised of the alleged violation and the facts leading toward the allegation. Following the hearing within twenty-four (24) hours the hearing officer shall issue his or her decision in writing along with a written statement of the student's right to appeal the result.

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The parent or guardian of the minor child shall be responsible for partnering with the school to ensure arrangements are made for the child's educational needs during a long term suspension and/or expulsion.

Qualifications of Disciplinary Hearing Officers: Disciplinary hearing training and officers will meet the qualifications outlined below.

1. Tribunal Training Provider – one who has expertise and/or knowledge of:
 - a. All student disciplinary provisions in Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
 - b. due process requirements under federal and state law,
 - c. applicable rules of evidence,
 - d. leading federal and state judicial and administrative decisions, and
 - e. applicable ethical standards and the role of the hearing officer and panel member as an independent, neutral arbiter.
 2. Qualified Student Discipline Hearing Officer or Disciplinary Tribunal or Panel Member – an individual selected by the local school system who is:
 - a. in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia, or
 - b. has experience as a teacher, counselor, or administrator in a public school system, or
 - c. is actively serving as a hearing officer under an existing contract/agreement with a Georgia school system provided that such individual completes the tribunal training course within 6 months of July 1, 2023.
2. Appeal of Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

A student aggrieved by the decision of the hearing officer may request to appeal such a decision to the Board of Directors. The appeal must be requested in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the imposition of the discipline, must contain the reasons that the decision should be reviewed or reconsidered, must be signed by the student or his parent, and must be delivered to the Board of Directors by way of certified first class mail. The Board of Directors shall review the decision of the hearing officer for the erroneous application of the handbook's provisions based upon the grounds presented by the student in his/her written request for appeal.

The request for appeal shall be presented at the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors following receipt of the notice of appeal, at which time the Board of Directors shall review the written request for appeal. The appeal may be considered in open or closed session, at the student or parent's request and shall be conducted in accordance with the rights of confidentiality adhering to Education Records as that term is defined in 20 USC 1232g. In reviewing the written request for appeal, the Board of Directors may, during the review, ask the administration to respond to the written request for appeal orally and may request information of the student or his/her parent. The Board of Directors shall notify the student and

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his/her parent of the result in writing within five (5) business days of the board meeting at which the appeal was heard.

All determinations of the Board of Directors on appeal or with respect to expulsions are final with regard to due process at the school.

C. Miscellaneous Provisions

- a. Voluntary Agreements: At any time, the School Leader or his/her designee may enter into a written contract with the student and his/her parent(s) setting forth the parties' agreement in settlement of disciplinary charges or restitution related to damage to or loss of school property. In such cases, the written agreement shall be final and binding and may not be later challenged by the School Leader or his/her designee or the student or his/her parent(s).
- b. Suspended/Expelled Students On School Property Or Attending School Activities: A suspended or expelled student who enters onto school property or appears at a school activity, event or function without the permission of a building administrator shall be deemed to be trespassing.
- c. Maintaining Class Progress: When practical in the judgment of the School Leader, a student may be permitted to maintain progress during the disciplinary period.

D. Definition Of Terms

- a. "Behavior Referral Report" is a specific written record of the student's act of misconduct. It documents the date, nature of the offense, and the disciplinary action taken by the teacher and/or school administration.
- b. "Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP)" is a written document that identifies the causes for excessive tardies and/or absences and what steps will be taken to minimize the number of occurrences. It is signed by the parents, student, and staff member.
- c. "Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP)" is a written document that identifies the cause of repeated misconduct and what steps will be taken in order to help a student overcome inappropriate behavior. It is signed by the parents, student, and staff member.
- d. "Suspension" refers to a decision to temporarily remove a student's right to attend school or any school-related activity not to exceed ten (10) school days. A meeting with the parents may be convened to discuss the incident that led to the suspension and to develop a BIP for the future.
- e. "Long Term Suspension" is defined as a decision to remove a student from school due to extreme non-compliance with school rules or state law for more than ten (10) school days but less than a semester. The student and his/her parent shall be notified in writing of the hearing date before the board designee and the student's right to due process. The decision, made by the Board of Directors' designee, can be appealed to the Board of Directors at their next regularly scheduled meeting. All other decisions by the Board's designee are final.

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- f. "Expulsion" is defined as a decision to remove a student from school due to extreme non-compliance with school rules/state law for a period of time that exceeds the current semester.
- g. "Permanent Expulsion" is defined as a decision to permanently remove the student from the school. This decision shall be made by the Board of Directors. All decisions made by the Board of Directors are final.
- h. The School Leader follows standard disciplinary procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures.
- i. If the School Leader believes it is warranted, the student is expelled.

Following the School Leader's decision to expel, there is an appeal process:

- A. The School Leader gives written notice of the expulsion to the parent/guardian within 24 hours, including giving notice that the parent/guardian or student has five (5) business days to file an appeal.
- B. All appeals must be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) business days after receipt of the notice of expulsion.
- C. The parent/guardian, student or a teacher requested by the student can appeal the decision.
- D. Absent a timely request for appeal, the decision of the School Leader is final. An appeal can be filed with the Board, and a hearing will be held no later than ten (10) business days after the beginning of the expulsion. Notice of the time and place of the hearing will be provided to the parent/guardian, the student, the School Leader, and a teacher who chooses to file an appeal.
- E. The Board may affirm the decision of the School Leader, order removal of the expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable. The action of the Board is final.

PEACE's policies and administrative rules and regulations pertaining to student conduct will be filed with the State Commission for Charter Schools and Georgia Department of Education.

Based on GA Law O.C.G.A. 20-2-768 (2010) 20-2-768. Expulsion or suspension of students for felonies; alternative educational system; policy (a) Each local board of education is authorized to refuse to readmit or enroll any student who has been suspended or expelled for being convicted of, being adjudicated to have committed, being indicted for, or having information filed for the commission of any felony or any delinquent act under Code Section 15-11-28 which would be a felony if committed by an adult. If refused readmission or enrollment, the student or the student's parent or legal guardian has the right to request a hearing pursuant to the procedures provided for in Code Section 20-2-754.

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Student Reporting of Alleged Sexually Inappropriate Behavior

Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator, or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her/their school.

Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the School Leader, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the School Leader within 24 hours. If the School Leader is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Chairperson of the Governing Board

Any School Leader receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. §§ 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by School personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the Executive Director shall make an immediate written report to the Chairperson of the Governing Board, and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

[Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Whistleblower Policy](#)

Handling Of Reported Violations

PEACE Academy Charter will promptly investigate all reports filed in accordance with this policy with due care. Matters reported internally without initial resolution will be investigated to determine if the allegations are true, whether the issue is material and what actions, if any, are necessary to correct the problem. PEACE Academy Charter staff will issue a full report of all matters raised under this policy to the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee may conduct a further investigation upon receiving the report from the School Leader.

For matters reported directly to the Governance Committee or the chair of the Board, the Governance Committee shall promptly acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant if the identity of the complainant is known and conduct an investigation to determine if the allegations

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are true and whether the issue is material and what, if any, corrective action is necessary. Upon the conclusion of this investigation, the Governance Committee shall promptly report its findings to the PEACE Academy Charter Board of Directors.

Authority of Governance Committee

The Governance Committee shall have full authority to investigate concerns raised in accordance with this policy and may retain outside legal counsel, accountants, or any other resource that the Committee reasonably believes is necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations.

No Retaliation

This [Whistleblower Policy](#) is intended to encourage and enable board members, advisors, employees and volunteers to raise serious concerns within the organization for investigation and appropriate action. With this goal in mind, no director, advisor, employee or volunteer who, in good faith, reports a concern shall be threatened, discriminated against or otherwise subject to retaliation or, in the case of an employee, adverse action as a result of such report. Moreover, a volunteer or employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the matter raised is a violation of law or policy or of accounting or auditing procedures. The act of making allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated and that prove to have been made maliciously, recklessly, with gross negligence, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment. Depending on the circumstances, such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil or criminal lawsuits.

Confidentiality

PEACE Academy Charter will treat all communications under this policy as confidentially as possible, but may need to disclose information for business reasons, including: 1) to conduct a complete and fair investigation, or 2) for review of PEACE Academy Charter's operations by PEACE Academy Charter's board, Finance Committee, independent public accountants, and/or legal counsel.



FAMILY HANDBOOK SIGNATURE

I have received and read a copy of PEACE Academy Charter's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the expectations, and procedures of the school. I understand that if I ever have any questions regarding school policies, I can always ask a member of the school community for further explanation.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent or Guardian Name

Parent or Guardian Signature

Grade

Date