



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Student and Family Handbook

(Fernhill Campus)

August 2018 – June 2019



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Mission Statement

THE MISSION OF WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL (WCS) IS TO PROVIDE A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS THAT STIMULATES AND BUILDS THE CHILD'S INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL, AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT. IT WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING:

1. A CURRICULUM FROM WHICH CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE PHYSICAL AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS;
2. SERVICE LEARNING CENTERED AROUND ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES;
3. PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS AS ALLIES IN THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNING;
4. EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT AWARENESS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY;
5. A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY AND STAFF;
6. STUDENT EMPOWERMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING THROUGH LEARNER-DIRECTED PROJECTS AND RECOGNITION OF DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES;
7. SMALLER CLASS SIZES; AND
8. PHYSICAL SPACE HARMONIOUS WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2018-2019

Rosemary Barbera, Chair
Ebony Staton-Weidman, Vice Chair
Justin DiBeradinis, Secretary
Justin Wheeler- Treasurer
Bob Anderson
Fran Bradley
Charles Case
Isaac Ewell
Rachel Loeper
Martin Millner
Jamal Elliott, *Ex-Officio*
Kristi Littell, *Ex-Officio*

SCHEDULE OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS 2018-2019 School Year

Wednesday, September 12, 2018-- Awbury campus
***Wednesday, October 17, 2018- Fernhill campus**
Wednesday, November 14, 2018-- Awbury campus
Wednesday, December 12, 2018-- Awbury campus
***Wednesday, February 6, 2019-- Fernhill Campus**
Wednesday, March 20, 2019-- Awbury campus
Wednesday, April 17, 2019-- Awbury campus
Wednesday, May 15, 2019-- Awbury campus

All meetings are held at the Wissahickon Charter School Awbury Campus (unless otherwise noted),
815 E. Washington Lane, at 6:30 pm.



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

**These board meetings will be held at the Wissahickon Charter School Fernhill Campus at 4700 G Wissahickon Ave.*

Administration

Jamal Elliott	COO
Kristi Littell	CEO
Aaron Dukes	Lower School Director
Rebecca Benarroch	Middle School Director
Michele Ferrante	Director of Learning Supports
Anne Pennington Wang	Director of Development
Kimberly Krasnow	Director of Human Capital
Ishmeil Bradley	Director of Technology
Jane Walsh	Executive Assistant/Development Associate
Paul Vande Stouwe	Assessment and Accountability Manager
Niema Golphin	Dean of Culture
Devon Pinkus	Apprentice Dean of Culture
Justin Trotman	Lead Administrative Assistant
Jenia Jolley	Clerical Assistant
Jenn Wong	Reading Specialist
Allyson Black-Foley	School Counselor
Shawn Brown	Behavioral Support Team Leader
	Afterschool Program Director
Kellie Coleman	Food Program Director

Faculty and Staff

Lower School

Hayley Tucker	Kindergarten K1
Laura O'Brien	Kindergarten K2
	First Grade 101
Sarah Mohtes- Chan	First Grade 102
Lauren Smith	Second Grade 201
Cara Burns	Second Grade 202
Angelica Santos	Third Grade 301
Nicola Robinson	Third Grade 302
Taylor Capaldo	Fourth Grade 401
Mary Carlton	Fourth Grade 402
Luke Reitz	Fifth Grade 501
Marissa Mallory	Fifth Grade 502
Adrienne Kimball	Assistant Teacher



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Joy McMahon	Assistant Teacher
TBD	Assistant Teacher
TBD	Assistant Teacher
TBD	Assistant Teacher
Annabel Zinn	Apprentice Teacher (Math)
	Apprentice Teacher (Literacy)

Middle School

Anni Tacchino	Mathematics/Science (6th)
Joshua Macha	Language Arts/Social Science (6th)
Anthony Coughlin	Social Science (7th/8th)
Lovelee Polite	Science (7th/8th)
Isabel Murphy	English Language Arts (7th/8th)
Donna Green	Mathematics (7th/8th)
Kevin Lattimore	Middle School Apprentice Teacher (Math/Science)
	Middle School Apprentice Teacher (L.A./S.S.)

Specialists

Kourtney Gavin	Physical Education Teacher
	Discovery Teacher
	Art Teacher
	Library/Media Specialist
	School Nurse
Amanda Bouwman	Learning Specialist
Jennifer Goren	Learning Specialist
VACANT	Learning Specialist
	Learning Specialist
Courtney MacGregor	Learning Specialist
Lauren Ingersoll	Learning Specialist
Gail Schroder	Learning Specialist

Behavioral Support Team

Shawn Brown	Team Leader
Anna Burdine-Gibson	Team Member
	Team Member
	Team Member
Menso Munkanta	Team Member
Richard Bell	Team Member
Jaide Thomas	Team Member



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Support Staff

Willa (Peanut) Elliott
 William Elliott
 Pauline Francois
 Rashaan Smith
 Lamont Hill
 Carla Reeves
 Joel Vernon
 Tyrell Washington

Wissahickon Charter School 2018-2019 Calendar - FERNHILL

Please keep this posted for your convenience as our schedule can differ significantly from the School District of Philadelphia.

August 21-22, 2018	Professional Development - New staff only
August 23-24 and 27-28, 2018	Professional Development - All staff
August 29, 2018	First Day of School for Grades 1-5, 7 & 8
August 29-31, 2018	6th Grade Kick-off Conferences
August 30-31, 2018	Kindergarten Conferences
September 3, 2018	Labor Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
September 4, 2018	Kindergarten Conferences, First Day of School for 6th Grade
September 5, 2018	Kindergarten Group A Half Day
September 6, 2018	Kindergarten Group B Half Day
September 7, 2018	All Kindergarten Students Half Day
September 10, 2018	Rosh Hashanah - Administrative Offices and School Closed
September 11, 2018	All Kindergarten Students Half Day
September 12, 2018	First Full Day for Kindergarten
September 19, 2018	Yom Kippur - Administrative Offices and School Closed
September 21, 2018	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
October 8, 2018	Columbus Day - SCHOOL IS OPEN
October 12, 2018	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
October 26, 2018	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
November 12, 2018	Veterans Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
November 19, 2018	Last Day of First Trimester - SCHOOL IS OPEN
November 20, 2018	Staff Only for Professional Development - Report Card Writing Day
November 21-23, 2018	Thanksgiving Holiday - Administrative Offices and School Closed
December 5-7, 2018	Report Card Conferences, 12:45pm Dismissal
December 14, 2018	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

December 24, 2018 - January 2, 2019	Winter Recess - Administrative Offices and School Closed
January 3, 2019	Staff Only for Professional Development
January 4, 2019	Students Return from Winter Recess
January 18, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
January 21, 2019	Martin Luther King Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
February 1, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
February 15, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
February 18, 2019	President's Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
February 19, 2019	Flex Day - School Closed (unless 2 or more snow days before 2/19/19)
March 7, 2019	Last Day of Second Trimester - SCHOOL IS OPEN
March 8, 2019	Staff Only for Professional Development - Report Card Writing Day
March 15, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
March 20-22, 2019	Report Card Conferences, 12:45pm Dismissal
March 25-29, 2019	Spring Break - School Closed
April 5, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
April 19, 2019	Good Friday - Administrative Offices and School Closed
April 23-25, 2019	English Language Arts PSSA, Grades 3-8
April 29-30, 2019	Mathematics PSSA, Grades 3-8
May 1-2, 2019	Science PSSA, Grades 4 and 8; Makeups (all grades)
May 17, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
May 27, 2019	Memorial Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
May 31, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 5, 2019	Eid Al-Fitr - Administrative Offices and School Closed
June 10, 2019	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 11, 2019	Last Day for Students, 12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 13, 2019	Last Day for Staff

Religious holidays

Students who are absent to observe a religious holiday will be given an excused absence. Staff who wish to observe a religious holiday when school is open are invited to take a personal day.

Professional Development **Early Dismissal Days**

The following is a list of staff professional development days.

All students will be dismissed at 12:45 p.m. on the following dates (unless otherwise noted):

September 21, 2018



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

October 12, 2018
 October 26, 2018
 November 20, 2018 - STAFF ONLY, STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE SCHOOL
 December 5-7, 2018
 December 14, 2018
 January 3, 2019 – STAFF ONLY, STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE SCHOOL
 January 18, 2019
 February 1, 2019
 February 15, 2019
 March 8, 2019 – STAFF ONLY, STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE SCHOOL
 March 15, 2019
 March 20-22, 2019
 April 5, 2019
 May 17, 2019
 May 31, 2019
 June 10, 2019
 June 11-13, 2018

Any changes to this schedule will be sent home prior to the date listed.

Wissahickon Charter School Hours of Operation

8:00a.m.	Early drop off – Students may sit on the loading dock or in the cafeteria
8:15 a.m.	Students start being sent to class
8:25 a.m.	School begins (students arriving after this time are late for school)
10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	Recess and Lunch for Kindergarten and first grade students
11:25 a.m. -12:25 p.m.	Recess and Lunch for second and third grade students
12:25 p.m. -1:35 p.m.	Recess and Lunch for fourth and fifth grade students



12:01 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Recess and Lunch for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students

3:10 p.m.

Dismissal for Lower School students

3:24 p.m.

Dismissal for Middle School Students

Prompt pick up is important. Please make sure that your child is picked up on time every day (including early dismissal days). Students not picked up by 3:45 p.m. or 30 minutes after the dismissal time on early dismissal days will be sent to the after school program and charged a fee.

Wissahickon Charter School
Drop Off and Pick Up Of Students

The safety of our children is of the utmost importance. At no time is the following allowed:

- **Double parking on Wissahickon Avenue**
- **Making illegal U-turns**
- **Pulling into the Wissahickon Charter School parking lot during drop-off / pick-up**
- **Parking in the designated bus section (between the entrance to Wissahickon Charter School and Deacon Street)**

Drop-off Procedures

School begins promptly at 8:25 a.m. Students are expected to walk to class when directed by a school official. For those students arriving earlier than the start time, School Support Staff will provide supervision in the cafeteria. Breakfast will also be served at that time. Middle School students can remain outside near the picnic benches until 8:15.

Busses (there are eight) will drop off students alongside the school on Wissahickon Avenue between the entrance gate and Deacon Street. There will be no car traffic / parking allowed in the bus lane. Busses should arrive by or before 8:15 a.m. Students will be directed into the cafeteria or sent directly to class depending on when the busses arrive.

Cars dropping students off are instructed to stop on the school side of Wissahickon Avenue before the entrance gate. If there isn't sufficient parking on the school side, we



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

encourage parents to use the other side of Wissahickon Avenue, but parents must safely walk their child across the street, or hand the child off to school staff who will be waiting at the crosswalk. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to park in the Fern Hill parking lot directly across the street from the school. Students will be directed into the school (or cafeteria), or to class.

Students walking to Wissahickon Charter School should obey all traffic signals and stop signs, and always walk in the crosswalk. Wissahickon Charter School will have staff positioned at the light where Wissahickon Avenue meets Fern Hill Drive.

Pick Up Procedures

School officially ends at 3:20 p.m. for Lower School and 3:24 p.m. for Middle School. Kindergarten students can be picked up @ 3:10 from their classrooms. Grades 4-6 will be dismissed out the side doors of the building. 7th and 8th grade students will be dismissed and are expected to walk to their designated bus stop or pick up locations. During inclement weather, students who are normally picked up outside will be picked up inside the school. Staff will be on hand to help adults locate their children. Dismissal times are staggered to ensure an orderly and safe dismissal. Busses will be waiting for children at the designated bus locations (between the entrance and Deacon Street). Students not taking the bus but being picked up by their parents or an alternative transportation service will also be dismissed with the class. Students should proceed out their class's designated exit and go directly to their waiting family member or van service. Students enrolled in the after school program will be dropped off by the teacher to the proper location.



WCS DRESS CODE POLICY 2018-2019

After years of toiling away trying to enforce a uniform policy, we have decided that for at least one year we were going to try to simply have a dress code rather than a uniform.

The hope is that the dress code will eliminate some of the challenges the school has experienced with the enforcement of the uniform requirements. WCS conducted a survey in May of 2018. By a 2 to 1 majority, families favored a dress code over the uniform. WCS will continue with the dress code policy with a few minor tweaks. We are excited for our school community.

There appears to be a definite relationship between appropriate dress, good work habits, and proper school behavior. Recognizing the relationship between personal dress and personal attitude, students are encouraged to dress in a manner that demonstrates pride both in themselves and in their school.

The following guidelines shall apply to attendance at school and all school activities and events:

- Students are expected to be neat and appropriately attired for school.
- Shoes appropriate for school activities must be worn at all times. Closed toe and closed backs on shoes are to be worn at all times. It is expected that on PE days, students wear sneakers along with the proper PE uniform.
- *STUDENTS MUST BE PREPARED FOR EVERY PE CLASS- sneakers, gym shorts, t-shirts, or sweats are appropriate for PE.*
- Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.
- leggings /tights can be worn, however a shirt that covers the backside must accompany the leggings.
- All skirts and shorts must be as long as the longest finger when hands are placed to the student's side even if the student is wearing leggings.
- Pants must fit the waist and belts must be worn if pants don't fit at the waist.

The following items are NOT permitted at school and any student not in compliance of the dress code violation will be subject to consequences:



- Slippers, house shoes, flip flops, slides or high heel shoes.
- See-through fabrics, sheer, fishnet fabrics, clothing with holes, frayed or rips of any kind regardless of how they are originally made.
- Clothing that is too tight or revealing may NOT be worn.
- Undergarments may not be visible (i.e. boys - underwear/boxers; girls - bras, undershirts or underwear)
- Facial piercings or piercings that pose a safety risk of any kind are allowed.
- Dress, accessories and jewelry which contain obscene symbols, signs, or slogans, and/or which slur or degrade on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, disability, or sexual orientation, contain language or symbols supporting sex, drugs, alcohol or tobacco, and impose a threat of imminent violence or disruption to the orderly operation of the school shall not be worn.
- Hoods may not be worn indoors for both boys and girls. Hats are not permitted for both boys and girls.
- Shirts that expose the stomach or are low cut in front, back, or sides; excessively tight or see-through shirts.
- Spaghetti straps or strapless tops.
- Tank tops or sleeveless shirts
- Students' faces must be fully visible at all times. Masks are not allowed.
- Pajamas are not allowed at school, unless on an approved spirit day.
- Sagging, or wearing of shorts/pants below the waist and or in a manner that allows underwear, under clothing, or base skin to show, or excessively baggy or long pants with low-hanging mid sections are not allowed.

Violation of the Dress Code

When a student is deemed to be in violation of the dress code, the family will be called to bring the student a change of clothes. If dress code violations persists student will be given appropriate consequences, which include loss of privilege, loss of recess, make up time and Saturday Make up Time.



Wissahickon Charter School
General Information

After School Activities

Wissahickon Charter School offers many activities after school hours that are free for our students. We encourage participation, but now mandate a minimum grade requirement to participate. Grades K-2 must have all S's or better in the major subjects, and grades 3-8 must have C's or better in the major subjects to participate. Major subjects are science, math, language arts and social studies. This policy does not affect tutoring or any academic work aimed at improving grades. Only the student who is participating in the activity is allowed to stay after school, **unless the parent has made arrangements with the adult in charge of the activity. That adult will then be responsible for the sibling(s).**

Attendance (Revised Policy 17-18)

Consistent attendance assures that our students will not miss valuable instructional time and opportunities that will enhance their success in school. Students are required to be at school everyday except for:

- Illness
- Approved religious holidays
- Funerals
- Medical and dental appointments
- Court appearances

If a child is absent, the parent must notify the office by 8:30 am the morning of the absence. For each absence, an automated phone call will be sent alerting the family. All absent students are expected to submit a parental note within three days of the student's return including the date of absence, the reason for the absence, and a parent/guardian signature with a contact number.

If a student is absent 3 or more consecutive days due to an illness, parents must provide a doctor's note. Up to 10 total absences for sickness during a school year are permitted; however, all absences beyond the 10 day limit require a physician's excuse. We must make every effort to record attendance accurately and if a student



misses school, it must be for a valid reason. If no reason is provided or our office is unable to verify an absence as excused, it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Please notify the school's nurse if your child is ill with a communicable disease, i.e., chicken pox, strep throat, etc.

Attendance Policy for Unexcused Absences

When a student is absent the first time, an automated call and/or email will be sent to the family.

3 absences - Certified warning letter sent home, generated by the front office

6 absences - Student attendance improvement conference with the Dean of Culture and/or Counselor to establish/create a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP). Please be advised that while the school will make every effort to hold a student attendance improvement conference at a time convenient for the student and caregiver will work to reschedule in the event of unforeseen circumstances, we are required to hold an attendance improvement conference even in the event that the student or caregiver is unable to attend. **A student with six unexcused absences in a year must be reported as habitually truant.**

9 absences - Student attendance improvement conferences with a Director & Dean of Culture to review policy, provide support, and revisit the Truancy Elimination Plan, (TEP)

10 or more absences - Attendance Review Committee (ARC) Meeting with the COO, member of the Board & Directors, home visit from the Counselor and/or Dean of Culture.

Potential Next Steps

Please note, that if your child is six (6) years of age or in grades 1-3 and has ten (10) or more unexcused absences, you, as the parent or guardian, may be referred to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for truancy. If your child is in grades 4-12 and is under the age seventeen (17), you may be referred to Truancy Court. A DHS or Truancy Court referral can only occur after an attendance improvement conference has occurred



If your child is referred to DHS or to Truancy Court, a DHS agency provider will be assigned to your case and will begin home visits. If the attendance does not improve or you do not participate in the voluntary services offered by the DHS provider, your case may be referred to the District Attorney's office for prosecution. Please be advised that expulsion, suspension, or transfer will never serve as a consequence for truancy.

Lateness

Being prompt to school is a habit that will remain throughout life and will benefit your child's efforts. If your child is late for school, he or she must come to the office, sign in, and receive a pass to enter the classroom. In addition, Middle School students are responsible for checking in with their teachers to get any missed work. If a student is late to school 3 or more times in one week, a phone call will be made regarding the lateness. A parental conference will be requested if a student is habitually late to school, and Saturday School may be assigned.

Early Dismissal

Whenever possible, appointments should be scheduled after school hours as they can interfere with your child's learning program. When children have appointments that require them to leave early, the following procedure must be followed:

- Send in a note stating reason for early dismissal that morning or come to the office to ask that your child be excused early;
- Notify the office if someone other than you is picking up your child (the person must be on the list of approved pick-up persons you submitted, and must have a photo ID for security reasons);
- You or the designated pick-up person must sign your child out at the office;
- Those picking up students, including parents, **may not** go directly to the child's classroom.

There will be no early dismissals permitted after 2:30 p.m on regular school days, or one hour prior to dismissal time on early dismissal days.

No kindergarten through eighth grade student will be released from school during regular hours without being accompanied by an adult on their pick up list.

This will be strictly enforced.



Make-Up Work

Upon request, we will make every effort to provide assignments for a child who is absent for **three days or more**. When an absence is anticipated, please let your child's teacher know ahead of time so that you and the teacher can work together to provide the necessary work assignments during the period of absence. Middle school students are required to check in with their teachers to ensure they complete all missed work assignments.

RESET

ReSet is where students are sent when they display disruptive/inappropriate behavior on a consistent basis, or when students are malicious and/or violent towards staff, and/or peers. Students can also be sent ReSet for other violations of the Code of Conduct, like being out of uniform and damaging school property.

Child Abuse and Neglect

It is the policy of the Wissahickon Charter School that all of its employees are to be aware of, and comply with, the Child Protective Services Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This law makes it mandatory for WCS school employees to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect and must file a report with the Department of Human Services. Compliance with the laws of Pennsylvania and the policies of WCS will serve to protect everyone concerned.

Contacting Your Child's Teacher(s)

Teachers are eager to meet with you to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have about class procedures. To request a meeting, please send a note with your child or leave a message for the teacher at her or his voice mail. A list of voice mail numbers will be provided to all families. Please include your telephone number and the time of day when you can be reached, and the teacher will contact you as soon as possible. Email correspondence is also encouraged.

Crisis Intervention

Any suggestion, demonstration or communication of an intention to commit suicide or to kill someone must be taken seriously. The school recognizes that self-destructive behavior and suicide occur among children and adolescents. Students that experience depression, and other mental health issues associated with depression, pose a serious threat to themselves and others. If a student threatens to harm, kill, maim himself/herself, or to inflict similar harm on others, we will mandate that the child be taken to a crisis center. The child will not be allowed back in school until a trained clinician at the crisis center has evaluated them, and deems that they are not a risk to themselves or others. When the student returns to school documentation of the evaluation must be presented to the School Counselor and/or COO, CEO or Director.



Discipline and Conduct

An effective instructional program requires an orderly environment in which students and employees know and abide by reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior and respect the rights, person, and property of others. All students in the school are entitled to share in its education and related programs to the extent of their abilities without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or handicap. Every student is expected to behave at school and in school-related activities in accordance with public laws, the WCS Code of Conduct, and lawful directions of assigned staff, and to deal fairly and courteously with fellow students, staff, and the public.

The Code of Conduct complies with applicable public law and includes the following elements:

- Standards of student conduct shall inform parents, students, and staff what conduct is appropriate and what is unacceptable. The Code shall apply to students while traveling to and from school, at school, and in all school-related activities, and shall be appropriate to students' ages.
- Disciplinary procedures shall define the means by which students who violate the Code of Conduct may be held accountable. Disciplinary procedures must be rationally related to the offense, designed to teach responsibility for one's actions and applied without discrimination. Procedures to enforce the Code of Conduct shall provide for due process by giving students notice of the offense charged and an opportunity to respond.
- The mission of conflict resolution through peace education seeks to eliminate violent or aggressive behavior in our community (as such the school operates under a philosophy where "**you hit, you go home – you hit back, you go home**"). We want all our children to feel safe and have developed a safe and pragmatic approach to teaching children to respect each other, themselves, and their surroundings.
- Corporal punishment of students is prohibited at all times.
- Student records shall reflect the outcome(s) of any disciplinary action to the extent necessary to support educational and counseling objectives with appropriate safeguards for proper use and limited dissemination.
- **Make-up time will be instituted for all students in grades 3-8 who are sent to the ReSet room for Code of Conduct violations or for lateness to class. The ReSet room supervisor or office staff will attempt to reach the parent by phone to inform them of the scheduled make-up time. Make-up time will be assigned the day after the child has been sent to the ReSet room. Make-up**



time will be everyday except Friday. If a student has been sent to the ReSet room on a Thursday, his/her make-up time day will be on the following Monday or the next school day.

A letter of notification will be sent home that must be signed by a parent or guardian and they will be asked to sign and return a portion of the letter. Even if the letter is not returned or is returned unsigned and even if the RESet room supervisor was unsuccessful in reaching the parent by phone, the student will still be required to report for Makeup Time the next day. Saturday Make-up Time will also be scheduled in extreme cases or in cases where repeated infractions occur.

- Students who do not show up for make-up time will be given an appropriate consequence. The Dean of Culture will contact the family to schedule a meeting. This meeting will detail next steps.
- In general, exceptions will not be given for students assigned to Makeup Time. Even so, occasionally there will be extreme situations for which a child will need to reschedule. In these cases a parent should send a note with a student on or before the day when the student is to attend requesting to delay Makeup Time to the following day. This note must be given to the Dean of Culture before noon on the day the student is to attend so that he has sufficient time to notify the parent by phone of whether the child is excused. Students are not excused unless they and their parent are told so by the Dean of Culture or his designee. Examples of “extreme situations” that may be excused are as follows:

Extreme cases for which a student may delay Make-up Time with parent note:

- Death in the family
- Medical emergency
- Interview at a high school

Examples of other cases for which students will not be excused:

- The student’s obligation to take part in a sports event or after school activity (e.g. dance class, etc.)
- Scheduled check up at a medical doctor (i.e. a non-emergency medical appointment).
- Lack of transportation
- Feeling sick at the end of the day after attending school



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

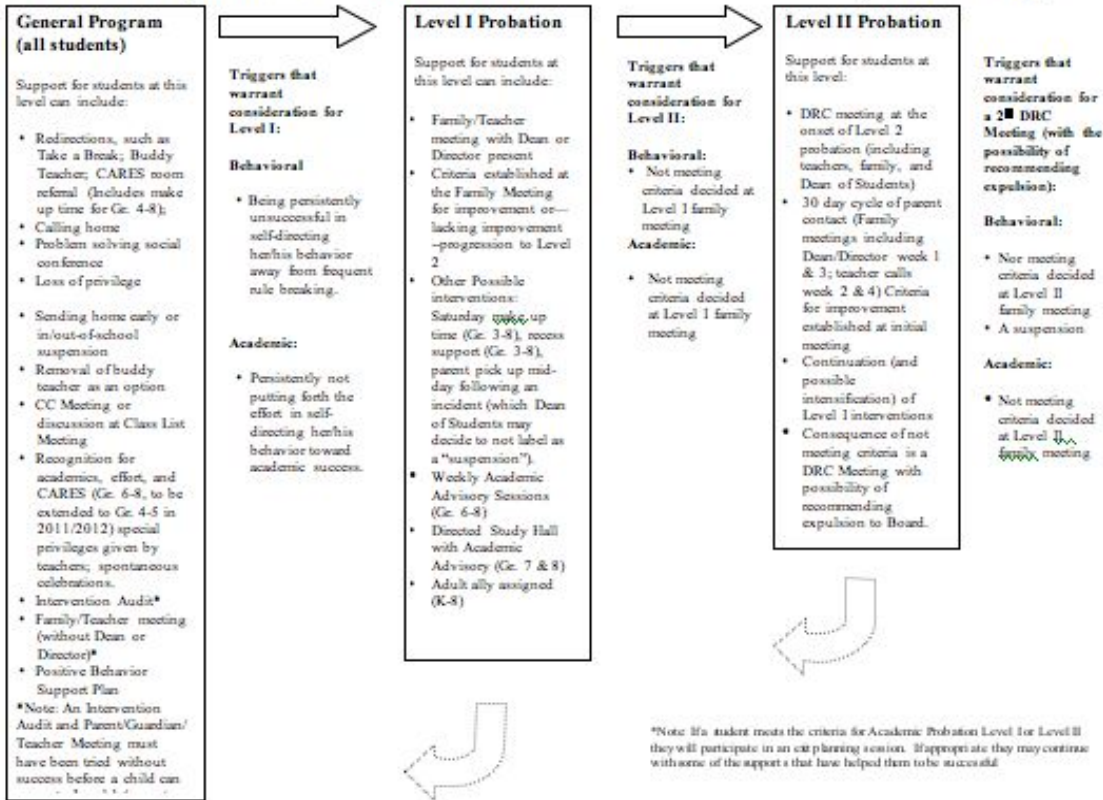
- **During Make-up Time students will complete both their current homework and any assignments that are outstanding.**
- **If students complete their homework for that day and complete all outstanding work, they are still required to stay until the end of make-up time (3:30-4:15). This requirement is to allow all adults involved to know where the student is and to avoid daily negotiation about when it is time to leave. For this reason, students are expected to bring a book or other work to do. As in the rest of the day, electronic devices are not allowed.**
- **Makeup Time will only be assigned in ONE day increments or until the specified work is satisfactorily completed. If more than one day is required, a second letter extending the time will be sent home.**
- **Any student sent out of Make-up Time for not following instructions, being disruptive, or any reason deemed against the protocol will be suspended the following school day. The student will not be allowed back in school until a parent, or responsible adult brings them back and has a conference with the Dean of Culture or designee.**
- **Per the Student Accountability Plan, Make-up Time can and will be used for students in the lower grades. This includes Saturday Make-up Time as well.**



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Student Accountability Plan Flow Chart -- PARENT VERSION

(Last revised 7/8/2011)



Discipline Review Committee:

The Discipline Review Committee (DRC) meets to discuss serious discipline issues that are Level 2 violations of Code of Conduct, or habitual problems that continue to occur with little or no change in behavior after numerous interventions. The DRC consists of the COO, Board Member (serves as the Hearing Officer in expulsion cases only), School Counselor, Lower School/Middle School Director and invited faculty/staff that are relevant to the situation.

The DRC meets on an as needed basis, and has power to place a student on disciplinary probation. **In cases where expulsion is being discussed a formal hearing of the committee will take place, with the Hearing Officer presiding. The Hearing Officer makes the determination if the student will be presented to the full board for expulsion or if probation or some other outcome is necessary.** Correspondence in regards to the DRC will be in writing and will come from the COO.



Emergency Drills

Students will participate in one fire drill per month. There will be two Shelter in Place drills per year. Unannounced drills are to prepare the students and staff for any emergency that may arise that would require the building to be evacuated. In addition, students will also participate in a bus evacuation drill during the course of the year.

Emergency School Closing

Most local radio, TV, and cable TV stations broadcast school closing information beginning very early in the morning. In the event of inclement weather, Wissahickon Charter School will be closed if the School District of Philadelphia is closed. Parents should plan ahead with their children for what to do in the event that school is closed for the day.

If it becomes necessary to close school during the school day, information will be forwarded to local radio, TV and cable TV stations. Our KYW official school number is **211**. We will also post information on our website, and have a message on our school voicemail. We will also send out a call using our alert system. Please make sure we have the most up to date phone number so that you can be assured of receiving the call.

Enrollment

State law mandates that charter school enrollment be governed by lottery. Children who are not selected can be placed on a waiting list. Children who live outside of Philadelphia can apply if every interested child in Philadelphia already has been accepted. **Preference is given to applicants who are siblings of current WCS students so long as proof of guardianship and residence is confirmed. Preference is also given to staff members who've worked at WCS for at least one year and founders of the school. Parents of students who fall in the categories above MUST STILL COMPLETE AN ENROLLMENT APPLICATION BY THE DEADLINE. The deadline for applications for grades K – 7 will be **January 28, 2019** by 4pm. Failure to submit the application by the correct deadline forfeits the preferences listed above. The lottery will be held in February 6, 2019.**

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – Access To and Release of Pupil Records

The WCS will provide parent access to the educational records of their child. The access rights of parents consist of:

- The right to inspect and review the contents of education records.
- The right to obtain one copy of the education records at no charge and additional copies, if requested, at a charge.



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

- The right to receive from school personnel an explanation and interpretation of the education records.
- The right to a hearing to challenge the contents of the education records.
- The right to bring an attorney or parent advocate to the review of education records.

A parent seeking access to education records may make a request by telephone, in writing or in person to the CEO or designee. However, prior to reviewing and inspecting education records, a parent must sign an official request form. Every attempt will be made to expedite delivery of records to parents as soon as possible, but in every case access to education records will be granted within forty-five days of the receipt of the written request as required by law.

After examining their child's educational record, parents may request a hearing to challenge the contents of the record. The purpose of the hearing is to establish the accuracy of the record. At an informal meeting between the parents and the CEO or designee, an attempt will be made to answer any questions raised by the parents. If the questions are not resolved, a formal meeting is conducted in the office of the CEO.

No education record may be released to a third party without the consent of the parents. However, education records may be released, without the consent of the parent, to other school personnel in the school, or to another school system to which a student transfers. Also, in compliance with a judicial order or subpoena, education records may be released without the consent of parents, provided the parents are notified in advance.

Pupil directory information, which includes: the pupil's name; address; telephone number; date; and place of birth; grade level; photographic likeness; major field of study; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; the most recent school attended by the student; and the weight and height of members of the athletic teams, may be released without the consent of parents unless the school is notified annually by the parents not to release the information without their prior consent.

State law provides that the following additional conditions will apply regarding the educational records of special needs students:

- If you ask to see your child's records you must be allowed to do so prior to a conference regarding an individualized education program and prior to a hearing regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- You may name another person to look at your child's records if you wish to have their advice.



- You may ask for a list of the types and locations of the records kept about your child.
- The school will keep Special Education records for five years. You will be sent a notice by mail shortly before the records would be destroyed and advised of your right to obtain them for your own or the student's use. It is your responsibility to provide the school with your current address so that you will receive this notification.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned to enrich or to enhance the programs presented in the classrooms. Teachers may ask parents to contribute towards admission and/or the cost of transportation. No child shall be excluded from a class trip because of a family's inability to pay. The classroom teacher will recruit a specified number of parent volunteers to ensure that a minimum ratio of one adult for every ten children is maintained. Teachers will inform each volunteer of the specific responsibilities he or she may have to help facilitate student safety and focus students on the event. Other parents may attend if space is available.

In order to plan a field trip, teachers must complete the field trip request form located in the office and have it signed by the Lower School Director or Middle School Director. The front office must be notified in order to make arrangements for transportation and the cafeteria staff must be notified if a class will not be attending lunch and if some bagged lunches need to be prepared for the trip.

Students will only be excluded from trips due to behavior in extreme cases. Teachers will make the decision to leave a student behind due to behavior in consultation with the administration.

Teachers will make a plan in advance for the placement of students who cannot attend the trip.



Graduation

8th grade graduation is a time to celebrate great accomplishments by our students and both families and staff are encouraged to attend. Wissahickon Charter School, however, reserves the right to exclude any student from participating in the graduation ceremony if the student's behavior doesn't meet or has not met school expectations. Parents will be notified in advance if such a decision is made.

Health Office

The school nurse handles a variety of student concerns each day and maintains medical records on each student. Please inform the nurse of any special health problems. When the nurse is not in school, the CEO/COO (or her/his designee), who has received proper training by the nurse, may administer medication under the guidelines established by the Pennsylvania Health Services Commission.

Homeless Students/McKinney-Vento

The McKinney–Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth. B.E.C. 42 U.S.C. 11431 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining responsibility. Federal and state laws make our responsibility clear. With the huge number of homeless children currently attending Philadelphia public schools, we must provide proper educational support and services.

McKinney-Vento Act Basics At-a-Glance:

What is the definition of a “homeless youth” under McKinney-Vento?

“Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking a fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.”

What situations fit this definition?

- Staying in the home of other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances – examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or campgrounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Unaccompanied (not living in direct care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth



- Refugee and migrant youth

How does McKinney-Vento help these students?

The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities. This includes:

- Immediate enrollment
- Free and Reduced School Lunch
- Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
- Help from school with getting basic uniform clothing
- Help from school with basic school supplies
- Help from school with any basic clothing needs
- Help from school with basic high school graduation needs and expenses

Where can I find more information for Pennsylvania?

You can visit the [PA Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness site](#).

Homework

Goals of homework include fostering individual responsibility; providing a chance for teachers and parents to teach organizational habits (e.g. keeping a list of assignments for that night, keeping homework in one place); allowing parental involvement so that they can both see the work that is assigned and see their child's ability in doing the work; and improving academic achievement (although interestingly, the research is inconclusive about how much it actually accomplishes in this last area).

Guidelines for Homework at WCS:

●In some classes throughout the school, parents/guardians will be asked to sign the homework of their child. Points or partial credit will be taken off if the homework is not signed.



●Each day, every student is required to complete independent reading at home. The amount of independent reading varies by grade level. Every student must also log his/ her independent reading every day using the form provided by his/her teacher. This daily independent reading is essential in the development of fluent readers who read with accuracy and high levels of comprehension!

●In addition to independent reading, students' homework should be roughly around ten minutes per night per grade (i.e. 10 minutes per night in K and 1st grade, 20 minutes in 2nd grade, and so on). Please keep in mind that, while teachers will use this as a rule of thumb, the amount of time required for homework will vary from child to child.

●In some classes, parents will be asked to provide feedback each night on how long the homework took: Next to your signature you will be asked to write the approximate number of minutes that the homework took and circle it.

●Students should be given homework that is at appropriate difficulty level: While we want you as parents or guardians to know what your child is working on, homework should be work on the student's independent level. Homework is the student's work—not the work of his/her parents. Please notify your child's teacher if your child is having difficulty completing the homework.

●Two notes from the research on homework: 1) While homework can help us achieve the goals listed above, research suggests that too much homework may diminish its effectiveness and turn students off from academic work; 2) Children who are physically active have greater academic achievement. Both parents and teachers must keep in mind the need for balance between fitness and independent academic work

No Zero Policy

Research shows that a grade of a zero does disproportionate damage to a student's average when using traditional 100 point grading scales. In order to avoid that kind of irreparable damage, the lowest score a WCS student can be given will reflect 50% of the total possible points of the assignment/assessment. For example, if the teacher is working on a 100 point scale, then a failing grade will be 50. If a teacher is working on an assignment worth 20 points, the lowest grade will be a 10. This applies to work that is not turned in or completed. In the event that a student scores less than 50% of the total possible points on a test or assignment, the student will see the grade they earned on the returned paper, but the grade that reflects the 50% mark will be recorded in Powerschool to go towards the student's final grade. By giving students 50% of the total possible points, students will still receive a failing grade without making it impossible for them to



receive a passing grade overall.

Tutoring at Wissahickon Charter School

Periodically, Wissahickon Charter School will offer tutoring as an educational institution. In those cases, school leadership will identify and invite students who qualify to participate for free in the program with a predetermined WCS employee.

Parents and guardians are welcome to pursue tutoring for their children (who are WCS students) by WCS employees. To aid in this process, the front office will hold a list of employees who are interested in tutoring. Aside from identifying interested parties through this list, WCS is not responsible for any aspect of tutoring (scheduling, compensation negotiations, etc.).

Tutoring by WCS employees can happen on school grounds outside of regular school hours. Employees are not permitted to tutor students during school hours (including lunch breaks and preps). Employees are not permitted to tutor students enrolled in their own classes for compensation. Outside tutors are not allowed to tutor at WCS unless the tutor is contracted by WCS.

Illness

If a child becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be given immediate attention. You will be called if your child is too ill to return to class. Please advise your older children that they should not personally call home if they feel ill but should go to the main office or the nurse's office.

Immunization of Pupils

All pupils must be completely immunized or exempted before admission to any public, parochial, or private school in Pennsylvania. This is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Philadelphia County Board of Health, and the Wissahickon Charter School.

The purpose of requiring immunization is to protect pupils from preventable communicable diseases and their medical and educational complications.

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
DIVISION OF DISEASE CONTROL
SUMMARY: PHILADELPHIA IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR SCHOOL ENTRY 2016-2017**



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Grade	Vaccines	Requirements
K-1	Diphtheria & Tetanus.... Pertussis..... Polio..... Measles..... ... Mumps..... Rubella..... Hepatitis B..... Varicella.....	4 Doses: at least 1 on/after 4 th birthday (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td) 4 Doses: at least 1 on/after 4 th birthday (DTaP or DTP) 3 Doses: (OPV/IPV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 3 Doses: (HBV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (Varicella or MMRV) or documentation of chickenpox immunity proven by laboratory testing or a written statement of prior chickenpox disease from a healthcare provider
2-5 and 8-12	Diphtheria & Tetanus.... Polio..... Measles..... ... Mumps..... Rubella..... Hepatitis B..... Varicella.....	4 Doses: at least 1 on/after 4 th birthday (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td/Tdap)** 3 Doses: (OPV/IPV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 1 Dose: on/after 1st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 3 Doses: (HBV) 2 Doses: on/after 1st birthday (Varicella or MMRV)*
6-7	Diphtheria & Tetanus..... Pertussis..... . Polio..... Measles..... Mumps..... Rubella..... Hepatitis B..... Varicella..... Meningococcal.....	4 Doses: at least 1 on/after 7 th birthday (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td/Tdap)** 1 Dose: at least 1 on/after 7 th birthday (Tdap) 3 Doses: (OPV/IPV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 2 Doses: on/after 1 st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 1 Dose: on/after 1st birthday (MMR or MMRV) 3 Doses: (HBV) 2 Doses: on/after 1st birthday (Varicella or MMRV)* 1 Dose: on/after 2nd birthday (MCV4)

References:

Requirements from The Pennsylvania Code- Subchapter C. IMMUNIZATION 23.81, amended May 28, 2010, effective August 1, 2011, and from the Philadelphia Board of



Health Regulations Governing the Health of Newborns, Children and Adolescents, published 2009.

*Or documentation of a history of chickenpox immunity proven by laboratory testing or a written statement of history of chickenpox disease from a parent, guardian or physician.

***Only 3 doses of Td-containing vaccine are necessary if series is started on/after 7th birthday, if at least one dose is given as Tdap.

There are two exemptions:

1. Religious Exemption – Pupils need not be immunized if the parent or guardian objects in writing to the immunization on religious/ethical grounds.
2. Medical Exemption – Pupils need not be immunized if a physician or his designee provides a written statement that immunization may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the physician determines that immunization is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the medical exemption ceases to be valid and the child must be immunized.

In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child is exempt from the requirement to be immunized, that child will be excluded from school until a competent medical authority determines that the child may return, or until the child is appropriately immunized.

Disposition of Immunization Records

When transferring from one school to another, parents should request the Certificate of Immunization from the current school and take it to the new school. No pupil will be admitted to a new school without the certificate. The Certificate of Immunization shall follow the pupil when he/she transfers, graduates, withdraws, or otherwise leaves WCS.

Medication

Children are not permitted to bring any medication to school or to self-administer any kind of medication. Should the occasion arise that a student must take medication during the school day, the medication must be prescribed by a physician and arrangements must be made through the nurse's office. The physician must send **written orders** that include the diagnosis, dosage, and the time to administer the medication during the school day. All medications and prescriptions are to be brought to the nurse in their original bottles and kept in the health office. Over-the-counter drugs – including cough medicine, aspirin, etc.—**must** also be accompanied by a physician's note. If the need arises that you must administer the medication to your child personally during the school day, please go directly to the nurse's office. Your child will be called there to receive the medication. Medications cannot be dispersed at any other location.



Late Pick-up

In the event of a late pick-up of your child, you must notify the school office in advance to indicate that you are arriving late and the reason for the late arrival. Children who are not in after-school programs and are not picked up by 3:45 PM are considered late pick-ups. If late pick-up happens on a regular basis, WCS may impose a charge of \$1 per minute late for childcare to offset overtime costs for staff that will be assigned to care for late pick-up children. **This will be strictly enforced.**

Lunchroom Program Information

Breakfast and lunch is provided daily by Linton's Managed Services. The program fits more with the school's environmental mission, offering more whole fruits, whole grains, less processed foods, and less wasteful packaging. Breakfast and lunch are offered to all students free of charge. We encourage families to take advantage of the breakfast and lunch menu. If you need any assistance, contact Kellie Coleman Food Service Director at 267-338-1020 ext 190 or coleman72@wissahickoncharter.org.

Food & Beverage Policy Update

At WCS our goal is to promote healthy living. Through community building in our classrooms and healthy eating initiatives in our cafeteria, our school works hard at practicing what we preach. While we allow students to bring their own lunch, and at times may not agree with what a student brings in terms of it's health benefits, we do respect and understand the choices that families make.

With that said, in some cases we draw the line, and we are drawing the line on energy drinks, such as Monster, Red Bull and Rock Star. These drinks contain between 75 and 200 milligrams of sugar. This compares to 34 milligrams in Coke and Mountain Dew. We believe these drinks are harmful to kids and don't want them consumed at our school.

Effectively immediately WCS bans all energy drinks. Any energy drink that we see on campus will be confiscated and discarded. Parents will be alerted when this occurs and multiple infractions will result in disciplinary action.

Parent Grievance Policy

At WCS we are proud of the positive relationships that we have with families and caregivers. Throughout the year there may be times where parents feel like they have concerns that need to be addressed. When the issue is academic in nature, the parent **must** speak with the teacher first. The parent should request a meeting with the teacher to address the concerns. Once the meeting is concluded, if the parent still feels uneasy or less than satisfied, the parent should request **in writing** a meeting with the **Lower School Director or Middle School Director depending on the grade level of the student.** The



Director will have one week's time to respond to the concern and to determine the next steps.

If the concern is a student matter that isn't academic, the parent should request, **in writing**, a meeting with the CEO or COO. They will have one week's time to address the concerns presented by the parent. The parent has the right to ask to meet with the other **CEO/COO** if the parent still feels like the concerns weren't addressed. **CEO/COO must** receive the concern in writing, and will respond within **10 school days** to the parent, and determine next steps. For middle school students, the first point of contact will be the Middle School Director.

Parents also have the right to address the Board of Trustees about concerns that they have, if they have exhausted other options. Concerns **must** be submitted in writing, addressed to the Board Chair, and dropped off at the front office of the school. The Board Chair will respond to the concerns in writing after having time to review the issue. Please allow at least **1 week** for the Chair to respond. In order to speak at Board meetings a request must be submitted in writing at the front desk at least one week prior to Board Meetings. Please note that Board Meeting dates are highlighted at the front of this document. Parents may also email the concern to BoardChair@wissahickoncharter.org. The response time from the Board Chair will be the same as noted earlier.

Parent Location Information/ Emergency Information /Parental Custody

Parent location forms were collected at registration before the beginning of the school year. These forms are our primary source of emergency information. For the well being of the students, it is important that the forms have been completed and returned to the school. Please notify the school office if you have changed your address, home or work telephone numbers, emergency contact persons, or any other pertinent information. It is important to have current information should an emergency arise. Please be sure to inform the person(s) you have selected as your emergency contact(s).

In addition, a copy of any Court order or agreement affecting the custodial rights of a parent should be filed with the school.

Failure to keep your child's school informed about your current address and telephone number may result in your not receiving notices of important academic, disciplinary and/or health information, and can result in the loss of your right to participate in important decisions.



Parent/Teacher Communications

Parent/teacher communications are vital to the educational success and experience of your child. Together we form a team that focuses on your child's needs, concerns and growth. We invite you to participate in the process through your inquiries at any time. We will also communicate with you through the following:

- Scheduled parent/teacher conferences
- Interim reports for students as necessary
- Report cards
- School and class newsletters
- Notes or telephone calls to parents
- Wissahickon Parent Partnership meetings
- E-mail for homes connected to the Internet.
- Make-up time/afterschool study hall

Please do not hesitate to contact the school or classroom teacher with questions you may have. Parents are welcome to observe in their child's classrooms. Arrangements for visits should be made in advance with the classroom teacher.

Parent/Visitors Log

Parents participating as volunteers in the classroom or who have made arrangements with the teacher to visit the classrooms should sign the Parents/Visitors Log in the office prior to going to the classroom. A visitor's pass must be obtained from the office before a parent or visitor enters a classroom. **As of January of 2016, all parent volunteers must have PA Child Abuse and Criminal Record Checks on file at the school.**

Visitors to the School

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment for all children and to protect valuable instructional time, all visitors must report directly to the office. No one is permitted in the halls, in the lunchroom during lunch, in the classrooms, or in the playground without authorization from the office. All visitors or non-school personnel must have a badge or nametag.

Parties/Celebrations

- Classroom celebrations that align with our mission or our curriculum are encouraged. These include celebrations of student work (eg. publishing parties), celebrations of family (eg. Grandparents' Day), and celebrations of nature/seasonal change (eg. harvest celebration, winter celebration).
- Secular (non-religious) holidays may be celebrated in classrooms with the approval of Directors. These include, but are not limited to: Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day, Valentine's Day.
- Religious observances are not permitted in deference to the varied religious beliefs of our students. Students may learn *about* religious holidays in an



academic context or in the context of learning about the diversity of our student and family community.

- Halloween is also not celebrated. Halloween costumes, parties, or candy at school on this day are not permitted.
- For a child's birthday, parents may send in one treat (eg. cupcakes) for the entire class with advance permission from the teacher. Please do not send in additional foods, drinks, or goodybags.
- To avoid hurt feelings, invitations to private parties will not be permitted to be given out in school. Please use the class contact list to handle party invitations.
- Families who do not wish to have their children participate in such events should notify the teacher. Family wishes should be respected, and such children should be exempted from participation in a way that does not cause embarrassment or distress to the child.

Personal Property

Parents are requested to place the name of their child clearly on all personal items such as coats, jackets, book bags, lunch boxes, etc. Please encourage your child to be responsible for looking for and finding lost items. The Lost and Found Box is located across from the main office.

Responsibility

Care should be taken when you approve of your child bringing valuable or irreplaceable items to school. The school cannot be responsible for items that are lost, damaged, or otherwise missing. Please review the dress code located in this handbook.

Items Not Permitted

- Electronic games, pagers, walkman, radios, CD players, I-pods, MP3 players, and headphones are not permitted in the school. We recognize that many of these items are used by students as they ride the school bus to and from school. **Please make sure your child understands that the device must be put away as soon as they walk through the school doors and the device can't be seen or heard. *This is also true of cell phones.* If the device is seen or heard, it will be confiscated by the teacher or adult present and taken to the Dean of Culture. Once confiscated, it may only be retrieved by a parent or adult designated representative, and make-up time will be required by the student.**
- Dangerous items/weapons are not permitted in school such as: razors, pen knives, hunting knives, matches, pointed objects, guns, etc. (Knives should not be sent in school lunch containers.)



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

- Students may not bring items to school for the purpose of selling to students or teachers. Trading of pogs, baseball cards, or similar materials on school property is not permitted.
- Any item not permitted in school will be confiscated and only returned to a parent. If the item is deemed dangerous, and the authorities are called, the item will be turned over to the authorities. Items that are not permitted in school, and are confiscated on more than one occasion, will not be returned until the end of the trimester.

Cell Phone Policy (updated 8/31/17)

Electronics (phones, mp3 players, etc.) if seen or heard without permission

- 1st offense: Verbal warning
- 2nd offense: Confiscate, submit to Dean of Culture. Parent will be contacted by Dean and device will be held until a family member picks it up. Phones should not be sent to the front office.

3rd offense: Confiscate, submit to Dean of Culture. Parent will be contacted by Dean and required to meet with the Dean. Phones should not be sent to the front office.

Middle School students are allowed to use phones during recess and lunch and as permitted in classrooms by teachers. Failure to abide by appropriate cell phone use will result in privilege being revoked and cell phone being taken.

Press Release

Throughout the school year, students will be involved in activities or projects that may be newsworthy. We enjoy publicizing the good things that happen at our school. In these cases, the children's work and/or pictures and names may be published in one of the local papers. In addition, children's work and/or pictures may also appear on the Internet along with their first names. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these procedures, please notify the school in writing. If it is your choice, we will make every effort to make sure that your child and/or her or his work is not included in the media.

Promotion / Retention Policy

Prior to the end of the school year, teams of teachers and administrators conduct an administrative review to determine if any child should be recommended for retention to increase the likelihood that a student will thrive academically, socially and emotionally in school, short and long term. For each child, these teams take into account reading level, standardized test scores (if available), achievement grades, effort grades, other assessments and social emotional development. Concerns regarding the possibility of retention will be shared with parents at report card conferences, report card comments, or through personal outreach.



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

Literacy in the primary years is of great importance and provides the foundation upon which all future learning is built. If a kindergarten student is an Emergent Reader or is on Level A at the end of the year, s/he will be considered for retention. If a first grade student is below Level G, s/he will be considered for retention. Being considered for retention is not the same as formally being recommended for retention.

Retention for students with IEPs will be discussed in an IEP meeting.

Please note that once a child is formally recommended for retention, this recommendation becomes part of the child's permanent Wissahickon Charter School records. In the event that the child transfers to another school, the child will still be retained.

RESEARCH

- "Position Statement on Student Grade Retention," the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) 2003
- Academic achievement of kids who are retained is poorer than that of peers who are promoted.
- Achievement gains associated with retention fade within two to three years after the grade repeated.
- Kids who are identified as most behind are the ones "most likely harmed by retention."
- Retention often is associated with increased behavior problems.
- Grade retention has a negative impact on all areas of a child's achievement (reading, math, and language) and socio-emotional adjustment (peer relationships, self-esteem, problem behaviors and attendance).
- Students who are retained are more likely to drop out of school compared to students who were never retained. In fact, grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of high school dropout.
- Retained students are more likely to have poorer educational and employment outcomes during late adolescence and early adulthood.
- Retention is more likely to have benign or positive impact when students are not simply held back, but receive specific remediation to address skill and/or behavioral problems and promote achievement and social skills.

Sales/Solicitation

No fund raising or product sales are permitted in school unless authorized by the COO/CEO.



Special Education Services and Programs

The Wissahickon Charter School is required by the IDEA '97 to provide a free, appropriate public school education to school age children with disabilities who need special education and related services. School age children with disabilities who need special education are identified as eligible for special education if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following disabilities:

- Autism/pervasive developmental disorder
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Neurological impairment
- Deafness/hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Mental retardation
- Multiple handicap conditions
- Other health impairment
- Physical disability
- Speech and language impairment
- Blindness/visual impairment

In compliance with federal law, the WCS will provide each qualified student the related services or accommodations that are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in the school program, without discrimination to the student or family. For further information on evaluation procedures and provision of services parents should contact the school COO/CEO or their designee.

Our Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities And Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is available here:

<http://wissahickoncharter.org/uploads/attachments/ciuy1f2ny00eu51fabphwlr51-child-fin-d-poster-090315.pdf>

Spiritual Expression

At WCS, we respect the right of students to appropriately exercise their spiritual expression, and we also recognize the need to prevent material disruptions to the learning environment. To honor these twin aims, WCS will make the Peace Center available to students during non-instructional time for spiritual expression, including prayer. For students to take advantage of the Peace Center, we require a note from a parent indicating that they wish their child to have access. Students presenting such a note will be able to go to the Peace Center during the last ten minutes of the lunch break. Staff will provide



students a daily pass in their planners, which they must have with them at all times. As always, students must demonstrate responsibility in using the Peace Center, including following all school rules in traveling to and from the Peace Center and following the school schedule. If a student does not follow school rules or if he/she otherwise causes disruption to the learning environment, WCS shall give notice to a parent of the student regarding the issues. Upon a second violation, that student will temporarily lose access to the Peace Center for a period not to exceed one calendar week. If after access is restored the student further violates school rules or otherwise causes a disruption to the learning environment, additional appropriate sanctions will be imposed, up to, and including, potential loss of use of the Peace Center for the remainder of the school year.

Teacher Qualifications

Notice to Parents: Right to Request

As a parent of a student at Wissahickon Charter School, you have the right to request the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

1. Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches;
2. Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances;
3. The teacher's college major, as well as any advanced degrees that he or she may have attained;
4. Whether any paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please deliver a request in writing to the school. In addition to specifying the information which you would like to receive, please be certain to include your name, address and a telephone number at which you can be contacted during the day.



Telephone Usage

The school telephones are not available for children's use unless there is an emergency as determined by the school. Forgetting books, notes or assignments are not emergencies. Our goal is to help students develop more responsibility for gathering the necessary materials required daily prior to coming to school. Emergencies include a forgotten lunch, or torn or wet clothing. **Students will not be interrupted in their classrooms to receive telephone calls.** In the event of a family emergency, please call the school office.

Textbooks

All textbooks, workbooks and other school materials should be protected. Small reading books may be protected by placing them in Ziploc bags when conditions necessitate such care. **Parents are financially responsible for any damage, loss, or theft, including school computers**

Transportation

Bus transportation for all eligible students in grades 1-6 only will be provided by the School District of Philadelphia as required by Pennsylvania law. The School District contacts families directly indicating pick-up and drop-off locations and times.

Wissahickon Charter School's mission is to support children in their learning experience by providing them with a safe and respectful environment. Many families have chosen WCS even though they live a great distance from the school. The bus transportation that is provided for students in grades 1-6 through a leased bus service from the School District of Philadelphia. It's considered to be a privilege as well as convenience provided for families, but can and will be taken away if behaviors warrant such actions. School buses do not have bus attendants assigned to them; this can make student behavior challenging.

We must work together to foster growth and responsibility among our children for the safety of all students who ride the school buses. Children must be on their best behavior so that bus drivers can transport students safely to and from school. **It is imperative that parents support our Code of Conduct and reinforce the School Bus Behavior Policy.**

Students must adhere to the behavior policies or risk losing the privilege of riding the bus for the duration of the school year. Below outlines the expected student conduct on the school bus and disciplinary actions:

Expected Student Conduct:

- Abide by the Wissahickon Charter School Code of Conduct.
- Be respectful of the bus property and the property of others.



- Remain seated for the entire bus ride.
- Follow the bus driver's directions promptly the first time they are given.

Disciplinary Actions:

- First Incident - Warning Letter or Phone Call to Parent (If actions are violent or unsafe a warning will NOT be given and the student will be suspended off the bus for one month. Examples of unsafe actions include but are not limited to: hanging body parts out of bus, throwing objects out of bus windows or doors, opening the emergency back door without driver permission. Examples of violence include but are not limited to: fighting, hitting, inappropriate touching/language and throwing an object at someone). A meeting with parent will be required if a suspension occurs.
- Second Incident - two-week suspension from the school bus and assigned seat upon reinstatement
- Third Incident - One-month suspension from the school bus and assigned seat upon reinstatement
- Fourth Incident - Dismissal from the school bus for the remainder of the school year (child may not ride the school bus)

If your student has his or her bus privileges revoked, it is important to note that a parent must continue to provide a means of transportation to the school for the student. Suspension from the bus does not mean suspension from school. **School attendance is mandatory. Parents are responsible for finding alternate means of transportation.**

Additionally, conduct resulting in a suspension from the bus may also result in disciplinary action in the school. This may include, but is not limited to, Saturday school and community service or out-of-school suspension. Furthermore, you may be liable for property damage or injury caused by your child. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dean Jamal Elliott at 267.338.1020 (Fernhill Campus) at 267.774.4370 (Awbury Campus) or via email at deanjamal@wissahickoncharter.org

HELPFUL HINTS FOR A POSITIVE SCHOOL BUS EXPERIENCE:

1. Remind your child of the school bus rules DAILY
2. Send your child with a favorite chapter book or "bag of books". Please write your or your child's name in the covers.
3. If your child does not have a chance to eat breakfast, please have him or her save the food and drink until arrival at school.
4. Electronic music devices and other personal electronic devices may be used when traveling on the school bus. We cannot, however, guarantee the security of such items on the bus or in school.



5. If you have questions or concerns about a bus incident please contact Ms. Shonté immediately at 267-338-1020 ext. 4113 or via email s.watkins@wissahickoncharter.org

Wissahickon Charter School Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a staff member.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room, as well as Myspace, and Facebook misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving and interacting with their peers.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy



- All administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All administrators, teaching, and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if a bullying issue arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously and our students and parents should be assured that they will be supported and protected when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to be truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has lunch or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong



- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention

We will use WCS methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Signing a behavior contract
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying which shows how bullying can hurt people
- Reading stories about bullying, having group, class, and all school meetings and presentations that talk about and deal with bullying
- Role plays that demonstrate bullying, and how to combat it, if one is the victim, or bystander
- Discussions about bullying and how it not only impacts the individual but the whole school community
- Working with students who display bullying tendencies, and helping them understand how they hurt people and why they must stop.

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologize and to fix the situation. Other interventions may be used and/or consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even expulsion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Procedures

- Students or staff should report bullying to correct person: Students to any staff members whom they feel comfortable talking to – staff members to administrators (Directors and/COO/CEO).
- All cases of bullying will be recorded by staff (using a discipline referral form).
- The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated with appropriate interventions used to deal with the bullying behaviors.
- In serious cases or cases where there seems to be a pattern, parents will be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.



- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behavior through peer mediation, meetings with the counselor, self reflection, parent meetings, and or/outside counseling, and if necessary school discipline, including suspension and as a last measure, expulsion.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Wissahickon Charter School Anti-Harassment Policy

The Administration of Wissahickon Charter School is committed to maintaining an academic and work environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, the WCS will not tolerate harassment of any of its employees and/or students by anyone, including any administrator, supervisor, co-worker, student, teacher, vendor, or visitor of WCS.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap/disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, or other characteristic protected by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. WCS will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, interferes unreasonably with a person's work performance or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment or academic environment.

Sexual harassment deserves special mention. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on sex constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or academic performance, (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment or academic decision, or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment or academic environment. Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing," "practical jokes," jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.



All WCS employees and students are responsible to help assure that harassment is avoided. If you feel that you have experienced, witnessed or have information regarding possible harassment, you should notify the COO/CEO immediately.

Wissahickon Charter School prohibits retaliation against anyone, who, in good faith, reports possible harassment, makes a harassment complaint, cooperates in a harassment complaint investigation or any related proceeding.

WCS's policy is to investigate all harassment complaints promptly and thoroughly. Interviews will be conducted, and all information gathered will be used to make an informed decision about whether harassment has taken place. All Code of Conduct rules along with local, state, and federal laws apply. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the COO/CEO will take corrective action, including, but not limited to, appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include disciplinary proceedings and/or termination of employment. When the harassment is student to student, the school will use its Code of Conduct as a guide for punitive measures. This holds true for student to adult community member harassment as well. To the fullest extent practicable, WCS will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential.

Education Rights of Homeless Children and Youth

Local Homeless Liaison Name: **Allyson Black-Foley, Head of Counseling Services**

Telephone: **267-338-1020**

School Address: **4700 G Wissahickon Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19144**

Who is considered "homeless"? Any child or youth not attending school who lacks a fixed regular, and adequate nighttime residence is considered homeless and includes those who are sharing housing with others due to loss of housing or economic hardship. It also includes children and youth who are living in hotels, camping grounds, emergency shelters, cars, bus or train stations, or other similar settings. If you are not sure, please call.

What are the education rights of homeless children and youth? Our schools provide equal and comparable access to all students regardless of their home living situation. Homeless children and youth have specific rights that include:

- Continuing their education in their current school, and provide transportation to that school, (if feasible);



WISSAHICKON CHARTER SCHOOL

- Immediate enrollment in the school district where they are temporarily housed;
- Assistance with obtaining school records *Note: lack of school records may not affect the right to immediate enrollment;
- Participation in all applicable school programs, including supplementary instructional programs, field trips, and other enrichment activities as well as after-school recreational programs, etc.;
- Assistance with school-related expenses, such as: supplies, clothing, uniforms, meals, etc.

Wissahickon Charter School Contact Information

Address: 4700 "G" Wissahickon Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Phone: 267-338-1020

Fax: 267-338-1030

Website: www.wissahickoncharter.org

It is the policy of the Wissahickon Charter School Board of Trustees to promote diversity and equal access to educational opportunity and all categories of employment without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status, parenthood, marital status, handicap or any other protected class.