



# PRIDE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

## PARENT HANDBOOK AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT 2008-2009

<b>AUGUST</b>		
August 12	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	0 days for students
August 21-29	Staff Orientation / Professional Development	7 days for teachers
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
<b>September 1</b>	<b>School Closed: Labor Day</b>	
September 2	Staff Orientation/Professional Development	
September 3	<b>First Day for 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade Student Orientation - Early Dismissal - 12:30pm Parent Orientation at 6pm</b>	
September 4	<b>First Day for 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Student Orientation - Early Dismissal - 12:30pm Parent Orientation at 6pm</b>	
September 5	First Day for All Students/ Ribbon Cutting Event at 10am / Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/Prof. Dev.	
September 9	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
September 12	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/Prof. Dev.	
September 15	High School Night at 7pm	
September 19	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/Prof. Dev.	
September 24	Back to School Night 6:00 PM	
September 26	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/Prof. Dev.	18 days for students
		21 days for teachers
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
October 3	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
October 10	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
<b>October 13</b>	<b>School Closed: Columbus Day</b>	
October 14	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
October 17	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
October 24	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m 1 <sup>st</sup> Trimester Progress Reports Parent Conference	
October 28-30	1 <sup>st</sup> Interim Skill Assessments	
<b>October 31</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>	21 days for students
		22 days for teachers
<b>NOVEMBER</b>		
November 7	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Progress Report Conference	
November 11	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
November 14	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
November 21	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
<b>November 26</b>	Early dismissal—12:30 p.m Thanksgiving Break - 1 <sup>st</sup> Trimester Ends	
<b>November 27-28</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break-School Closed</b>	18 days for students
		18 days for students
<b>DECEMBER</b>		
December 5	Early dismissal— 2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
December 9	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
December 12	Early dismissal— 2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
December 19	Early dismissal— 2:45 p.m Report Card Conferences	
December 22-23	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interim Skill Assessments	
December 23	<b>Early dismissal – 12:30 p.m. Winter Break</b>	
<b>December 24-31</b>	<b>School Closed: Winter Break</b>	17 days for students
		17 days for teachers
<b>JANUARY</b>		
<b>January 1</b>	<b>Winter Break-School Closed</b>	
January 2	School Closed: Professional Development	
January 5	School Re-opens	
January 9	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
January 13	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
January 13-15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interim Skill Assessments	
January 16	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
<b>January 19</b>	<b>School Closed: Martin Luther King Day</b>	
January 23	Early Dismissal - 2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
January 30	Early dismissal— 2:45 p.m./2 <sup>nd</sup> Tri. Prog. Reports Parent Conferences	19 days for students
		20 days for teachers

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

<b>FEBRUARY</b>		
February 6	Early dismissal--2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
February 10	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
<b>February 13</b>	School Closed: Professional Development	
<b>February 16</b>	<b>School Closed: President's Day</b>	
February 20	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
February 27	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev / 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trimester Ends	
		19 days for students
		19 days for teachers
<b>MARCH</b>		
March 6	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
March 10	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
March 10-12	3 <sup>rd</sup> Interim Skill Assessments	
March 13	<b>School Closed: Professional Development Day</b>	
March 20	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
March 27	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Report Card Conferences	
		19 days for students
		20 days for teachers
<b>APRIL</b>		
April 3	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting / Prof. Dev.	
<b>April 6-10</b>	<b>School Closed: Spring Break</b>	
April 13	School Reopens	
April 14	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
April 17	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
April 24	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tri. Progress Report Conf.	
April 28-May 1	NJASK Assessments—7-8 grades	
		19 days for students
		19 days for teachers
<b>MAY</b>		
May 1	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting / Prof. Dev.	
May 4-7	NJASK Make-up days for 7-8 grades	
May 8	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting / Prof. Dev.	
May 11-14	NJASK Assessments—5-6 grades	
May 12	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
May 15	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting / Prof. Dev.	
May 18-21	NJASK Make-up days for 5-6 grades	
May 22	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
<b>May 25</b>	<b>School Closed: Memorial Day</b>	
May 29	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
		20 days for students
		20 days for teachers
<b>JUNE</b>		
June 5	Early dismissal—2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester Ends	
June 9	Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm	
June 8-10	Final Exams	
June 12	Early dismissal – 2:45 p.m Faculty Meeting/ Prof. Dev.	
June 15-19	Project Pride Presentations and Celebrations	
June 19	Early dismissal—2:45 pm Faculty Meeting/Prof. Dev.	
June 22-24	<b>Early dismissal – 12:30 p.m.</b>	
June 24	<b>Early dismissal – 12:30 p.m./ Graduation / Last Day of School</b>	
<b>June 25</b>	<b>School Closed: Teachers End-of-Year Wrap-up</b>	
June 26	Report Cards Mailed Home	
		18 days for students
		19 days for teachers

Every Friday, students have a early dismissal for 2:45pm dismissal for Faculty Meetings/ Professional Development, unless otherwise noted.

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## **INTRODUCTION – *Why should we read this book?***

Welcome to the PRIDE Academy Charter School family. At PRIDE Academy Charter School, we are committed to partnering with you to ensure your child's growth and success. This guide is intended to introduce you to our philosophy, policies, and procedures. It will answer many of your questions.

Please read this handbook completely and discuss it with your child. We ask this so you understand how we operate and your child arrives with a clear understanding of the commitments we make and expect. It is important that your child be familiar with our philosophy, adhere to our core values and follow the code of conduct to be successful here. We will work to teach your child everything he or she needs to succeed, but we recognize that *your child's first, most important, and most influential teacher is you*. We look forward to working with you this year.

## **THE PRIDE PHILOSOPHY – *What We Believe***

PRIDE Academy is characterized by a culture that is orderly, supportive and focused on academic achievement. Our school community emphasizes mutual care and respect. Our philosophy emphasizes a positive approach to discipline, in which the students are gradually led towards self-discipline. Students are expected to behave respectfully towards their teachers, classmates, school staff and property. Our committed staff of teachers will likewise address students with respect and compassion. Administrators and teachers will work together to promote student achievement and to ensure the code of conduct is consistently followed and fairly enforced.

Our teachers strive to create a sense of community within our classrooms. Our students are expected to come to school on time every day and be prepared to contribute positively to the school community. Our goal is to discourage misbehavior and teach students to make better choices in the future.

Lastly, PRIDE Academy is shaped by five guiding principles, or core values. The first of these core values is *peace*. Violence of any type has no place at PRIDE Academy. Students, parents, staff, and administration will work together to resolve conflicts constructively and peacefully.

## **THE PRIDE VISION – *How We'll Get There***

The cornerstones of our school vision are represented by letters that spell **PRIDE**:

**P**ace      **R**espect      **I**ntegrity      **D**etermination      **E**mpathy

At PRIDE Academy Charter School, students work together and encourage one another in a supportive learning community; teachers and administrators work as a team and actively facilitate opportunities to grow and support student leadership; parents commit to work in partnership with the school; and all members of our school community model and live the core values of Peace, Respect, Integrity, Determination, and Empathy.

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

## **OUR MISSION – *What We Want for You***

PRIDE Academy Charter School endeavors to ignite success in middle school students of all abilities through a curriculum rooted in the values of peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy. By establishing a community dedicated to academic achievement, mastery of fundamental skills, positive leadership, and active service, PRIDE Academy Charter School strives to embolden its students to harness their own power to shape their futures and the world.

## **OUR VALUES – *Who We Strive to Be***

The Pride philosophy is based upon five core values: peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy. All students are expected to try to live by these values. During the first week of school, students examine and discuss each value. Students and their parents or guardians affirm their commitment to live by and practice the core values by signing the PRIDE Academy Charter School Pledge.

The five core values are characterized as follows:

- Peace:** Conflicts will be resolved in non-violent ways. Students and adults will work together to create a calm, safe environment by learning and teaching how to resolve and avoid conflicts in non-violent, non-confrontational ways.
- Respect:** All members of the school community will treat each other with respect. We treat each person as valuable, worthy of greatness and goodness. We accept individuals for who they are. We demonstrate high regard for others, for property, for differences, and for opinions different from our own. We respect the rights of our teacher to teach and of our classmates to learn.
- Integrity:** Honesty will be at the core of all that we say and do. We follow through on our obligations and commitments. We do not do things halfway.
- Determination:** We will not allow obstacles to block our pathways to excellence. We do our best in every area. We never give up.
- Empathy:** Compassion and understanding of each other's feelings will guide our choices and conduct. We will not hurt each other physically or emotionally. We are kind and supportive of one another.

## **PRIDE Promise**

PRIDE Academy Charter School students begin each day at morning assembly. The morning assembly is a school-wide meeting during which information is shared, community issues are discussed, and the entire school community reaffirms its focus and commitment to the PRIDE Core Values by reciting the PRIDE Promise:

I am responsible for my own destiny.  
The choices I make today will determine tomorrow.

I have pride...

I will be a peacekeeper.

I have pride...

I will treat everyone with respect.

I have pride...

I will be trustworthy and do what's right.

I have pride...

I will believe in myself and never give up.

I have pride...

I will care for and value others.

I have pride...

As we let our pride shine, we promise to help others shine too.

**We have PRIDE!**

## **OUR CORE BELIEFS**

PRIDE Academy Charter School is built upon the following core beliefs:

- Students of all abilities will thrive in a peaceful learning community that values respect, integrity, determination, and empathy for others.
- Within all students lies the power to shape their own future by making positive choices today.
- By serving individual academic needs through a cohesive skill-centered curriculum, untapped student potential will be realized.
- Through critical examination and active response to challenges facing our community, students are best able to comprehend the interconnectedness of life and the power of the individual.
- By deliberately honoring accomplishments while continuously setting new challenges, students gain the courage, confidence, and competencies needed to take academic and leadership risks.
- Adults teach students with their actions. All members of our school community -- administration, faculty, and parents -- must live and embody the values that the school seeks to instill in its students.
- A culture which prizes goal-setting, positive choices and perseverance will equip students with the skills and mindset needed to seize future educational opportunities.
- By questioning, seeking, understanding, and responding, all members of our school community will be active participants in the lifelong learning cycle essential for growth.

## **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Pride Academy Leadership Team is led by the School Principal and composed of the following.

- Dean of Students
- Dean of Academics
- Dean of Student Life / High School Placement
- Lead Teachers

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Pride Academy Charter School is governed by the Board of Trustees, which meets on the second Tuesday of every month. Board of Trustees meetings are open to teachers, parents, and the public. The Board may choose to go into a closed Executive Session to discuss personnel or individual student issues. Those who attend Board of Trustees Meetings should be aware that the names of students and staff must not be stated during a public meeting.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

In the event that a parent or family member has a concern, parents must follow the chain of command in order resolve the issue. The chain of command proceeds as directed.

- First the parent must speak to teacher or staff member directly connected with the grievance.
- If the issue is not resolved, the parent must then speak to either the Dean of Students or Dean of Academics.
- If after speaking to a Dean, there is no resolution, then a parent should contact the School Principal.
- Only after the above steps have been followed, may parents seek to address the Board of Trustees.

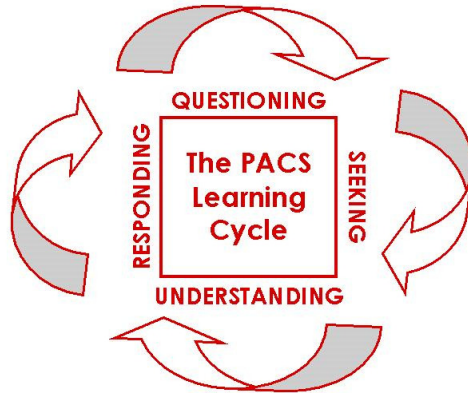
## **ACADEMICS AND LEARNING – *Why We're Here***

Academics and learning are the fundamental goals of PRIDE Academy. We need your cooperation and support to ensure your child's success here. Students are expected:

- TO BE **ON TIME** every day to school and to each class and activity
- TO **WORK HARD** in class
- TO **BE PREPARED** for class
- TO **PARTICIPATE** in all class activities
- TO **COMPLETE NIGHTLY HOMEWORK** assignments and projects

### **Academic Achievement**

Our educational program is based on the PACS Learning Cycle, an original system created by the PRIDE Academy Charter School team to cultivate and strengthen higher order habits of mind.



The four key components of The PACS Learning Cycle are:

- questioning
- seeking
- understanding
- responding

These are critical for the development and execution of higher order thought processes. PRIDE Academy Charter School recognizes that rudimentary memorization of facts and content will not translate into more meaningful, useful learning for any discipline unless students are also directly taught how to make sense of information and then to respond actively to what they have learned. The PACS Learning Cycle is an integral part of the school day and is continually reinforced throughout the school community.

## **Honor Roll**

PRIDE Academy Charter School Honor Roll recognizes both scholastic achievement and core value achievement. We do so because we believe that the key to success lies as much in excellence of character as in superior academics. The core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy represent the bedrock of good citizenship. At PRIDE Academy emphasis is placed on the development of the person as well as the development of the scholar.

The awarding of Core Value Honors recognizes consistent demonstration of effort and behaviors that exemplify the core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination and empathy. Placement on the Honor Roll recognizes academic achievement. The awards are made each trimester based upon report card grades.

The criteria for recognition as a Core Value Honor recipient is achievement of an above average Core Value grade of 1 (Excellent) or 2 (Good) in every subject for the trimester.

There are two levels of recognition on the Honor Roll. Student who earn grades no lower than B are placed on the Honor Roll. Students who achieve the highest level of academic distinction by earning straight As are honored by inclusion on the High Honor Roll.

Core Value Honors	Core Value Grades of 1 or 2
Honor Roll	As and Bs in all subjects
High Honor Roll	Straight As

## Grade Scale

The PRIDE Academy grade scale is as follows:

A+	97-100
A	90-96
B+	87-89
B	80-86
C+	77-79
C	70-76
D	65-69
F	64 or below

## GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Cellular Phones, BlackBerries, and similar communication devices

We request that students not bring cellular phones to school. In those instances when a cell phone is absolutely necessary, students must silence phones at the beginning of homeroom and put them away until they leave the building at the end of the day. Phones that ring or are visible during school hours will be confiscated and left with administration for parent or guardian pick-up. Students who repeatedly violate the cellular phone policy will not be permitted to bring a phone to school.

*IMPORTANT: Teachers will not safeguard cell phones. Under no circumstances will the school be responsible for replacement or repair of lost, damaged, or stolen cellular phones irrespective of the phone's location at the time of the loss, damage or theft. It is best to leave cell phones at home.*

### Electronic Equipment and Toys

iPods, electronic games, and other toys may not be brought to school because of the potential interruption to the learning environment and the danger of damage, loss and theft.

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

***Teachers are not responsible for safekeeping personal articles. PRIDE Academy will not be responsible for repair or replacement of lost, damaged, or stolen electronic equipment or toys of any type.***

## **ADMISSIONS**

If you would like to enroll a student at PRIDE Academy Charter School please contact the school to find out the details of the application process including the application deadline. We encourage applicants for all grade levels from 5th to 8th grade.

### **Admissions Conference**

Families should schedule an admissions interview where they will receive an application packet that should be completed and returned to the school.

### **Admissions Lottery**

The names of all applicants will be entered into a lottery held towards the beginning of each calendar year. Successful applicants will be chosen at random from those who have applied.

### **Waiting List**

A waiting list is kept for students who have applied but are not selected for admission at the beginning of the school year. If new openings for students become available during the year, students on the waiting list will be contacted. A student on the waiting list must accept a spot when offered, or re-enter the next lottery.

## **BEFORE YOU ENROLL**

**Before you enroll your child, please be certain that you understand and are prepared to support the school's mission, values, and code of conduct. This includes full support of school policies, including your commitment to ensure that your child is dressed in the appropriate school uniform every day and your willingness to abide by decisions made with regard to student behavior, including your attendance at accountability conferences when required, honoring out of school suspensions, etc.**

**We are always open to parental input and opportunities to grow and improve as a learning community; however the policies contained in this handbook are those that will be in effect for the 2008-2009 school year.**

**As such, it is vital that you are fully prepared to honor these policies prior to your child's enrollment. For the sake of fairness, they will be followed in all cases. Unwillingness of students and parents or guardians to honor the code of conduct and policies contained in this book will lead to accountability consequences up to and including dismissal from PRIDE Academy.**

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

## WITHDRAWAL

Parents or guardians that are withdrawing their child should complete withdrawal forms in the school office. School records will be forwarded to the new school upon receipt of a signed request from the new school.

## ARRIVAL

REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS begin at 8:00 am, and students may enter the facility at 7:30 A.M. Monday through Friday.

Students arriving before 7:30 a.m. go directly to the Common Room. Common Room space is limited and cannot safely accommodate both children and parents. ***Please escort your child only as far as the Common Room door.***

## BREAKFAST

Due to facility limitation, Pride Academy is unfortunately unable to provide a school breakfast program. Students will be allowed to bring breakfast to school and eat it during morning community time.

This is a privilege. In order to maintain this privilege, students must clean up their trash and place it in garbage cans. Students should bring a healthy breakfast that does not include soda. Additionally, students should not bring in any glass bottles or anything that would need to be heated in a microwave.

## LUNCH

Breakfast and lunch are served daily in our Common Room. We participate in a federal program that offers free and reduced price breakfast and lunch for students from families with eligible incomes **beginning in October 2008. Lunch will be available at the opening of school in September, however all students who chose to purchase lunch must pay full price until the free lunch program begins.** Breakfast will not be available until October 2008. Application forms will be provided to all students at the beginning of the school year and they may be requested at any time from the main office. **A separate form must be completed for each child.**

Students may also choose to bring their own lunches to school and purchase milk. We encourage the development of healthy eating habits by teaching about and providing nutritious meals. Please support this effort and do not send candy or soda to school.

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

## COMMON ROOM RULES

The Common Room is our dining room when we are away from home. It should be treated with the same care and respect we demonstrate in our own homes. We show our appreciation by following these rules of courtesy and conduct:

- Walk at all times
- Use indoor voices
- Say “please” when making requests
- Say “thank you” when food is served
- Eat neatly and help clean up
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Stay seated unless cleaning up
- Stay in the Common Room unless going to the restroom

## ATTENDANCE

To succeed at PRIDE Academy, students must attend school regularly. For this reason we ask that you not schedule vacations while school is in session. Students who miss multiple days of school do not perform as well as those who attend every day. Students are expected to attend a full day of school every day unless they are so ill they cannot function.

### Absences

Parents or Guardians must notify the main office by 7:30 a.m. if their child will be absent from school. Authorized reasons for absence are personal illness, serious illness in the family, observance of religious holiday, or death in the family. If the school is not notified of the student’s absence, the school is required by law to notify the parents that the child is not in school. This will be done by telephone.

The student must bring a note signed by the parent or guardian **on the day he or she returns to school**. The note should include the child’s name, current date, dates of absence, and reason for the absence.

### Excused Absences

Students who are frequently absent for medical reasons or are out of school for three or more consecutive days due to illness **may not return to school without a doctor’s note**. This note must include the child’s name, the current date, the date on which the child may safely return to school, and the diagnosis or reason for the absence. This note must be submitted to the Main Office. **Without a written note, any absence will be considered unexcused.**

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

***A student with more than 18 unexcused absences may be retained. Students are expected to ask for make-up assignments the day of return to class. They are responsible for making up work in a timely manner. Assignments that are not made up will lower grades and can lead to failure and retention.***

## **PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS**

Being on time is a matter of personal integrity and a valuable life habit taught at PRIDE Academy. School begins at 8:00 a.m. Students arriving late must report to the Main Office for a late pass. A late pass is required for entry to class. In addition, the student will be required to make a lateness apology to the community at large during morning assembly. Habitual lateness will be addressed by administration.

***IMPORTANT: Excused lateness is limited to official appointments with health care providers and requires a physician's note to be excused.***

## **DISMISSAL**

The school dismissal schedule is as follows:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday school ends at 4:00 p.m.
- Friday school ends at 2:45 p.m.
- Half days school ends at 12:30 p.m.

Pick up of students takes place in front of the building.

**IMPORTANT:** Half days are posted in the school calendar. Parents will be notified of any changes to the calendar in writing or by phone in the event of weather, building, or other emergencies.

**While we understand that emergencies sometimes occur, please make arrangements to have your child picked up on time. *In accordance with statute, children who are frequently left at school beyond the hours of operation will be considered abandoned, and referred to the appropriate authorities.***

## **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING THE DAY**

PRIDE Academy is committed to the safety and wellbeing of its students. We have no means by which to protect students outside of the school grounds. As such, once students enter the school building, they are not permitted to leave the building unless accompanied by an authorized adult

such as a parent, guardian, parent chaperone or teacher in the event of a field trip. Students may not leave the building to run errands, go to the store, etc. under any circumstances.

## **EARLY DEPARTURES**

PRIDE Academy students are expected to attend the full day of school. If your child needs to be picked up early, we ask that parents report to the Main Office and we will call your child's classroom teacher and have your child dismissed to meet you in the office. The student is expected to return to school after the appointment, if time permits.

Excessive early departures may warrant parent conference with a member of the leadership team.

## **SCHOOL VISITORS**

We encourage visitors, volunteers, and parents at PRIDE. For security reasons all school visitors are required to sign in at the Main Office **before** going anywhere in the building.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

As a charter school, PRIDE Academy is an independent school district. Changes in the school schedule, including cancellation, may occur due to weather, building, or other problems. The administrators will make decisions regarding schedule changes, etc. independent of other local districts. Please check the website or listen to the radio and television stations for information specific to PRIDE Academy Charter School, especially during weather that could warrant possible cancellation, delay, and/ or early closing. The PRIDE Academy Charter School will indicate which action is in effect in its announcement to the media.

Please discuss with your child what he or she should do if the regular schedule is changed and school closes early.

## **BUS POLICY**

Following are guidelines that ensure the safety of all children when riding on buses to and from school, school events and educational field trips. Students should follow regular classroom rules:

- Remain seated at all times unless you are entering or exiting the bus after it has stopped.
- Items prohibited at school are also prohibited on the bus.
- Be silent as requested by the driver, staff, or chaperones.
- Keep arms, hands, heads, and other objects inside the bus.
- Cooperate respectfully and immediately with instructions from the driver or school staff.
- Respect fellow passengers, property, pedestrians, and motorists.

***Students who fail to abide by these guidelines may be excluded from future trips or required to have a parent or guardian attend.***

## **HEALTH / ILLNESS**

Keep your child at home on any day he or she has a contagious condition, has experienced diarrhea or vomiting, has an undiagnosed rash or has a fever. Your child must be well enough to participate in all school activities, including recess and will be sent home if he or she exhibits any of these symptoms. Students will NOT be permitted to remain alone in the classroom during recess.

**Students who need to leave school due to illness must be picked up within one hour of notification.**

Please provide the school nurse a doctor's note diagnosing your child as suffering from any ongoing medical condition such as diabetes, eczema, asthma, food, seasonal, or medication allergies, or any other chronic health condition.

### **Communicable Diseases**

It is important that you notify the school nurse immediately if your child is diagnosed with any of the following communicable illnesses, so we may alert other parents, if necessary, and watch for symptoms in other students:

Chickenpox	Influenza (Flu)	Ringworm
German Measles (Rubella)	E. Coli	Scabies
Streptococcus (Strep Throat)	Mononucleosis	Impetigo
Scarlet Fever	Meningitis	Giardia Lamblia
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Fifth Disease	Mumps
Typhoid	Tuberculosis	Whooping cough (Pertussis)
Shigella	Diphtheria	Staphylococcal disease
Hepatitis A	Small Pox	Lice (head or body)
Stomach virus (any type)		Salmonella

### **Medication**

A student who needs to take a **prescription medication** at school must have the correct form completed and signed by a parent or guardian and the prescribing physician. This form and medication (in the original container) must be together in the nurse's office. A student who needs to take a **non-prescription medication** at school must have the correct form completed and signed by a parent or guardian. This form and the medication (in the original container) must be together in the nurse's office. Both types of medication forms can be obtained from the nurse. Please work out a medication schedule that excludes the school whenever possible. Parents may also come to school and administer medication without a form.

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

## Self-administered Medication

Self-administration of medication by pupils is permitted in accordance with New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.3). A student is only permitted to self-administer medication for asthma or other potentially life-threatening illnesses as defined by the Department of Education, New Jersey Statutes Annotated and New Jersey Administrative Code. Permission for self-administration of medication must comply with the conditions set forth in Regulation No. 5330. Every pupil that is authorized to use self-administered asthma medication pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.3 or a nebulizer must have an asthma treatment plan prepared by the pupil's physician. The asthma treatment plan must identify, at a minimum, asthma triggers, the treatment plan and other such elements as required by the Department of Education. All pupil medications will be maintained and secured by the school nurse, except those medications to be self-administered by pupils. In those instances, the medication may be retained by the pupil with the prior knowledge of the school nurse.

## Accidents at School

When an accident that results in an injury to a student occurs at school, an attempt is made to notify the parents unless the injury is deemed to be minor (such as a small cut or scrape, etc.).

## Contact Information

So we may reach you in the event of an emergency, please inform the school immediately of any change of address, personal, cellular, or emergency contact phone number. **Please provide the school with two or more alternate people to contact in case of emergency. At least one emergency contact person should be someone who is willing and able to pick the child up from school, if needed.**

## HOMEWORK

Homework promotes independent study, extends and enriches learning, provides extra practice in mastering skills and assists in the development of good work habits. It is not meant to be a burden but an extension of classroom learning. Homework may be assigned to an entire class, a small group, or an individual student. The amount and type of homework will vary because of grade and/or teacher. In order to be meaningful, it must be done consistently. Homework is your child's responsibility.

You, as a parent or guardian, should encourage the child to fulfill this responsibility. Please provide a quiet area where your child can work and study. There may be times that your child will need your assistance in completing homework assignments. Failure to complete homework will affect your child's grade and may result in failure and/or retention. Therefore, we ask that you supervise homework completion to ensure that it is done correctly and represents your child's best work. Chronic failure to complete homework will result in an accountability conference between the parent, student and teacher.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

The PRIDE Academy academic year is divided into trimesters. Progress reports will be distributed three times yearly. Report cards will also be distributed three times yearly with final report cards being distributed by mail. Teacher conferences will be scheduled to coincide with progress reports and report cards. You and your child's teacher may have additional conferences as needed or requested by either of you.

## **PARENT COUNCIL**

At PRIDE Academy, involved parents are the key to the success of our students. Our Parent Council provides an important link between parents and the school's staff and administration. We urge all parents, teachers, and friends of the school to join and become active members. To encourage participation, Parent Council meetings are scheduled in the mornings, afternoons and evenings. Please attend whenever you can.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Student Council is a democratically elected group of students in the fifth through eighth grades. The council focus is on addressing needs in the school community. Students have the opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and to appreciate their own contributions, as well as those of others, to improve their school.

## **DRESS CODE**

PRIDE Academy students are required to wear a uniform daily, with the exception of school-approved dress down days. The uniform should be worn in a way that demonstrates pride and self-respect. Pants must be pulled up and securely belted around the waist. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

### ***The uniform for boys and girls is:***

- Grey long or short-sleeved shirt with the PRIDE logo
- Uniform Black pants
- Grey hooded sweatshirt with the PRIDE logo
- Solid black (no additional colors) shoes, boots or sneakers
- Black belt, if necessary, with plain silver or gold buckle (No nameplate, rhinestone, colored, or other ornate buckles)
- Black socks

### ***On days when students have gym, the uniform is:***

- Grey hooded sweatshirt with the PRIDE logo
- PRIDE logo T-shirt
- Black sweatpants with the PRIDE logo

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

- Sneakers with laces or Velcro closures (No slip on gym shoes permitted)
- Socks

***In addition, with regard to jewelry and accessories:***

- No jewelry except small stud or post earrings may be worn
- No hoops or dangling earrings of any size will be permitted
- Headbands may not dangle or drape
- No grills or other dental appliances worn for cosmetic purposes may be worn
- No head coverings may be worn except those worn for religious purposes.

**Casual Wear**

PRIDE students may not wear clothing that contains language or messages that are vulgar, offensive, obscene, or libelous; that denigrate others on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability; that promote alcohol or drug use or violence; or that are otherwise contrary to the school's educational mission. Student may not wear clothing that reveals undergarments, or that exposes the buttocks, back, breasts, chest, belly, upper thighs, or abdomen. No spaghetti strap tops or tank tops may be worn. Sneakers or shoes with wheels (Heelies) may not be worn at school. No head coverings may be worn except those worn for religious purposes.

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

The behavior guidelines at PRIDE Academy are based on our core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination and empathy.

**Expectations**

The following expectations are set for all of the student body.

**Classroom:**

- Show respect for all staff members
- Follow directions
- Come prepared for work
- Display classroom courtesy
- Be kind: Keep hands, feet, objects, hurtful words and actions to yourself
- Help care for school property
- Follow the classroom rules in each room

**Playground:**

- Use all playground equipment properly
- Play only in areas assigned to your grade
- Make sure there is no rough play or fighting

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

- Get permission before re-entering the building

**Common Room:**

- Talk quietly and use good table manners
- Keep food and utensils on tray
- Keep your table area is clean
- Do more than your share
- Never take food or drink out of the Common Room without official permission
- Walk quietly in single file lines and wait your turn in the lunch line
- Raise your hand quietly to leave the table for any reason

**Assemblies:**

- Stay in your seat until dismissal
- Be courteous: Watch and listen attentively

**General Building Rules:**

- Be quiet in common areas including hallways, stairways, Common Room, and restrooms
- Walk when in the building
- Leave gum, candy, and soda at home
- Leave toys, portable music and video players, and other valuables at home
- The school is not responsible for damage, theft, or loss of personal items
- Cooperate with staff and administration: Help us to help you
- Don't pollute our school with rude, indecent, or obscene words or actions
- Solve problems and differences peacefully
- Practice good manners at all times: Say please, thank you, excuse me, and you're welcome when appropriate
- Don't litter, graffiti, or otherwise deface our school's property
- Use restrooms responsibly: Clean up before you leave. Do more than your share.
- Be honest. Don't take credit for work that's not yours; don't steal; don't forge signatures, or lie to the staff, teachers or one another.
- Do what's right. If you find something of value that doesn't belong to you, turn it in to the Dean of Students or to the Main Office.

Any member of the community can and will hold others accountable to meet these expectations and to help keep our school great.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONSEQUENCES

### Resolving Student Conflicts

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

We want our students to be safe. Students who fight or even play fight should expect to be suspended. We do not allow hitting or hitting back. This type of behavior does not support a peaceful school environment. It hurts you and it hurts other students. If you have a dispute or disagreement with another student, or are unhappy with your peers, try to find a positive, non-violent way to resolve your differences one on one. Speak to your teacher or request a conference with the school social worker, or any member of the administration so that the problem can be worked out peacefully.

## **Accountability Consequences**

Nearly all inappropriate behavior is handled by the staff through use of the PRIDE Academy's Accountability Policy. This policy is used for all students whether or not they start the action or join in. Behavior addressed by the policy includes, but is not limited to:

Defying an adult, fighting, hitting, kicking, spitting, scratching, threatening, bullying, shoving, name-calling, inappropriate language, biting, tripping, pinching, any behavior that could result in harm to self or others, or disruption of the learning environment, theft or possession of stolen property, destruction of property, truancy, lewdness, weapon or prohibited item possession, sale, or distribution, possession or being under the influence of any illicit substance, repetition of any other offense, and all types of harassment. Other behavior may also be considered inappropriate and will be acted upon on a case-by-case basis.

The majority of PRIDE Academy students behave well. These students will be recognized for exemplifying PRIDE Academy's core values.

### ***IMPORTANT:***

***Corporal punishment (spanking and all types of physical discipline) is never practiced at PRIDE Academy Charter School. Teachers and staff may not physically discipline students under any circumstances and may not accept parental permission to do so. This policy applies to all PRIDE Academy Charter employees, including those who are family members of students.***

## **Behavior Consequences**

We recognize that good behavior takes time both to teach and to learn. The PACS Learning Cycle will be an integral part of helping students to manage their behavior. By utilizing the key components of the PACS Learning Cycle, questioning, seeking, understanding, and responding, students will examine themselves and their behavior, and learn to understand and respond appropriately to challenges.

## **Accountability Incentives**

All PRIDE Academy Charter School students will participate in a school-wide Accountability Incentive program in which students earn or lose points weekly based upon behavior. The points

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earned will be redeemable for rewards to be established by the teachers, students and administration.

By reviewing performance weekly, students can begin to recognize patterns in their behavior. Students who have made poor behavior choices will learn to make better choices.

## **Accountability Conference**

The accountability conference is the first step in growing and developing the core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination and empathy in individual students. The conference is an opportunity to examine and improve the dynamics of a student's behavior, academic performance, or the interactions between the student and teacher, staff, or administration in a way that heals and fosters trust. During the accountability conference, the student may meet with one or more of the following:

- Teacher or staff member
- Parent or guardian
- Social Worker
- Person of influence (a friend, counselor, teacher, etc. whom the student regards highly)
- Administrator

These parties will meet to help the student reflect upon and understand his or her behavior including strengths and areas that represent opportunities for growth, and to establish a plan to help the student achieve his or her goals. Several accountability conferences may be held to review or revise goals, assess progress, assign consequences, etc.

Assigned consequences may include reflective writing assignments, a community apology or service project, teacher detention, loss of recess time, loss of in-class accountability system points, or referral to the Dean of Students for an accountability consequence, including any of the previously mentioned consequences, participation in an accountability conference or peace circle, an alternative intervention and/or an out of school suspension of up to 10 days based upon the offense.

**When students have been referred to the Dean of Students for significant or repeated issues, a parent will be notified and may be required to attend an accountability conference and/or notified of a suspension. Parent attendance at an accountability conference is required before a suspended student returns to school.**

## **Peace Circle**

The Peace Circle is a meeting that may include any number of community members who are in conflict, whatever the cause may be. The Peace Circle is intended to help members resolve relationship issues in a way that models and fosters practices that demonstrate the core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination and empathy among students and other school

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community members. Participants will practice active listening and work together to respectfully, peacefully, and honestly work out differences in a way that empowers the individuals and strengthens the community. A peace circle will typically include one or more administrators who will facilitate the meeting; and,

- Student(s)
- Teacher(s) or staff member(s)
- Parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Social Worker
- Person of influence (a friend, counselor, teacher, etc. whom the student regards highly)

The peace circle is a forum in which parties speak honestly and respectfully about relationship issues. The shared goal of participants is to understand and take responsibility for their respective roles in a conflict and to use the power each holds as an individual to change and grow through positive resolution. Members of the circle will acknowledge the strengths and positive attributes of others and themselves, and learn to give others the benefit of the doubt. The ultimate goal is to promote peace within the relationship and to spread that peace, and the peaceful resolution process throughout the community.

**Circle participants will convene as many times as necessary to resolve issues.**

## **Alternative Behavioral Interventions**

At any level of the process students may also be required to complete one or more additional tasks such as serve a teacher or recess detention, write a reflective essay, or deliver an oral or written apology to an individual, a class, or to the student body. Students may be assigned community service where they perform tasks under staff supervision as restitution for behavior that hurt the school community. A parent maybe required to attend classes with a student (shadowing) to observe behavior and/or support behavior modification.

Additional interventions that authorized school personnel may initiate in response to student behavior problems include:

- *Referral for school support services and counseling*
- *Juvenile Court or Police referral*

Every attempt will be made to exhaust behavior modification options prior to resorting to disciplinary consequences that remove a child from the school, except when a child poses an immediate threat to his or her safety or the safety of others in the school. The alternative interventions are intended to:

- Offer students appropriate support
- Help students think deeply about making better future choices

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

- Help develop a sense of obligation to the school community at large
- Help students make restitution to the community
- Ensure the safety of the school community
- Ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn

***These may be implemented in addition to or in place of any or all measures at a specified disciplinary step, at the discretion of the administration.***

## **Graduation and Graduation Activities**

Graduation and promotion to high school are determined by a student's academic performance. Participation in graduation events and activities is a privilege that must be earned through appropriate behavior and living Pride's core values. Students who do not follow the school's code of conduct may be excluded from graduation activities including, but not limited to, the graduation trip, dance, and commencement ceremony.

## **SUSPENSION PROCEDURES**

Suspensions at PRIDE Academy Charter School take place out of school. Students are required to remain out of school for the duration of the suspension period, and may not attend school functions, or be present on school grounds during that time.

While we understand that suspension may create hardships for parents who need to miss work or make alternate arrangements for childcare, please understand that is not the intention. Suspension is only utilized when a student's demonstrates behavior that represents a major violation of the core values or that is harmful to self, others, or the community. It is intended to teach valuable lessons about accountability, the responsibility of community membership, and the consequences of violating accepted standards of behavior. In order for the student to really learn from the suspension and not repeat the negative behavior, Pride Academy parents are encouraged to support the school's decision and withhold activities such as watching TV or playing video games during the time of suspension.

It is fully expected that parents will honor suspensions and never bring students to school when suspended. Violating suspension by being present in school or on school grounds during a suspension constitutes a Major Violation and may result in a consequence up to and including expulsion. ***Please refer to the section titled Major Infractions, subheading Abidance with Sanctions for additional information.***

## **Informal Conference**

Suspension will be preceded by an informal conference by the school director or designee with

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the student and whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who witnessed the behavior(s) leading to the suspension. The conference may be omitted if the school director or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without a conference, both the parent or guardian and student shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

### **Notice to Parents or Guardians**

At the time of the suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent or guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent or guardian will be notified in writing of the suspension and the specific offense committed by the student.

### **Suspension of Students with IEPs**

The regulation regarding suspension of students with special needs will be followed. For those students, if total days suspended exceeds 10, a review of the Individual Education Plan will take place and additional services will be provided, if warranted.

### **Probation**

A student who has accrued five suspensions or any suspension for a major infraction is subject to an administrative hearing and is at risk of expulsion (permanent dismissal). The administrative hearing may result in suspension. The number of days assigned will be based on, but not limited to, such things as premeditation, severity of injuries, and potential to threaten the safety of self and others.

**A parent conference is required before the student returns to school. The follow up notice must be signed and submitted to the Dean of Students when the child returns to school. Failure to make consistent progress in changing problematic behavior will result in additional accountability measures.**

## **MAJOR INFRACTIONS**

Major infractions are behaviors that violate the Code of Conduct and/or require administrative intervention. *Major infractions may result in suspension or expulsion and include, but are not limited to:*

### **Assault**

A student shall not assault, threaten, or behave in such a way, or incite others to behave in such a way as causes, or could cause, physical injury or produce fear of physical injury, to any school employee, student, or other person on school premises, while in the custody and control of the school, or in the course of a school-related activity including transit to and from school.

### **Dangerous Weapons and Instruments**

PRIDE Academy has a zero tolerance policy for weapons and dangerous items. A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object which is designed for the purpose of inflicting

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bodily harm to others on school premises, while attending school events away from school grounds, or while in transit to and from school. This includes, but is not limited to, chains, clubs, razors, box cutters, bats, laser light pointers, knives, firecrackers or explosives of any type, and *any type of gun* including replicas and toys. Students are not to have these items in their possession at any time while on school property, traveling to and from school, during the lunchtime on or off campus, or at any school-sponsored events or activities.

*Any student who has knowledge of the presence of firearms or other weapons on the person of a PRIDE Academy student, including during transit to and from school, on school grounds, or at any school-related function is required to notify school administration and security immediately.*

### **Damage to School or Private Property**

Students shall not damage, attempt to damage, steal, or attempt to steal, any school or private property while on school premises. School property includes, but is not limited to buildings, school grounds, buses, supplies, and equipment.

### **Disruption of, or Interference with, Curricular or Extracurricular Activities**

A student shall not, by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, demonstration, false alarm, bomb threat, vulgar or obscene language, gestures, or printed material, ignition of fires, distribution of text via e-mail, telephone or other means incite others to violent or disruptive conduct, or in any other manner cause material disruption or interference with curricular or extra-curricular activities, or cause threatened or actual harm to others.

### **Narcotics, Drugs, Alcoholic Beverages or Tobacco**

Students shall not possess, use, transfer, conceal, sell, attempt to sell, deliver, or be under the influence of narcotics, drugs, or alcohol, or in any manner engage in drug abuse while on school property or attending any school-related function. No student shall possess, use, transfer, conceal, sell, or deliver any object deemed to be drug related while on school grounds or attending any school related function including during transit to and from school. Students shall not possess, distribute, or use tobacco while on school premises or while attending any school related function including during transit to and from school. Law enforcement will be notified as required by statute and the student is subject to suspension.

***Any student suspected to be under the influence of a controlled substance will be required to have an immediate physical examination and drug test by a physician. If a student's parent cannot arrange an immediate physical examination, the school will take the student to the school's physician. If the test results are positive, the student must have an evaluation and assessment conducted by a drug and alcohol counselor to determine the nature and severity of the problem. The student must comply with recommended treatment to remain at PRIDE Academy. A repeated violation may result in expulsion.***

### **Truancy**

Adapted from PRIDE Academy, Lady Liberty Academy, Penn Manor Elementary, Chauncey Avenue Elementary, and Teaneck Community Charter School Handbooks and websites.

Students shall not be absent from school or from any assigned location in school for any unauthorized reason. Students, once present at school, are expected to attend all scheduled periods, including lunch and recess, and may not leave school without proper authorization.

### **Threats and Intimidation of Others**

Students shall not intimidate, bully, abuse, sexually or verbally harass by any means including electronically, by phone, text message, or Internet, or otherwise extort favors or property from any other student or school personnel nor shall any student incite others to do so.

### **Improper Social Behavior**

A student shall not expose any part of his or her anatomy in any socially deviant or sexually suggestive manner while under jurisdiction of the school. Nor shall any student engage in any sexual conduct or engage in any amorous physical contact with any other person while under jurisdiction of the school.

### **Abidance with Sanctions**

A student shall not refuse to abide by any legal course of action set by the school administration, any teacher, or any court order related to improper behavior during school, school activities, or transit to and from school. Suspensions must be honored.

### **Other Conduct**

A student shall not engage in any type of conduct not specifically set forth above which conduct is not in compliance with socially accepted standards of behavior.

### **Abiding and Abetting in the Commission of a Violation of the above rules**

A student shall not aid or abet another student in the commission of a violation of any of the above rules. Any student who does so is subject to the same disciplinary consequences as the violator.

## **EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

A student recommended for expulsion is entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be dismissed. The student will be suspended during the expulsion process. Home instruction will be provided in accordance with New Jersey Administrative Code. The hearing will be held in a timely manner, not to exceed (30) days after the School Principal or designee determines that a major infraction or series of offenses warranting expulsion has been committed and that at least one of the following findings is substantiated.

1. That other means of correction are not feasible or have failed to bring about proper conduct.
2. That due to the nature of the violations, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others.

The hearing will be presided over by the Board of Trustees of PRIDE Academy. Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent or guardian at least ten (10) days before the date of the hearing.

The notice will include:

- The date and place of the hearing
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed dismissal is based
- A copy of PRIDE Academy's student discipline guidelines and/or the grounds for suspension and expulsion
- Notification of the student, parent, or guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status in PRIDE Academy to any other district in which the student seeks enrollment
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent or guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses

There will be zero tolerance for bringing a gun or deadly weapon to school for any assault on school employees or students. Expulsion may apply to a student who is repeatedly suspended and shows no evidence of desiring to change problem behaviors such as continued and willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority. In each case, the student up for dismissal would have to be one who has not responded to other forms of discipline and support, such as behavior modification plans, detention, suspension, parental involvement and counseling.

## **Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcript of the proceedings can be made.

## **Presentation of Evidence**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to dismissal hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. The decision to dismiss a student must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed a major infraction or series of offenses warranting expulsion.

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Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While no evidence shall be based solely on hearsay, sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses whose disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may be subject them to unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

### **Written Notice to Dismiss**

The School Principal or designee shall send written notice of the decision to expel to the student, parent or guardian. This notice shall include the following:

- The specific offense committed by the student
- Notification of the student, parent, or guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status in PRIDE Academy to any other district in which the student seeks enrollment

## **STUDENT DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Due process protects students from arbitrary and unreasonable decisions. Four important elements in due process procedures are:

- Students have the right to be informed in writing of the rules that regulate behavior and situations that will result in disciplinary measures.
- Students have the right to an informal hearing in all disciplinary actions, including the suspension process.
- Students have the right to a formal hearing in the expulsion process.
- Students have the right to appeal all decisions and be informed of all appeal procedures available to them

Students, regardless of age, must conduct themselves in a manner that does not disrupt the educational opportunities of others or disturb the orderly operation of the school. Students are responsible for regular attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, properly maintaining textbooks and other school equipment, and conformance to school rules and regulations.

## **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Each teacher is fully responsible for the discipline in his or her classroom. Teachers will explain the Pride Academy classroom management system to help students understand and integrate

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class and school guidelines. Teachers are responsible for making their classroom management system known to volunteers and parents of their students to promote partnership and foster compliance.

Pride Academy uses an individual point management system which emphasizes points earned for positive behavior reflective of the core values of peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy in all classes. Students are given appropriate feedback from teachers when their actions do not follow Pride's core values and, as a consequence, points will be taken away for continued negative behavior. Throughout the year, positive rewards and acknowledgements will be presented to students who earned the determined number of points during a set time period.

Extreme incidents of negative behavior may warrant both points taken off the Pride behavior system as well as other appropriate consequences such as accountability conferences, participation in Pride Peace circles, and/or suspension.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found clothing items are kept in the Main Office. Please check the lost and found for your child's belongings periodically as unclaimed items are retained for a limited time. Check with administration for valuable lost items.

## **CLASS TRIPS**

Field trips are an extension of classroom learning. As such we make every effort to have all students participate. In instances where student behavior is problematic, or may jeopardize the student's safety, a parent or guardian may be required to accompany the student on the trip and/or the student may not be permitted to attend.

## **SECURITY**

The safety of our students is of primary importance. Please ensure that your child understands that he or she should never admit anyone onto the school premises via side doors, etc. All visitors are required to enter designated doors and stop at the main office for clearance.

## **FIRE ALARM PROCEDURE**

Any time the fire alarm sounds, including during scheduled fire drills, students must:

- Listen for the fire alarm
- Line up immediately and be silent
- Walk silently to the designated exit and line up outside
- Stand quietly and await additional instructions
- Do not re-enter the building until instructed to do so

## **CONCLUSION**

We hope you have found this handbook helpful. Feel free to make suggestions for additional content. We would love to hear from you. Please keep this handbook nearby for your reference throughout the year. We look forward to working with you and your family this school year.