



Highline Academy

Charter Schools

Family Handbook

2024-2025

Responsibility • Empowerment • Aspiration • Citizenship • Honesty

One school, with two Denver area campuses:

Northeast Campus: 19451 East Maxwell Place, Denver, CO 80249

Southeast Campus: 2170 South Dahlia Street, Denver, CO 80222

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WELCOME TO HIGHLINE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Welcome to Highline Academy! We are grateful to have you be a part of our welcoming community and in-demand program. Highline Academy was founded in 2004 by a group of community members in Southeast Denver who saw the need for a school to provide rigorous academics, character development, and a culture that celebrates and embraces diverse backgrounds. After realizing great success, the community expressed an interest to replicate Highline in Far Northeast Denver, and in 2014 our Northeast campus was founded.

What makes Highline unique is that we fully support every student no matter their ability, socio-economic status, or demographic profiles. We are home to students who speak over 25 languages, represent over 50 countries from around the world, and come from a wide range of financial means. Students and staff from all walks of life have a place to thrive and grow here at Highline. We are a high performing school, with our Southeast campus being a 2020 National Blue Ribbon School, and our Northeast campus placing in the top 10 of all DPS schools for Multi-language learners. We value the development of the whole child and offer art, music, physical education, social-emotional learning, diversity/equity/inclusion education, wrap-around supports, and Spanish for students to gain a holistic academic learning experience.

Our commitment is to meet students where they are and help them excel academically, personally, and as civic members of their communities. We teach our students to REACH, which stands for Responsibility, Empowerment, Aspiration, Citizenship, and Honesty. Students are taught to REACH IN for personal growth and self reflection. To REACH UP to do their best academically and to pursue an ongoing love of learning. And to REACH OUT to be leaders in their classrooms and communities who make a difference. We recognize that each child has potential and we seek to unearth and cultivate their interests, strengths, untapped and natural abilities. We can only do this with a community that is dedicated to breaking down barriers, biases, and false narratives. At Highline we challenge ourselves to keep pushing and REACHing to create an equitable environment where all students feel encouraged, challenged, and accepted.

We hope your family has a rewarding and enlightening journey during your time here with us, and that we make a positive impact on your child's growth and development. It takes all of us to support the next generation of leaders, and it is our pleasure to come alongside you as partners in your child's education.

Thank you for being a part of the Highline family - let's do some incredible work together this year!

Wishing you all the best as we REACH for excellence together.

Chris Ferris, Executive Director

Vanessa Rodriguez, Northeast Campus Principal

Sarah Verni-Lau, Southeast Campus Principal

About Highline Academy Charter Schools

Vision

Our vision is inclusive excellence in public education.

Mission

Our mission is to foster a diverse and equitable community of youth and adults striving together for academic, personal, and civic excellence.

Core Values

- We believe in having high expectations for all staff, parents and guardians, and staff.
- We believe that all students can and will be successful - academically and as a member of the school community.
- We believe in developing the whole child, including their academic, critical and creative thinking, social and emotional competencies, and civic engagement.
- We believe that schools play a critical role in helping children reach their full potential.
- We believe in a highly individualized approach to student growth, family engagement, and staff development.
- We believe in a strengths-based approach to education.
- We believe that widespread support and involvement from parents and guardians is an indispensable component of successful schools.
- We believe that our school community is enriched by a diverse student population, including racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity.
- We believe that our school community is enriched by a diverse staff.
- We believe in culturally relevant curriculum and instruction.
- We believe that schools ought to be not only academically rigorous and orderly, but also respectful, caring, and loving.
- We believe that schools ought to be not only physically safe but also emotionally safe.
- We believe in stakeholder participation, transparency, democratic processes, and collaboration.
- We believe in accountability for students, parents and guardians, and staff.

Highline Academy does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious views, gender expression, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement in accordance with all federal, state and local laws.

Campuses

Highline Academy has two campuses: Highline Academy Northeast (HANE) and Highline Academy Southeast (HASE). Both schools are public schools, part of Denver Public Schools (DPS), tuition-free, and not religiously affiliated.

	Highline Academy Northeast (HANE)	Highline Academy Southeast (HASE)
Region	Green Valley Ranch / Far Northeast Denver	Near I-25 & Colorado Boulevard
Location	19451 East Maxwell Place Denver, CO 80249	2170 South Dahlia Street Denver, CO 80222
Contact Information	Phone: (720) 485-5172 Fax: (303) 307-1703 Email: TGarcia@HighlineAcademy.org	Phone: (303) 759-7808 Fax: (303) 759-7809 Email: MSotelo@highlineacademy.org
Grades	Early Childhood Education to 5th Grade	Kindergarten to 8th Grade
Founded	August 2014	August 2004

What is a Charter School?

Highline Academy is a charter school. A charter school is a public school of choice. Charter schools operate under a contract with the local school district (in this case Denver Public Schools) to provide a different choice in education. Charter schools were founded on the belief that one size does not fit all. Charter schools have more autonomy (local control) in return for accountability. In other words, if a charter school fails to produce results or meet parents' needs, the district can close it.

Charter schools are usually run by a parent-based governing board. As a result, parents are more involved in decision-making and spend more time volunteering at the school. Charter schools each have a unique focus. Highline Academy believes that **all** children are capable of meeting high standards given the right educational environment and support.

Charter schools in Colorado have been very successful and usually outperform public schools on standardized tests such as CMAS. Charter schools have been popular with families as evidenced by the fact that most charters have substantial waiting lists. Most importantly, charter schools provide parents educational options within the public school system.

Other important characteristics of charter schools:

- They are always tuition free.
- They are non-religious.
- They are open to everyone, regardless of ability level.
- They have control over their own curriculum, staff, and budget.
- They must meet the state content standards.
- They must meet all special education laws.
- They must receive accreditation by the school district, just like your neighborhood school.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Organizational Chart

Network Office

- Chris Ferris, Executive Director, 818-983-5950
- Sara Taylor, Human Resources Consultant, 303-909-5089
- Manda Troutman, Director of Communications, 303-359-4378
- Alex Bowden, Outreach and Marketing Specialist, 720-940-3988

Highline Academy Northeast

- Vanessa Rodriguez, Principal, 720-485-5172, ext. 1013
- Abby Arriaga, Assistant Principal, 720-485-5172, ext. 1013
- Maya Balakier, Assistant Principal, 720-485-5172, ext. 1013
- Tamara Garcia, Office Manager, 720-485-5172
- Franca Benevente, Student Services Liaison, 720-485-5172 ext. 1101

Highline Academy Southeast

- Sarah Verni-Lau, Principal, 303-759-7808, ext. 1122
- Ashlee Morris, Principal in Residence, 303-759-7808, ext. 1122
- Carolyn Leary Gallegos, Assistant Principal, 303-759-7808, ext. 1122
- Cortney Fry, Assistant Principal, 303-759-7808, ext. 1122
- Kevin O'Connell, Assistant Administrator, 303-759-7808, ext. 1122
- Marisol Sotelo, Director of Operations, 303-759-7808, ext. 1101
- Erika Paulino, Office Manager, 303-759-7808, ext. 1131

School Governance

Highline Academy's Board of Directors is composed of parents/guardians and community members who share a commitment to policy governance and a specific commitment to Highline's vision and mission. The Highline Board of Directors is the governing body of our school, monitoring our progress against established goals and helping us achieve them. They also ensure Highline remains compliant with district and state requirements and that we are transparent with decision making, resource allocation and school operations.

Parents/Guardians on the Board are charged to remain objective in decision making so that their actions are always in the best interest of the school, students and staff. This entails making decisions that may not be particularly advantageous for his/her child, however benefit the majority of students. All Board members commit to serving the school in a capacity that aligns with Highline's values and Board policy.

Board Meetings

Parents and Guardians are encouraged to attend Board meetings, which are held on the fourth Monday of each month. Meetings are held both virtually and in person, and begin at 6:15pm. Meeting agendas are posted on Highline's website on the Friday prior to each meeting. For meeting dates and locations, visit our website [here](#) or from our website under About Us → School Governance → Board Committees & Meeting Dates.

Highline Academy Board of Directors:

- Ambar Suero, Board President
- Katherine Casey, Board Vice President
- Kaylee Hart, Board Co-Treasurer
- Drew Goltermann, Board Co-Treasurer
- Annie Bielecki, Board Secretary
- Nikea Bland, Board Director
- Ramone Carson, Board Director
- Katondra Dunn, Board Director
- Kelly Fleming, Board Director
- Alexander Landau, Board Director
- Sloan Macy, Board Director
- Grace Nailing, Board Director
- Meg Ramey, Board Director
- Kenny Smith, Board Director
- Joe Whitfield, Board Director

Ex Officio Members to the Board:

- Christine Ferris, Executive Director
- Vanessa Rodriguez, Principal, HANE
- Sarah Verni-Lau, Principal, HASE
- Manda Troutman, Director of Communications

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents and Guardians of Highline Academy students are committed to partnering with Highline Academy Charter Schools in supporting civic, academic, and personal excellence. Parents and Guardians, to the greatest extent possible, agree to uphold a set of specific responsibilities outlined in this linked [annual Parent/Guardian Responsibilities agreement](#).

Parent Volunteering

Highline is a community school and was founded on family voice and engagement. Highline thrives with the participation from families, and it is our expectation that families find a meaningful way to engage as partners in their child's education. We encourage families to volunteer at school or lend their time to support school projects that can be done offsite. Examples of volunteer activities include preparing materials for teachers, chaperoning field trips, helping with school events, sending communications to other parents, and more. Parents and guardians who are interested in volunteering should indicate so on [this form](#). Thank you for your support!

Parents with Purpose

Parents With Purpose (PWP) is Highline Academy's version of Parent Teacher Association (PTA). PWP was established in 2005 and carries out much of Highline's fundraising and community building functions. PWP's mission is to bring together a diverse community with an ongoing commitment to support Highline's children, faculty, and administration through community events and fundraisers. For more information about PWP, please contact the campus parent leads below:

- Northeast campus: Rachel Chin at rachel-chin@hotmail.com or pwpNE@highlineacademy.org
- Southeast campus: pwpSE@highlineacademy.org

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Schedule & Logistics

Calendar

The school year calendar can be found [here](#) or on the [school calendar page](#) on our website.

School Hours & Bell Schedules

HASE: The building opens at 7:30 am. Classes begin at 8:00 am; dismissal is at 3:30 pm (1:30 pm on Fridays). Pickup time ends at 3:50 pm.

HANE: The building opens at 7:30 am. Classes begin at 8:00 am; dismissal is at 3:30 pm (1:30 pm on Fridays for K-5 grade and 12:30 pm for ECE 4). Pickup time ends at 4:00 pm.

School Supplies

Northeast Campus Supply List for 2024-25 - [Click here](#) or go to the Northeast campus page on our website and select 'School Supply List' in the left-hand navigation menu.

Southeast Campus Supply List for 2024-25 - [Click here](#) or go to the Southeast campus page on our website and select 'School Supply List' in the left-hand navigation menu.

Lockers

HASE only: Every middle school student at our Southeast campus is issued a locker during middle school orientation. Students are responsible for maintaining appropriate usage of their locker, including compliance of stored materials.

Transportation, Parking, Drop Off and Pick Up

Highline Northeast Arrival

Carline begins at 7:30 am. If dropping off your student after 8:00 am, enter the Front Lot through Maxwell Place and park your car. Students need to be escorted into the building and signed in at the front office. Students will be marked tardy after 8:00 am.

ECE: Parents and guardians will park in the Blue ECE parking lot located east of Maxwell. All ECE families will get a parking pass to access this lot. Parents and guardians must walk their student into the building for in person check in and check out, per licensing regulations. Parents must sign their child in on the ECE sign in sheet.

2nd, 3rd, 5th Grades: Drop off is the Front carline off of Maxwell Place

Kinder, 1st, and 4th Grades: Drop off is long the back green line off of Robins Drive

Highline Northeast Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 3:40pm. All vehicles that are picking up students need to have their hang tag visible.

Vehicles need to either go East on Robins Drive (for back carline) (front carline) or West on Maxwell Place. When you arrive, a staff member will put your pick up number into the app. Students will then be released to vehicles accordingly. We ask guardians with multiple children to go to the carline of their youngest child. Reference the map for carline locations by grade level. After 4:00 pm if your child has not been picked up, they will be escorted to the Front Office and guardians will be contacted.

ECE: Parents and guardians will park in the Blue ECE parking lot located east of Maxwell. All ECE families will get a parking pass to access this lot. Parents and guardians must walk up to the ECE sign out table for their child's classroom for in person check in and check out, per licensing regulations. Parents must sign their child out on the ECE sign out sheet.

Highline Southeast Arrival and Dismissal

Drop off and Pick up will be via carline only, parents are not permitted to park and walk students in or out. Please enter carline through the driveway on Dahlia Street - this is a **right turn only**. Cars that try to turn left into carline will not be permitted to do so.

Students who will be walking will be dismissed at 3:50 pm and must walk off campus immediately. **Parents will not be permitted to park on Warren to pick up students and avoid carline.**

[Click here](#) to view the Southeast campus carline map and see below.

Transportation: Campus Specific

HANE: Bus service is available for students. Use [this link](#) to opt your child into transportation service.

HASE: Transportation is not provided by either Highline or DPS for HASE students. Student transportation to and from HASE is the sole responsibility of parents and guardians. Transportation may be provided for students with disabilities, students in foster care, or homeless students, consistent with federal laws and regulations. [Zero Fare for Youth](#) Pilot Program offers a limited number of [Regional Transportation District \(RTD\)](#) passes. The bus stop is at Evans and Dahlia. Contact [Grace Jansson](#) for more information.

DPS [Policy JICC](#) (“Student Conduct on School Vehicles and Buses”) and DPS [Regulation JICC-R](#) (“Student Conduct on School Buses”) apply to Highline student conduct on DPS’ vehicles and buses.

Delays and Closures

Highline follows DPS’ weather-related school closures and delays.

If weather conditions necessitate a school delay or closure, DPS has a planned non-student contact day, and Highline schools are in session, the principal will make a decision about whether school will be closed. In this case, information about Highline Academy Charter Schools specifically will be broadcast by 6:00am on the three major news networks on the day of the closure and on our social media channels. In addition, room parents will be notified.

During adverse weather conditions, parents and guardians should monitor local news and social media for updates about closures and delays. Examples include: [CBS 4](#); [Denver 7](#); [9 News](#); [Fox 31](#); [Denver Post](#); and [DPS Twitter](#).

When Highline schools are on a delayed start, the after-school program is canceled. When Highline schools are closed, all school-sponsored activities, including the before- and after-school programs, are canceled.

If a Highline school must have an unexpected delay or closure in order to ensure the safety and well-being of students, an emergency “Alert” will be placed.

Our students go outside for recess and physical education classes in all but the coldest weather or during active precipitation. ECE students adhere to ECE licensing protocols and decisions about indoor recess are responsive to campus needs. Please dress your child with the outdoor weather in mind.

After Care and Enrichment

Before and After-School Care

At both Highline campuses, an outside vendor provides before- and after-school care. Before-school care is available from 6:30 am to 7:45 am. After-school care is available from 3:40 pm to 6:00 pm. Additional information can be found from the homepage of each campus under 'Before and After School Care' on our website.

EnREACHment

We are pleased to partner with staff and vendors to provide students with after-school enrichment activities that we term 'EnREACHment'. Offered classes rotate every 6-8 weeks and are available on a first come, first served basis. Highline has a limited budget to provide scholarships to qualified families. As more information becomes available for EnREACHment classes, it will be sent out to families from your campus team.

Middle School Sports

Highline offers competitive sports for middle school students. We offer the following sports:

- Basketball (girls and boys)
- Flag football (co-ed)
- Cross country (co-ed)
- Volleyball (girls- fall, boys- spring)
- Soccer (girls and boys)
- Cheer (co-ed)

Guardians must complete the [Athletic Participation](#) and have a current Physical Examination form from a care provider before a student can begin practices. The schedule for games can be accessed on the Southeast campus webpage. If you have additional questions, you may contact our Athletic Director Tara Whalen at twhalen@highlineacademy.org.

ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Prospective Students

Prospective Family Tours

Highline offers tours to prospective parents and guardians while classes are in session. To schedule a tour of the Northeast campus, call (720) 485-5172 or email TGarcia@HighlineAcademy.org. To schedule a tour of the Southeast campus, call (303) 759-7808 or email MSotelo@highlineacademy.org.

Enrollment

Highline Academy participates in DPS' SchoolChoice process. Parents and guardians interested in having their child attend Highline should:

- visit <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org/> for more information;
- create a SchoolChoice account, if they do not have an existing DPS Parent Portal log-in
- complete and submit one online SchoolChoice application per child, including a ranking of their top school preferences and all required paperwork; and
- wait for DPS to match students to schools based on preferences, school admission priorities, and available space, and to send parents and guardians placement results.

If there are more applications for HANE or HASE than seats available for new students, then a waitlist will be created.

Once a student is admitted or enrolled at HANE or HASE, the student is guaranteed re-enrollment the following year so long as the student's parent or guardian: (a) claims the student's seat during the open enrollment period; and (b) re-registers the student by the posted deadline.

For more information, see DPS [Policy JC](#) ("Student Assignment") and DPS [Regulation JC-R](#) ("Student Assignment")

Admission Denial

Subject to Highline's responsibilities under the Exceptional Children's Educational Act and applicable state and federal laws and regulations, the following constitute grounds for denial of admission to Highline:

- failing to meet age requirements;
- having been expelled from any school or school district the preceding 12 months;
- having engaged in behavior in another school during the preceding 12 months that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel;
- failing to comply with immunization requirements; or
- falsifying application or enrollment documents.

For more information, see DPS [Policy JF](#) ("Admission and Denial of Admission").

Attendance Policies

Absences

Notification to the School: If a student is going to be absent from school, the student's parent or guardian may submit an electronic absence form [here](#) via our website (also accessible from the homepage). Or, guardians may leave a message on the campus attendance phone line no later than 10:00 am on the day the student is absent. The message should include:

- the student's name and grade;
- the date(s) the student will be absent; and
- the reason(s) for the student's absence.

Northeast Campus: 720-485-5172, press option 5

Southeast campus: 303-759-7808, extension 3

If no message is left, school staff will attempt to contact the student's parent or guardian. If school staff cannot reach the student's parent or guardian, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Specific absences due to COVID-like symptoms will be shared during the years as health guidelines are updated.

Excused Absences: Excused absences are those resulting from:

- temporary or extended illness;
- medical or dental appointments;
- injury, or physical, mental, or emotional disability;
- family emergencies;
- absences excused by the principal in advance;
- religious holidays; and
- a student being in the custody of a court or law enforcement authority.

If a student's number of absences due to medical appointments becomes excessive, as determined by the principal, a note from the student's doctor may be requested by the school.

Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences are those with or without prior knowledge and approval of the parents, but for reasons not approved by the principal. Absences due to family excursions, etc., will be considered unexcused absences.

Level I: If a student has a total of three unexcused absences in one school year, an intervention shall begin with the school counselor contacting the student's parent or guardian to discuss the situation.

Level II: If a student has four consecutive unexcused absences or six total unexcused absences in one school year, the school counselor will attempt to work with the student's family to create

an attendance plan that outlines specific responsibilities of the student, parent or guardian, and school. The school counselor will mail a letter to the student's parent or guardian, and a copy of the letter will be placed in the student's records. The letter will inform the student and parent or guardian:

- of the number of unexcused absences to date;
- of Colorado's School Attendance Act and DPS' intent to seek enforcement of the law;
- that, if the student accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences, the matter will be referred to DPS' truancy office for resolution; and
- that, if unexcused absences continue, DPS policy and State Law require that an Attendance Filing be initiated in juvenile court.

Level III: If a student has 10 to 20 unexcused absences in one school year, the school counselor may, but is not required to: (a) refer the family to a social worker in order to assist the family in following the attendance plan; and/or (b) work with the family to create a revised attendance plan. Additionally, the school counselor will send the student's parent or guardian a letter stating that the parent or guardian is subject to a subpoena and a court order that requires attendance. Consequences for violation of the court order may include:

- mandated community service for the student;
- detention of the student in a juvenile facility;
- a monetary fine imposed upon the parent or guardian;
- detention of the parent or guardian in the County Jail;
- referral of the family to Denver Human Services; and
- other sanctions deemed appropriate by the juvenile court judge.

Level IV: After 21 or more unexcused absences, the school counselor and administration will initiate an Attendance Filing. If the student has more than 21 truancies during the school year, an attendance filing must be initiated per DPS Policy JE- R. A letter stating that attendance must improve within 5 days, with no further truancies for the school year, shall be completed and mailed to the student's home. If the attendance does not improve in a reasonable amount of time, an Attendance Petition shall be initiated through the DPS Legal Office. The 5-Day Letter will follow the student from one DPS school to another.

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school on time everyday. Students who are not in their homeroom by the school start time will be marked tardy. Any student arriving after the school start time must be escorted inside by a responsible adult directly to the front office, where the student must be signed in. The student will receive a tardy pass and immediately report to his or her homeroom or classroom.

Over-sleeping, car troubles, heavy traffic, and work are not excuses for being tardy. Tardiness is considered excused in a small number of circumstances, such as poor weather and road conditions that inhibit a student's punctual arrival. This decision will be made by the school's administration on a case-by-case basis. Five unexcused tardies are recorded as one day of

unexcused absence and may require a parent or guardian meeting with the school's administration to discuss how to resolve chronic tardiness. If a student has had more than 10 unexcused tardies during a school year, the school will send the student's parent or guardian a letter requesting that the parent or guardian make every effort to improve the child's promptness.

Early Dismissal

Highline encourages parents and guardians to avoid early dismissals of students to the greatest extent possible. Early dismissals may cause students to miss important information, and may disrupt classroom learning. For example, all efforts should be made to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours.

If a student must be picked up before the end of the school day, the student's parent or guardian is required to sign the student out of school in the front office. Office staff will call the student's classroom and have the student sent to the office. Students may not be called to the office for early pick up if the time is too close to regular dismissal.

Student Withdrawal

To withdraw a student from Highline, the student's parent or guardian must complete a withdrawal form and submit it to the school's front office. The withdrawal form is available [here](#).

The school will not release academic records until all fines (if any) have been paid and all school books, school technology and property checked out to the student have been returned and or paid for.

FAMILY AND STUDENT POLICIES

Family Communication

Phone: To facilitate home/school communication, phones are located in every classroom. All staff members have voicemail accounts that can be accessed by calling the school's main number (HASE is 303-759-7808; HANE is 720.485.5172). Students will only be permitted to use the phone in cases of an emergency. Please feel free to leave voicemails for any teacher, staff member or administrator.

Email: Email is the preferred way of contacting faculty or staff members at Highline. All employees have email addresses and most prefer it as a mode of communication. Please be patient, our faculty and staff receive many voice and email messages. Our goal is to respond within 48 hours to all non-emergency communication.

- **Highline email addresses are formulated:**
[first initial of first name]+[last name]@highlineacademy.org
- **Example:** John Smith = JSmith@highlineacademy.org

Highline Academy Charter Schools administrative team is available between 7:30 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Friday. The administrative staff is happy to meet with parents/guardians. Call ahead to make an appointment. Please also understand that while you may find faculty and administrators in the building in the early mornings, later afternoons/evenings, or even on the weekends, their presence does not indicate their availability to parents/guardians or students without an appointment. Faculty and administrators often utilize these non-administrative hours to catch up on focused work and therefore may not be available for impromptu meetings during these hours.

Teachers may not be available for at-will conversations with parents/guardians due to other responsibilities or duties. Faculty and administrators are happy to schedule a meeting with you if needed with advance notice. Please email or call in advance to arrange such a meeting.

Infinite Campus: The Infinite Campus (IC) Alert system uses voice message, text, and email to notify you of various events at Highline. IC will also be used to let you know information specifically related to your student or family like an overdrawn lunch account, attendance, and weather related closures or delays. Please follow up on these phone blasts if it has specific information about your student(s). If you are not receiving regular phone/email messages from Highline, it is your responsibility to update your phone number and email address with the front office.

Communications Department: The Highline Academy Communications Department oversees network-wide internal and external communications including school crisis communications, media relations, social media, Campus and Network newsletters, and annual publications. You can email the communications team for information about media resources, public information or language services.

Newsletter: Each week the office staff at each campus produces an electronic newsletter which outlines activities and announcements for Highline Academy. The newsletter is emailed to families with a current email address in IC and is posted on the [Highline Academy](#) website.

Website: The main [HighlineAcademy.org](#) website is our top platform for distributing information. The aim of our website is to make information more accessible, create positive user experiences, and improve communication between the school and Highline Community. Students, families, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to give feedback to our Communications Department about website and communication accessibility. If you are a community member who wishes to give feedback, [please fill out this linked form](#). Your responses can be anonymous, unless you would like a response from a Highline team member.

Social Media: Highline Academy communicates with the school community through a number of online platforms including [Instagram](#), a [Southeast Campus Facebook](#) and a [Northeast Campus Facebook](#). Connect with Highline's Social Media platforms to stay up to date on events and news shared through our external media platforms.

Education Nights: Highline Academy Charter Schools holds Parent/Guardian education nights during the school year. These events are designed to educate parents about topics related to your child's education and to help parents gain a deeper understanding of how and what your child is learning. Parent Education events will be published in the newsletter and shared via Infinite Campus messaging.

Translation and Interpretation Services: Highline partners with [Talking Points](#) (HANE) and [Remind](#) (HASE), non-profit organizations that support 2-way communication between school staff and families in more than 100 home languages. The apps allow school staff to text with families in almost any language. The app is free and no family will be charged for the service. To learn more about the apps, contact your campus team. Highline also uses the Denver Public Schools Infinite Campus Alerts system to notify parents of important school related information. Alerts will automatically translate messages to the designated language identified in Infinite Campus for your student.

For translation and interpretation services beyond those listed above, an advance notice is required for service requests. Service requests must be submitted by a Highline Employee through the DPS [Translation & Interpretation Department](#).

Uniform Dress Code

Uniform Policy

If your family qualifies for the free or reduced lunch program, we will provide assistance in acquiring a uniform for your student. Please contact the school counselor if you would like help.

Dress code / uniform sweaters and sweatshirts may be worn in the building during school hours. Any type of coat may be worn to and from school, and at recess, but not in the classroom. Shoes must fit properly, secured to the foot (not loose flip-flop type shoes) and be suitable for play, PE, recess and science lab.

Please take the time to label each piece of your child's clothing with his or her first and last name. This should be done with a permanent marker on the inside tags. Any misplaced clothing that is not labeled will be put in the lost and found. The lost and found will be cleaned out frequently and all unlabeled dress code/uniform clothing will be placed in the uniform closet for sale. All other unclaimed lost and found clothes may be donated to local charities.

Abiding by dress code/uniform guidelines conveys a respect for others and for self that underlies Highline Academy Charter School's mission. A dress code/uniform emphasizes the school is both a community and a place of work. Students are to be in dress code/uniform from the time they arrive at school until they leave the school grounds. By enrolling your child at Highline Academy Charter Schools, parents accept full responsibility for their child's adherence to the dress code/uniform requirements.

All clothing must fit properly and be neat, clean, and in good repair. Any student wearing or possessing any article of clothing or accessory that is deemed a distraction to learning will need to change. Students who come to school out of uniform may not be permitted to attend class. Parents will be called and asked to bring a uniform.

Gently used items may be purchased or traded for other gently used items in the school uniform closet.

- [Southeast Campus Uniform Information](#)
- [Northeast Campus Uniform Information](#)

Uniform Violations and Consequences

Students wearing clothing deemed to be in violation of the uniform may not be permitted to attend class. When a teacher asks a student to correct a dress code violation, the student is expected to comply immediately. Questions regarding interpretation may be discussed at a later time. When a dress code violation occurs, students will be asked to call home for the delivery of a proper uniform. Students may be asked to wait in the front office until they are in compliance with the dress code.

The Front office staff should be consulted if there are any questions about whether a particular item of clothing meets the requirements of the above policy. Highline Academy Charter Schools administration reserves the right to restrict individual items of clothing as necessary, given notification of a parent or guardian, if such clothing interferes with normal school activities.

Food Service and Food Policy

Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school in order to stay hydrated throughout the day.

The following are not allowed at school: nuts and products with nuts or nut oils; or sodas, Gatorade, coffee drinks, or other high-sugar beverages. Additionally, students should not bring high-sugar snacks - such as cake, cookies, and candies - to school. Students are not allowed to share or swap foods or drinks brought from home.

Snacks: All students will be given an opportunity - at a time determined by their teachers - to eat a nutritious snack during the school day. Highline does not provide snacks to students; therefore, parents and guardians should send a snack with their student on a daily basis. We encourage parents and guardians to send healthy snacks, such as fruits, vegetables, or nut-free proteins.

Breakfast and Lunch: Breakfast and a hot lunch is served daily. Breakfast and lunch is free for all students for the 2024-2025 school year, regardless of family income status. However, we ask all parents and guardians to complete a Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) application at the beginning of each school year, as this provides additional funding for Highline Academy and students. Families may opt out if they do not believe they will qualify for the program or if they chose not to disclose income information.

Student Fees

At Highline Academy, student fees are used for school based expendable supplies such as planners, art supplies, PE equipment and paper. Student fees are voluntary, but appreciated in helping us to provide a high quality program. This fee is waived if your student qualifies for the Free & Reduced Lunch Program through DPS.

Northeast Campus Fees

- \$50 per student

Southeast Campus Fees

- 1 Student: \$65
- 2 Students: \$130
- 3 Students: \$195

Please note that all bounced checks will incur a \$10 fee.

Holidays/Birthday Policy

Due to Highline's diverse student population and intense academic program, its schools do not celebrate (ex. decorate, dress in costumes, or distribute treats or cards) the holidays of any particular religion or culture. Students should not bring or possess costumes, flowers, gifts, balloons, or other items to school.

For students in first to fifth grade, homeroom teachers acknowledge birthdays monthly to celebrate all students born during that month. Homeroom teachers will notify parents and guardians of the date for each monthly celebration. Parents and guardians may bring store-bought treats (and any necessary napkins, plates, and utensils), such as small cupcakes or cookies, to share with the entire class, as long as there is enough for every student and the treats do not contain nuts or nut oils.

For students in sixth to eighth grade, their birthdays will be acknowledged, but materials and treats sent from home are not allowed.

Students should not distribute invitations to parties at school. Staff will not distribute invitations on behalf of students, parents, or guardians. Please reach out to Manda Troutman at ATroutman@HighlineAcademy.org for a list of released phone/emails for your student's homeroom.

Code of Conduct

Highline's Philosophy

The goal of the Highline Academy Discipline Philosophy is to create a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment where learning can take place. Highline faculty will use its discretion in its choice of disciplinary measures depending upon the child's age, his or her specific infraction, and general pattern of behavior. Highline's philosophy is that children feel more secure and act more responsibly when expectations are clear and understood. Therefore, the school community will support this philosophy through the integration of character education in the curriculum and the daily life of the school. We also believe that good discipline requires the concerted effort of students, parents and teachers, the result of which will be a more positive and productive learning environment. Regular review of expectations in the classroom and at faculty meetings will encourage the ongoing implementation of the philosophy throughout the school. Key principles that allow teachers to teach, children to learn, and students to become self-disciplined include:

- We provide messages of personal worth, dignity, and strength through choices and the development of problem-solving skills, respect and empathy for others, and actions that grow and support relationships.
- We set enforceable limits through enforceable statements.
- We foster responsibility toward self and others.
- We provide consequences with empathy rather than antipathy.
- When appropriate, we offer opportunity for restorative justice and/or service back to the school community at the discretion of the principal per case-by-case review.

Restorative Approach

At Highline we practice Restorative Approach as an equitable practice to repair harm and change future behaviors. Learn more about Restorative Approach [here](#) for Southeast and [here](#) for Northeast on our website.

Additionally, Highline follows the DPS Discipline Policy ladder. You may access the policy [here](#).

Prohibited Conduct

Highline prohibits the follow conduct by students during school, on school busses, on DPS school busses, and during school-sponsored activities:

- alcohol possession, distribution, and use, and being under the influence of drugs
- arson/fire setting
- blackmail
- bullying/cyber-bullying
- cheating/plagiarism/scholastic dishonesty
- defiance/insubordination
- disrespect
- disrupting class and school activities
- dress code violation
- drug paraphernalia possession
- drug possession, distribution, and use, and being under the influence of drugs
- electronics use without authorization (such as cell phones, video games, tablets, etc.)
- extortion
- fighting
- (false) fire alarm activation or tampering
- forgery and falsifying or altering records
- gambling
- gang activity
- harassment, including harassment based on race, class, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, and religion
- hazardous materials possession
- hazing
- physical aggression/assault/battery (such as pushing, shoving, slapping, fighting, throwing objects, etc.)
- possession of matches, lighters, fireworks, and explosives/incendiary devices
- profanity/cursing
- property damage, defacing, or destruction
- school equipment use without authorization
- sexual behavior (such as inappropriate comments, indecent exposure, kissing, inappropriate touching, etc.)
- skipping class, leaving school without permission, etc.
- theft/stealing/larceny
- threats (verbal or physical)
- tobacco possession, distribution, and use
- trespassing
- vaping and possession of vaping devices
- verbal abuse
- weapons possession (such as guns, firearms, knives, mace, pepper spray, slingshots, etc.)

- witness intimidation or retaliation

Consequences

A student who engages in any of these activities will be subject to consequences, which may include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● redirection | ● restorative justice |
| ● reminder | ● daily behavior reports to parent or guardian |
| ● warning | ● behavioral intervention plan |
| ● student-teacher conference | ● behavior contract |
| ● parent or guardian contact | ● change in schedule or class |
| ● reflective essay | ● in-school suspension |
| ● letter of apology | ● suspension from the school bus |
| ● change of seat in classroom | ● threat assessment |
| ● referral to school administrator | ● referral to law enforcement |
| ● Student-administrator conference | ● referral to mental health counseling |
| ● parent or guardian meeting | ● referral to a mentoring program |
| ● loss of privilege (such as recess or a field trip) | ● referral to substance abuse treatment |
| ● community service | ● out-of-school suspension |
| ● restitution | ● school transfer |
| ● mediation | ● expulsion |

The consequence(s) for a student will be based on:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● the type and severity of the conduct | ● the student's behavioral history/prior conduct |
| ● the student's age and developmental level | ● the student's willingness to accept responsibility |
| ● the student's disability (if applicable) | ● the student's willingness to repair any harm |
| ● whether the student's conduct was premeditated | ● the harm to other students or staff |
| ● whether the student was provoked or acting in self-defense | ● the impact on the overall school community |
| ● the student's cooperation with any investigation | ● other aggravating or mitigating factors |

Highline follows:

- DPS [Policy JICH](#) (“Drug and Alcohol Use by Students”);
- DPS [Regulation JICH](#) (“Drug and Alcohol Use by Students”);
- DPS [Policy JK](#) (“Student Discipline”); and
- DPS [Regulation JK-R](#) (“Student Conduct and Discipline Procedures”).

For more information, visit:

- DPS’ “Student Discipline” [website](#); and
- DPS’ “Discipline Documents” [website](#)

Student Searches

Highline Academy Charter Schools reserves the right to conduct searches of the students and their property, including backpacks and journals. Searches will be conducted so as to respect the privacy and interests of the students to the fullest degree possible, but will balance such concerns with its predominant interest in maintaining student safety and discipline. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a searched student will be notified as soon as possible to inform them that a search is about to or has just occurred. Should a student refuse to cooperate with a search request, the school will confiscate the property in question. School lockers, cubbies and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain property of Highline Academy Charter Schools and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to searches by school officials at any time.

Student Incident Statements

As a restorative approach school, students fully participate in the restorative process after a behavior incident with either a teacher or an administrator. The DPS Discipline policy covers the process for handling high-level student incidents.

Use of Restraint / Disruptive Students

Highline follows:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”);
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);
- The Colorado “Rules for the Administration of the Protection of Persons from Restraint Act;”
- DPS [Policy JKA](#) (“Restraint, Physical Holds, and Seclusion”); and
- DPS [Regulation JKA-R](#) (“Restraint, Physical Holds and Seclusion Regulation”).

For more information, visit:

- The Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education’s “[Dear Colleague Letter: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities](#),” and
- The Colorado Department of Education’s “Special Education Rules and Regulations” [website](#).

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND PRIVACY POLICIES

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Highline Academy does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race(including hair texture, type and protective hair styles), color, national origin, sex, disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement in accordance with all federal, state and local laws.

In accordance with the statement above, Highline Academy expects all staff, students, and volunteers of Highline Academy to adhere to this policy. Specifically, no person associated with the school will intentionally commit any of the following acts:

- Discriminate based on an individual's membership in a legally protected class in the recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, benefits, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, reduction in workforce, or any other terms or conditions of employment.
- The CROWN Act amends Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act by defining "race" to include "hair texture, hair type, or a protective hairstyle that is commonly or historically associated with race." A protective hairstyle may include braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, Bantu knots, Afros, and headwraps. In other words, under the new law, an employer who discriminates against an employee because of the employee's or student's natural hair texture, hair type, or protective hairstyle is discriminating on the basis of race.
- Make any comments, or display or distribute any materials that constitute unlawful harassment based on an individual's membership in a legally protected class.
- Deny a person any services, program benefits, or financial aid based on the individual's legally-protected classification.
- Discriminate based on a student or family's membership in a legally protected class in the assignment and evaluation of academic work, placement in ability groups, promotion between grade levels, or provision of academic support and services.
- Discriminate based on a student or family's membership in a legally protected class in the administration of behavioral expectations and consequences.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

All Highline Academy employees who become aware of violations of this policy have the affirmative obligation to report the conduct to their immediate supervisor, or if the supervisor is engaged in the conduct, to another member of the management team.

Educational Political Advocacy

Highline Academy's default policy is to provide parents of enrolled students information on educational policymaking and political activity related to education matters directly affecting Highline Academy. Highline Academy may seek to connect parents with opportunities to advocate for educational issues that impact their students. Highline Academy may release publicly available Directory Information, namely parent names and contact information (mailing addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers), to contractors and partners involved in those efforts. Highline Academy does not release any private student information or educational records as set forth in the [Denver Public School's Student Data Privacy Policy](#). Families wishing to opt-out of Highline Academy's default policy may contact Manda Troutman (ATroutman@HighlineAcademy.org), Director of Communications at Highline Academy, if you do not wish for your directory Information to be released to third-parties.

Student Data Privacy

Highline Academy Charter Schools takes student data privacy very seriously. Safeguarding student data is an essential responsibility for all Highline employees. Our schools and staff follow our [Student Data Privacy](#) training and guidance process to ensure that all DPS staff are protecting student data and operating in compliance with Colorado state and federal laws regarding student data privacy.

Regarding privacy and student records, Highline follows:

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA);
- Relevant state laws (ex. Colorado Revised Statutes, Section 22-1-123);
- DPS Policy [JRA/JRC](#) ("Student Records/Release of Information on Students");
- DPS Regulation [JRA-R/JRC-R](#) ("Regulation Regarding Student Records and Release of Student Information");
- DPS [Policy JRCB](#) ("Privacy and Protection of Confidential Student Information"); and
- DPS [Regulation JRCB-R](#) ("Privacy and Protection of Confidential Student Information Regulation").

There are several laws that dictate how schools and teachers handle student data.

- [FERPA – The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#)
FERPA requires that schools have written permission from the parent or guardian in order to release any information from a student's education record. So the most important thing is that, with some very specific exceptions, you shouldn't be sharing student information with apps and websites without parent permission.
- [COPPA – The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#)
COPPA puts special restrictions on software companies about the information they can collect about students under 13. So, students under 13 can't make their own accounts, teachers have to make the accounts for them. In making the accounts, teachers need to be aware of their responsibility under FERPA.

- [CIPA – The Children’s Internet Protection Act](#)
Teachers don’t need to help comply with CIPA, but it’s useful to know that it is in place. CIPA requires districts to put measures in place to filter Internet access and other measures to protect students.
- [PPRA – Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](#)
PPRA governs the administration to students of any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of eight designated protected areas.
- [SDTSA – Colorado Student Data Transparency and Security Act \(HB 16-1423\)](#)
SDTSA puts additional restrictions on how school districts can share student data with third party service providers. The three primary focus areas of the law are:
 1. Data Use Obligations and Restrictions
 2. Data Transparency
 3. Data Security & Destruction

For more information, visit:

- the U.S. Department of Education’s “Protecting Student Privacy” [website](#);
- the Colorado Department of Education’s “Data Privacy and Security” [website](#); and
- DPS’ “Student Data Privacy” [website](#).

[Public Transparency](#)

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) collects student data from students across Colorado to meet specific policy, practice, and service requirements of state and federal laws. We collect and submit DPS student data to CDE based on their requirements and procedures. CDE provides a [Data Collection Fact Sheet](#) of what type of information is collected as well as an overview of the [Data Elements Collected in Data Collection System](#) to meet state and federal reporting mandates. In addition, this [Student Data Map](#) outlines the types of student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that we collect in our primary enterprise applications. These applications represent the core of DPS’ operational information systems, and the data within these systems is highly managed for security, quality and appropriate usage.

What is the ATM?

The Academic Technology Menu (ATM) is a resource for school leaders, teachers, students and parents/guardians as part of the student data privacy process. The purpose of the ATM is to allow school leaders and teachers to identify which tools they plan to use with students, and to inform parents/guardians of these tools and their privacy policies. As applications are adopted by schools, and if they are not already protected by student data privacy agreements, the ATM provides assistance for schools to take appropriate measures in protecting student data by providing guidelines for obtaining data-sharing agreements or obtaining parent consent for classroom use. The ATM is also an integral part of the district’s Academic Technology Strategic Plan.

Parent Consent – On-Demand Service Providers

If a vendor has not signed the DPS Data Protection Addendum (discussed further below) then it is considered to be an on-demand service provider. Parent/guardian consent is required at the school level before student data can be shared with on-demand service providers. You can review the educational technology resources listed by your student’s school in the ATM and the provider privacy policies. Parent consent is given each school year through the Annual Family Update. As new tools are added by your school, parents/guardians will receive notifications from their school so they have the opportunity to provide consent.

Data Protection Addendums

At a district level, we devote significant staff time and resources to negotiating contracts with vendors that include a formal data sharing agreement (Data Protection Addendum) to prohibit student data mining or targeting marketing while requiring industry standards for encryption and security. These agreements allow DPS to designate vendors as “school officials” to enable us to share student data without parent/guardian consent.

Approved DPA Vendor List

The Approved DPA Vendor List provides the names of vendors who have signed the DPS DPA. We require that vendors sign the DPA if they have a negotiated contract.

District-Wide Tools

There are certain tools, such as our Learning Management Systems (Schoology and Seesaw), that are district purchased and managed. District purchased and managed digital content ensures ease of access for students with single sign-on and IP authentication, while also protecting student data privacy and copyright compliance.

Digital Media Release

Highline Academy uses photos and videos of students in the promotion of our program to donors, foundations, partners and community leaders. You may access our photo and video policy [here](#).

Professional photos are taken once a year and are included on student IDs as well as linked to DPS portal information. Professional photos are available for purchase for interested families.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Remote Learning

For the 2024 - 2025 school year, Highline is not offering remote learning. If conditions change, you may review our remote policy [here](#).

Onsite Learning

Class Placement

Students are assigned to classrooms at the sole discretion of Highline staff. Classroom placements are based on an analysis of each student's academic performance, behavior, learning styles, and other factors. Classes are intentionally balanced in order to promote the success of all students.

Parents and guardians who have a compelling placement request based on a student's social, emotional, physical, or academic well-being may submit a request to the principal, in writing, by June 1st prior to the start of the relevant school year. While such requests will be considered, there is no guarantee that they will be granted. We do not honor teacher requests based purely on preference.

Curriculum

At Highline we strive to meet every learner where they are. This means that our curriculum provides a differentiated approach so that each learner is challenged where they are academically. Our curriculum includes the following:

- Benchmark Workshop
- Engage NY
- Zearn
- TCI
- Amplify
- Orton Gillingham
- Eureka Math (HASE Only)

Grading

Highline Academy uses standards-based education (SBE) grading. That is, grades are based on specific measurable standards, as defined by Common Core standards, state standards, and teacher-designed standards. Standards are what students need to know, understand, and be able to do to achieve academic mastery. Highline assesses students based on their mastery of key academic skills and bases of knowledge. Students are not graded on a curve - that is, a student's grade is not based on other students' grades. Students are given a grade of 1, 2, 3, or 4 for each benchmark.

Grade	1	2	3	4
Meaning	Basic	Approaching	Proficient	Advanced

Report Cards

Report cards are provided to parents through Mastery Connect. Families can also check student grades during the school year in the portal. Families are notified when grades are finalized each semester and a printed version of what is in the portal is sent home.

Family/Guardian-Teacher Conferences

Family/guardian-teacher conferences are opportunities for parents/guardians and teachers to exchange useful information about the educational and social needs and progress of students. At conferences, teachers will review student progress and note any areas of special concern. Per its contract with DPS, Highline must maintain a 95% parent/guardian attendance rate for conferences. Please mark the following conference dates on your calendar now:

- Friday, September 20, 2024
- Friday, March 7, 2025

Each conference lasts approximately 20 minutes. The specific time for your conferences on the above dates will be scheduled directly with your child’s teacher.

Classroom Observations

While Highline encourages parental/guardian presence in the school building, out of respect for our teaching faculty and student body, we ask that you arrange for classroom observations twenty- four hours in advance. Please arrange your observations with your classroom teacher who will alert the front office of your appointment. Usually, your request for an observation will be accommodated. However, due to assessments, specials schedules, and the nature of certain classroom activities, we may, on occasion, have to ask that you find an alternate time.

Parents/guardians who want to drop in for an impromptu visit with their children are encouraged to do so during lunch and recess. Parents/guardians wishing to visit a classroom other than the class their child attends must receive permission from the principal.

Standardized and Internal Testing

In addition to classroom and curriculum-based assessments, Highline students take the following standardized assessments each year.

Time of Year	Grade Levels	Assessment
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Fall, Winter, Spring	HASE: K-8 HANE: K-5	STAR Reading and Math
January	All Multi-language learners	ACCESS
In March and April	Math and Literacy in 3-8 Science in 5 & 8 Social Studies in 4 & 7	CMAS

Highline uses the results of these assessments to strategize for individual students and school-wide improvements. Per state law, Highline automatically distributes individual CMAS and PARCC results to parents and guardians each year, within two weeks of Highline receiving them from DPS.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS):

The MTSS process is academic language for looking at a student who is struggling and trying to offer support based on what you think may be the problem and increasing that support as needed. Students may need support with academic, behavior, and/or social emotional support. The team from the school and the parents/guardians come together to discuss the concerns and develop a plan. As the school tries different kinds of support the student moves up the pyramid of MTSS support with more and different kinds of supports. Going through this process is essential before ever determining a student might need special education services. If your child is struggling in school and you have already met with your child’s teacher you can request a MTSS or care and concern meeting. You might also be invited to one should school staff determine it is needed.

Interventions

Elementary Intervention Classes: Intervention support is provided during our math and literacy classes for elementary students who need additional help. Intervention support happens during the school day by teachers trained in supporting students in accelerated learning. Intervention groups are designed to be small (2-8 students), focused and short (20-30 minutes). Students move in and out of intervention groups as needed throughout the school year.

Tutoring:

- Northeast campus: teachers provide tutoring to students as needed to students outside of educator assigned grade level. Students may also receive an invite to participate in After-School EnREACHment tutoring.
- Southeast campus, teachers provide tutoring to students as needed.

Academic Organization

Student Planners - Southeast Campus Only: Student planners are issued to all students in grades 1-8. Planners are a daily tool for students to record homework assignments and for staff to communicate with families. Students are expected to have their planners with them during every class, except P.E. Planners are provided to teach students valuable lifelong organizational skills. Students in grades 6-8 must carry their planners with them as their hall pass. There is a \$5 replacement fee for a lost planner.

Student Planners and Communication Folders - Northeast Campus Only: Student planners are issued to all students in grades 3-5. Communication folders are used for students in grades ECE - 2nd. Families are responsible for reviewing information sent home in communication folders and student planners. There is a \$5 replacement fee for a lost planner.

Library and Information Science

Highline is fortunate to have a fully-functioning library at both campuses. Campus librarians will communicate specific protocols around library use and procedures.

Homework and Make-Up Work

Homework

Generally, students will have approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level per school night. For example, a first grader might have approximately 10 minutes of homework and a fifth grader might have approximately 50 minutes of homework per night.

Homework will be in math and reading only for elementary students. Additionally, students and families are asked to engage in daily reading outside of school.

Highline teachers do not assign weekend homework on a regular basis. Occasionally, a student may be asked to work on a project, complete a missing assignment, or study for a test over a weekend.

Students are responsible for tracking homework assignments.

Students' homework is checked every day. Elementary school teachers work with students on a case-by-case basis if homework is not regularly being completed. There may be consequences for missing homework assignments, or rewards for completed homework. Middle school students who fail to complete the previous night's homework are assigned to a lunch-time support meeting, during which they have the opportunity to catch up on their academic work.

Make-Up Work

Students are granted one class day per day of absence to make up missed work. Upon return from an absence, the teacher will work directly with the family to make a plan for work and assessments that were missed during their absence.

Families taking extended absences, although discouraged, may request work in advance; however, whether such work is provided is up to the teacher's discretion.

Technology Use in Academics

Technology

Students are responsible for appropriate usage of all assigned technology materials. Students and families must adhere to Highline's technology code of conduct, which you may access [here](#).

Northeast Campus: All students are assigned a Chromebook meant for use while in the classroom. Chromebooks should be used only for academic work as assigned by a student's teacher. Students must not use Chromebooks for social media or entertainment purposes. Chromebooks should be safely stored and plugged in every evening unless special permission is granted by a teacher. Click [here](#) for HANE's acceptable use Chromebook policy.

Southeast Campus: All middle school students are assigned Chromebooks that are meant for use while in the classroom. Chromebooks should be used for academic purposes only. Students may not use Chromebooks for social media or entertainment purposes. Chromebooks should be left at school every evening unless special permission is granted by a teacher.

Please reference [this agreement](#) for technology use at home.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in Academics

As with any technology, Artificial Intelligence can be used to support learning or it can be detrimental to the learning process. The following gives some suggestions for how AI might be used appropriately at Highline Academy and some examples of inappropriate use. This list is not exhaustive and may continue to shift, due to the nature of this rapidly advancing field. It is critical that AI is used as a tool rather than as a replacement for critical thinking. Please review guidance [here](#) and reach out to administration for additional support and clarification.

Guiding Responsible Use Principles for Technology:

1. Support Education Goals for All: Technology will be thoughtfully used to enhance outcomes for every student.
2. Privacy & Security: Technology use will align with regulations protecting student data privacy, safety, and accessibility.
3. Technology Literacy: Students and teachers will build skills to critically evaluate and utilize technologies ethically.
4. Realize Benefits & Address Risks: We will cautiously explore the benefits of evolving technology while proactively addressing risks.
5. Academic Integrity: Students will produce original work and properly credit sources, including AI tools.
6. Maintain Human Agency: Technology will provide support, not replace educator and student discretion in decisions. Our staff will set parameters for each class and assignment for when and how certain technology systems can be used

7. Continuous Evaluation: We will routinely audit technology and application use, updating policies and training as needed.

Personal Cell Phones

Except in the event of an emergency, or as approved by a teacher, students are not permitted to use classroom phones. All after school arrangements must be made prior to school. To protect instructional time from disruptions, phone messages will be delivered to students during break times. Student use of cell phones at any time during the school day is prohibited, unless approved by a teacher due to specific lesson circumstances. If a student cell phone is visible and/or heard, or evidence is presented that the phone has been in use during school hours, it will be turned off, taken to the office and a parent or guardian must come in to claim it. Should a student need to make a call home for an extenuating circumstance, the student must request permission to use the front office phone.

Smart watches can be worn to support learning throughout the day, however may not be used for communication purposes.

Retention and Acceleration Policies

Retention

Highline Academy Charter Schools believes it is necessary for the educational professionals within our building to have the final say in student retention. If we promote students before they have demonstrated the ability to meet our academic standards, their academic weaknesses will continue to compound, and students will only grow increasingly frustrated with the rigor of our academic program. As such, Highline students earn promotion to the next grade level only when they have gained proficiency on the critical benchmarks of their current grade level. Grade retention may increase the likelihood that students will succeed in meeting challenging academic and behavioral expectations at the next grade level. Retention provides a second opportunity to master skills, and is recommended only after other interventions aimed to support the student have been documented. Grade retention will depend on several factors including including the following:

- Maturity.
- Satisfactory completion of assigned work.
- Likely success in completing the academic work at the next grade level with independence and proficiency.

Cases for retention are reviewed on a case by case basis. Grade retention will be based on the best interests of the student and his/her educational success, and will be determined by a collaborative team of educators, including teachers, administrators and family members.

Acceleration

We strive to offer students challenges within their grade level group each year regardless of their academic level. Highline rarely, if ever, offers grade skipping or acceleration beyond the normal grade progression. Grade acceleration will be based on the best interests of the student and his/her educational success, and will be determined by a team of educators, including teachers and administrators. We will not accelerate a student based on parent request.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specific Information

ECE Transition Policy

Transitions refer to the process of a child moving from one program or setting to another. For example, the transition from home care to formal care, to a new classroom within a program, or from one program to another. At Highline Academy, we recognize that stability and consistency is important for a child's development and acknowledge that young children accomplish different developmental milestones at different rates. Smooth transitions support a child's academic and social success and contribute to the well-being of the child and their family. At Highline Academy, we support intentional and thoughtful transition practices for children and their families.

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to see the classrooms, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. We also ask each family to complete the "Child Information" packet prior to the first day of school so the new teacher can learn about and better meet the needs of your family and your child.

Regardless of whether it is the first time you are leaving your child in a new school or have left multiple times, saying goodbye may not be easy. Nevertheless, there are some things that can make the transition smoother. Before you arrive at the school, it is a good idea to make sure your child understands that you will be leaving the child in the classroom with their friends and teachers for a while but will always return. The calmer and more assured you are about sending your child to school, the more confident your child will be. When it's time to go, remind your child you will be back soon, then say a quick goodbye. As tempting as it may be, leaving without saying goodbye can make kids feel abandoned, so it is not a good idea to "sneak" out. A consistent and predictable farewell routine can make leaving easier. Your farewell routine could include waving from outside the classroom window, making a funny goodbye face or performing a special handshake before parting. Providing your child with a transitional object, such as a family picture, a special doll, or a favorite blanket, can also help comfort a child. Keep in mind that most kids do well after their parents leave. However, if you hear your child begin to cry, it's best to not return to the classroom as returning can justify a child's anxiety and increase their concerns. We assure you that the child's teacher will be there to help the child start a great new day in school.

Children also transition out of the school for multiple reasons, such as the family moving to a new area or because a child will be going to a new school. This type of transition can also be stressful for a child and for families. To support the child's transition to a new school, we offer

exit conferences between families and program teachers, share assessment data so families can make it available to the child's new teacher, and communication between programs if authorized. We also have informational documents that we can provide you to help your child with the transition.

For a child who will be attending kindergarten at Highline Academy for the next school year, students will have opportunities to visit the kindergarten classrooms before the end of their ECE year. During this visit, ECE students complete an activity with the kindergarten students and teachers to help familiarize themselves with the classroom and routines. Additionally, all families will receive information about kindergarten enrollment in January, including resources on how to navigate the DPS SchoolChoice process. Highline also offers important resources and suggestions on helping prepare a child for kindergarten, including parent workshops and parent-teacher conferences in the Spring. Parent-teacher conferences happen two times a year and the Spring conference is an important time to discuss a child's progress and kinder-readiness.

ECE Quality Improvement Policy

Continuous quality improvement is a process which ensures that an organization and its partners are systematic and intentional about improving services and practices and increasing positive outcomes for families and their children. This process is valued and used here at Highline Academy Northeast. To support the process of continuous quality improvement, we have created a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that is reviewed annually by the ECE Director, the Board of Directors and the principal and is updated periodically throughout the year. To support the identification of areas of quality improvement, the setting of goals, and the creation of detailed action plans for quality improvement, we annually send out family and staff surveys to obtain feedback on how well we are doing. Families, staff, and stakeholders will receive notification of the results of the family survey and our plan for addressing any issues raised after the family and staff surveys have been received, reviewed, and a quality improvement plan has been fully developed. As part of the continuous quality improvement process, we also conduct self-assessments at least annually in various areas including Business Practices, Family Engagement and Playground Quality, as well as periodic reviews in the area of Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Health Promotion, Culturally Responsive Practices, Reducing Bias, Trauma Informed Programming, and Classroom Evaluations. If you wish to view the complete Quality Improvement Plan, a hard copy is available for viewing. It is located in a binder in the front office and can be requested at any time. Upon request, we can also provide a printed copy of the Plan or we can email you a PDF of the Plan.

ECE Ratio Policy

Staff to child ratio refers to the number of staff to the number of children in a classroom. Group size refers to the total number of children in a classroom. At minimum, Highline Academy follows the Colorado Department of Human Services Rules and Regulations for Child Care Centers for both ratio and group size which can be referenced in the link below.

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=4073>

Colorado Department of Human Services Rules and Regulations for Child Care Centers	
Ratio - 4 years to 5 years	1 staff member to 12 children
Group Size - 4 years to 5 years	24 children

The standards set forth by NAEYC for group size and Teacher-Child ratios are widely considered to be best practice. The lower recommended ratios are intended to support one-to-one interactions that build increased knowledge of the individual needs of children and support practices that encourage a child's development. Lower ratios also allow staff to better meet the physical, cognitive, and social/emotional needs of the children in their care.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	
Ratio - 4 years to 5 years	1 staff member to 10 children
Group Size - 4 years to 5 years	20 children

At Highline Academy, we exceed NAEYC's recommendation regarding lower group sizes and improved adult-child ratios. Our enrollment policy is that no more than 16 children will be enrolled in the ECE Classroom with 2 teachers, for a ratio of 1 teacher per 8 students.

Highline Academy	
Ratio - 4 years to 5 years	1 staff member to 10 children
Group Size - 4 years to 5 years	20 children

[ECE Trauma and/or Adversity Policy](#)

For our ECE families, at the beginning of every year and for every new family joining the program, you will receive the "Learning about Your Child and Your Family" questionnaire which we will be asking you to fill out. This document will help your teacher and the Director better understand your child and his/her development and learning needs, as well as the needs of your family. If your family is experiencing trauma or other challenges, and needs the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help you connect with those supports. Services may focus on children's developmental needs, (e.g. intervention screenings) or family needs such as housing, job, and food assistance. We can also provide you with information on a variety of topics including child development, nutrition, parenting and discipline. If you need support, you can contact us any time by speaking personally with your child's teacher or the Director, or you can call or email us. Your family can be connected with the School Counselor or Social

Worker who can provide you with additional contacts for services and supports. You can also request to have resources or materials emailed or mailed to you. Please let us know how we can best support you. If your family is experiencing trauma, crisis or adversity please reach out to our school social worker, Jaimie Schlicher, at jschlicher@highlineacademy.org.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Unique Student Populations

Gifted and Talented Education

“Gifted and talented learners” are those whose learning capacity and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational and affective needs. See the PDF document below for more information about what it means to be gifted and talented (GT) and the process for identifying GT students at Highline Academy.

Our leadership team provides programming to students who are identified as Gifted and Talented, or have high potential. They use Seasonal STEM Challenges, Math Stars, Destination Imagination, and Personalized Learning Projects for students.

Resources for Parents and Teachers

Check out the following resources to learn more about what characteristics to look for in a potentially gifted and/or talented child in your family:

- [Common Characteristics of Gifted Individuals](#)
- [Could my child be gifted?](#)

For more information on our Gifted and Talented program, contact our program coordinators.

- Northeast Campus - Lora Martinez at LMartinez@highlineacademy.org
- Southeast Campus - Jeff Trulock at JTruelock@highlineacademy.org

Students with Exceptionalities

All students - including students with exceptionalities - are welcome in Highline’s inclusive community. Highline services students with exceptionalities, including students with individualized education programs (IEPs) and students with Section 504 plans.

Highline follows:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”);
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); and
- The Colorado Rules for the Exceptional Children’s Educational Act (ECEA).

For more information about all of the above laws and regulations, visit:

- The Colorado Department of Education’s “Special Education Rules and Regulations” [website](#); and
- DPS’ “[Parent Handbook on Special Education](#).”

For more information about the IDEA, visit:

- The U.S. Department of Education’s “IDEA” [website](#); and
- DPS’ “Special Education” [website](#); and

For more information about Section 504 and the ADA, visit:

- The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education’s “Disability Discrimination: Overview of the Laws” [website](#);
- The OCR’s “[Frequently Asked Questions about the Rights of Students with Disabilities in Public Charter Schools under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#);”
- the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services’ “[Frequently Asked Questions about the Rights of Students with Disabilities in Public Charter Schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#);”
- The OCR’s “[Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#);”
- DPS’ “Section 504” [website](#); and
- The ADA National Network’s “Disability Rights Laws in Public Primary and Secondary Education: How Do They Relate?” [website](#).

Highline believes that inclusionary practices result in best results for all students. This means that minutes designated on a student’s IEP inside the general education classroom as much as is appropriate for that student’s needs.

Multi- Language Learners

The Multi-Language Acquisition department at Highline Academy serves to provide guidance, resources, training and support to ensure that all of our classrooms are equitable, rigorous learning environments for our Multi-language Learners. Multi-language learners in the elementary program at both Highline campuses receive 45-minute dedicated instruction with explicit focus on how the English language works, the structures and complexities of the English language, as well as providing students practice with linguistic skills needed to participate effectively in academic discourse and conversational language. Instruction is driven by students’ assessed English proficiency levels on ACCESS, with the goal of moving students from one proficiency level to the next.

At our Southeast campus, English Learners in our middle school receive an integrated approach to English Language Acquisition--ELA content teachers integrate the specific skills and lessons for Multi-Language Learners into the ELA content block for integrated support.

- Elementary Multi-language Development Department Curriculum - [E.L. Achieve](#)
- Middle School Multi-language Development Department - [The DBQ Project](#)

Homeless Students

Highline follows:

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“McKinney-Vento”);
- DPS [Policy JFABD](#) (“Homeless Students”); and
- DPS [Regulation JFABD-R](#) (“Regulation for Implementation of Homeless Student Policy”).

For more information about McKinney-Vento, visit:

- The National Center for Homeless Education’s “The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act” [website](#);
- The Colorado Department of Education’s “McKinney-Vento Homeless Education” [website](#);
- DPS’ “Homeless Education Network (HEN)” [website](#).

Students in Foster Care

Highline follows:

- Applicable state and federal laws;
- DPS [Policy JFABE](#) (“Students in Foster Care”); and
- DPS [Regulation JFABE-R](#) (“Students in Foster Care Regulation”).

For more information, visit:

- the U.S. Department of Education’s “Students in Foster Care” [website](#);
- the Colorado Department of Education’s “Foster Care Education” [website](#);
- DPS’ “Foster & Kinship Care” [website](#); and
- DPS’ “ESSA Foster Care” [website](#).

REACH Program and Student Council

REACH Programming

What's REACH? We actively prepare students to succeed in the diverse environments that await them—in college, in the workplace, and in community life—by teaching them about responsibility, empowerment, aspiration, citizenship, and honesty.

These are the five key character traits emphasized through our REACH program:

- Responsibility
- Empowerment
- Aspiration
- Citizenship
- Honesty

Students in our elementary school enjoy a REACH class once per week. During this class time, students are explicitly taught the values in our REACH program and are provided opportunities to practice their implementation. Every month, students who consistently demonstrate the school's REACH goals are nominated by their classroom teacher and chosen by the school administration to add their hand print to Highline's REACH for Success Wall located throughout the building.

Reach Values: The Reach values are the core of the student character program at Highline. We also refer to the Reach values for our staff and what we expect from each other in our working relationships.

Reach In: Highline staff are expected to be self-reflective. They should be self-motivated to grow as an educator. They should be able to realize mistakes through introspection or feedback and take responsibility for correcting them. Highline staff are expected to persevere through challenging circumstances and maintain a problem solving attitude.

Reach Up: Highline staff are expected to do their best and to strive to improve. They are expected to be interested and open to new learning in professional development and to authentically engage with other staff in learning opportunities. Highline staff should set high goals for themselves and work hard to attain them to support all students in our care.

Reach Out: Highline staff are expected to support others in the community. Staff should support all students, even ones they aren't assigned to through collaborating with other staff, holding all students to the same expectations for behavior, and building relationships with students and families. Staff should Reach Out to other staff members by being caring and supportive of others, being respectful of different work styles, prior experience and personal background.

Student Council

Highline Academy is home to an active student council, where students are empowered to assume a leadership role and take initiative on matters they would like to advance. Our student council is an influential body within our school, leading community service projects, school-wide fundraising initiatives, student advocacy, and positive changes to school culture and policy. Council members are voted by their peers each year.

School Support Services

Student Support Resources

At Highline we have a full time nurse, counselor, and social worker to support student needs. We also have a comprehensive social-emotional program, and provide support for families experiencing food and resource insecurity.

Family Support Resources

At the beginning of every year and for every new family joining Highline Academy, you will receive the “Learning about Your Child and Your Family” questionnaire which we will be asking you to fill out. This document will help your teacher better understand your child and his/her development and learning needs, as well as the needs of your family. If your family is experiencing trauma or other challenges, and needs the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help you connect with those supports. Services may focus on children’s developmental needs (e.g. early intervention screenings), or family needs such as housing, job, and food assistance. We can also provide you with information on a variety of topics, including child development, nutrition, parenting and discipline. If you need support, you can contact us any time by speaking personally with your child’s teacher or the principal, or you can call or email us. You can also request to have resources or materials emailed or mailed to you. Please let us know how we can best support you.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Related Policies

Illness

It is imperative that the health and safety of all Highline Academy Charter School students be protected at all times. Students who become ill or injured during the school day are sent to the clinic where Highline Academy Charter Schools offers limited nursing services to its students. Parents are notified, by telephone or note, if a student:

- Has an elevated temperature.
- Has visited the office for illness or injury more than once in a day. Is injured and needs medical attention.
- Receives non- routine treatment (routine treatment includes administration of a band-aid, distribution of water, rest, etc.)
- Has a condition which the office and/or nursing staff feels warrants notification.

If a student is injured or ill and requires immediate medical attention, 911 will be called. Please help keep Highline Academy Charter School informed by providing the school office with

updated contact information and an emergency phone number for your family. Your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of your receiving a call from the clinic, as there is no place at school to isolate ill students.

If your child has been absent from school due to illness, s/he must be fever- free and exhibit no symptoms of illness for 24 hours before returning to school. If you have been treating head lice at home please notify the school so that other children in the classroom can be monitored.

Vaccines

Highline Academy follows the Colorado Department of Public Health policy regarding student vaccinations. You may access it [here](#).

Medications

Do not send medications, including over the counter drugs such as Tylenol, herbal remedies, vitamins, or prescription medication with children in backpacks or to your child's teacher. The classroom teacher may not dispense medication. Therefore, a parent must deliver all medications to the clinic personally with the following:

- All medication must be: in its original bottle, properly labeled with a physician's instructions and the student's name, and be accompanied by a completed DPS medication form with authorization and directions from the doctor who prescribed the medication.

- There can be no exceptions made to this request; therefore, prescription medications sent in any other form must be picked up by an adult or Highline Academy Charter Schools will dispose of them. Highline Academy Charter Schools will be happy to provide your doctor with a fax number to receive the information from the doctor.

Safety Related Policies

Visitors

All visitors will be permitted entry into the building after ringing the camera security bell and stating their reason for visiting the campus. Visitors are immediately required to check in with front office staff to confirm their reason for visiting and will be asked to provide their driver's license or another form of approved identification. Highline's security system will verify if the visitor has any criminal activity prior to being granted access to the building. A visitor's badge will be printed and must be worn at all times while on campus. Upon departure visitors must check out with front office staff and retrieve their identification.

Fire Drills

Highline Academy conducts fire drills each month that school is in session. ALL people in the building, including volunteers and parent visitors, must exit at that time in compliance with fire department regulations. Students are to follow the instructions of their teacher, remain silent, and leave the building single file in an orderly manner. This drill will be conducted 11 times a year.

Shelter in Place, Lockdown, and Secured Perimeter Drills

SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS: The "Shelter-in-Place" drill will be conducted once each semester of the school year. The purpose of this drill is to be prepared to move to a safe location within the building in case of severe weather such as tornados or hailstorms.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS: The school will conduct one "Lockdown" drill each semester of the school year. This type of drill will secure the school building and safely shelter all students, staff and visitors inside the building. The purpose of this drill is to keep the students safe from any danger outside or inside the building. During a "Lockdown Drill", all perimeter doors to the school building will be secured, and will remain secured until the danger has passed. No one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until the authorities release the lockdown.

SECURED PERIMETER DRILLS: A "Secured Perimeter" drill will be initiated when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building. Whether it is due to violence or criminal activity in the immediate neighborhood or a dangerous animal in the playground, Secured Perimeter drills use the security of the building to act as protection. Students and staff who are outside of the school building are brought inside and resume normal school activities in the building. To ensure safety, no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building unless approved by authorities.

Security

Highline Academy has a sophisticated video and camera system to capture activity within the building and for the immediate perimeter. All external doors require a keycard issued exclusively to authorized personnel for entry. Highline partners with DPS Safety and Security to maintain student and staff safety. They can be reached at 720-423-3911. Highline staff are provided with detailed information on handling a wide range of incidents as directed by DPS Safety and Security. You may view the DPS Emergency Protocols Guide [here](#) for more information on standard procedures in a time of crisis.

Click [here](#) for general information about Emergency Management as directed by the district.

Accident Reporting

In the event of a student accident or injury at school, families will be notified using our school communication platform (Infinite Campus) as soon as safely possible. It is important to notify us of any change to your contact information as soon as possible so that you receive pertinent updates and alerts if they should occur.

Student Safety Protocol Processes

Student safety is supported through school supports and includes student safety protocol processes for the following areas: Suicide Risk Review Process, Threat Response Process, Individualized Supervision Management Plans, and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury Process. Processes may be initiated for reasons that include, but are not limited to: self reports, anonymous tips, observations of concern, law enforcement information, or community charges. Protocols are facilitated by a trained staff member. Students and guardians are invited to participate. Below is a brief of each protocol process.

Suicide Risk Review Process: The Suicide Risk Review Process is initiated whenever a student talks about harming themselves, or if there is concern that a student has thoughts about hurting themselves. The [protocol](#) includes a Preliminary Suicide Risk Screener and Full Suicide Risk Review.

Threat Response Process: The Threat Response Process is initiated when a student poses a threat, makes a threat, or if there is concern that a student may be about to act out violently. The [protocol](#) includes a Preliminary Information Gathering Form and a Full Threat Appraisal.

Non-Suicidal Self Injury Process: The Non-Suicidal Self Injury Process is initiated whenever a staff member becomes aware that a student has been hurting themselves through self-injury. The [protocol](#) is called the Non-Suicidal Self Injury protocol.

Each student safety protocol is concluded with the development and implementation of an Action and Intervention Plan to help support the safety of the student, of the school and community, and a successful return to learning. Plans also aim to provide necessary services and support that address the individual student's needs. Parents are encouraged to contact their school mental health provider or administrator with questions about these processes.

Individualized Supervision Management Plan (ISMP) Process: An Individualized Supervision and Management Plan (ISMP) is developed and implemented when a student has been charged with or adjudicated for an offense of a sexual nature. The goal of the ISMP is to build a foundation for safety within the school community; to respond to the individual needs of the student and their family; and address through supervision and management the needs of the student. The ISMP outlines specific supervision parameters that will be in place for the student during the school day and specifies any need for supervision during extracurricular activities on school grounds.

Suicide Prevention and Response

Suicide is a leading cause of death for children and youth in Colorado. Referrals for hospitalization continue to rise as Colorado has one of the highest rates for suicide in the country. Denver Public Schools is dedicated to serving the Whole Child by working to ensure physical and psychological safety in schools. All schools work diligently to provide access to suicide prevention programming and community resources. As a parent, it's important to be aware of common [warning signs](#), and to take all concerns seriously. Remember that together, we can prevent suicide!

What should I do if I have concerns about my child?

It's important to take all concerns seriously! Listen to your child, and acknowledge how they feel. Let them know you care and seek help from a trained mental health professional. When risk is imminent, call 911 or transport your child to the nearest emergency room. If you are worried about another child, you can call 911 or make a Safe2Tell report by calling 1-877-542-7233 or completing the form [online](#).

What else can I do as a parent?

- Talk with your child about mental health. Be present, listen, and take all concerns seriously.
- Help your child identify trusted adults that they get help from. Talk to your child about Safe2Tell, and make sure they know how to report concerns at home, school, and in the community.
- Share information on talk and text lines such as [988](#), the [Colorado Crisis Services](#), and the [Trevor Project](#) that children and youth can access for support. Consider practicing a call with your child.
- Engage in restricting the means by which a child may consider using to harm themselves or others. This includes increasing supervision and implementing [gun safety](#). Remove any medications that a child could use and overdose.
- Partner with your school's mental health provider (*school psychologist, school social worker, school counselor, or school nurse*) to implement a plan for school and home. Use the [DPS School Finder](#) to locate your school's web page and contact information.
- Ask your school or primary care physician about free or low cost resources in your community.

- Access referrals provided by emergency services. This could include follow-up with a primary care physician, referral to [school-based health center](#), or a referral for free counseling through [Second Wind Fund](#).

How does DPS support suicide prevention?

DPS implements annual suicide preventive programming with students in 5th, 6th, 9th, and 12th grades. Programs implemented include: [Riding the Waves](#), [Signs of Suicide](#), [More than Sad, It's Real](#), and [Erika's Lighthouse](#). Programming is supplemented with information on [Safe2Tell Colorado](#) to ensure all students have access to an anonymous reporting tool. DPS schools also provide annual training for parents and staff and work to cultivate community partnerships that support accessible and affordable mental health services for DPS families. Parents are encouraged to contact their school mental health provider or administrator with questions about these services.

Translations Available:

[Vietnamese](#)
[Amharic](#)
[Amharic](#)

[Arabic](#)
[French](#)
[Nepali](#)

[Somali](#)
[Spanish](#)
[Mandarin](#)

Child Abuse Reporting

State law requires Highline officials and employees to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the state child abuse reporting hotline system or local law enforcement.

Highline follows:

- [Colorado Revised Statutes](#) 19-3-304 (“Persons required to report child abuse or neglect”) and 19-3-307 (“Reporting procedures”);
- DPS [Policy JLF](#) (“Child Abuse and Reporting”); and
- DPS [Regulation JLF-R](#) (“Reporting Child Abuse and Child Protection”).

For more information, visit:

- the Colorado Department of Education’s “Child Abuse and Prevention” [guide](#);
- the Colorado School Safety Resource Center’s “Resources for Child Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention” [guide](#); and
- DPS’ “Mandatory Reporting” [website](#).

Safe 2 Tell

We encourage students to utilize Safe2Tell to anonymously report threatening behavior or activity. The line is available 24 hours a day and a response team is notified immediately to take action.

- Call: 1-877-542-7233
- Text: S2T2 to 274637
- Online: www.safe2tell.org

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Community Fundraising

As a charter school, Highline Academy is not fully funded and as a result, relies on external sources of funding in order to sustain our world-class program. Each year we have specific projects or needs that we ask our community to support. This includes campus-level efforts as well as initiatives that support both Highline campuses. We recognize that the capacity for families to donate to our program varies. We never pressure our community to make gifts, as this is personal and optional. However, for those who have the capacity and would like to make a meaningful difference in our program operations, we are grateful for your support!

We have big goals for the 2024 - 2025 School Year that will require a new level of support from our community. For our Southeast campus we are fundraising to rebuild the community gardens and refurbish our outdoor spaces including updating playground equipment. For our Northeast campus we are fundraising to support our ECE and after school EnREACHment Programming. Collectively as a school we are also fundraising to support Leadership Development initiatives. Whether you are able to support our school financially or not, we encourage everyone in our community to be a Highline champion. Spread the news about the great work we are doing here and invite others in your circle to support our mission and cause. Below are a few ways you can support our program:

- Make a donation of any amount on our website [here](#)
- Let your everyday shopping generate a reward for Highline! Learn more [here](#)
- Follow and like us on social media - share our story and the difference we are making for kids
 - Northeast Campus Facebook page - [click here](#)
 - Southeast Campus Facebook page - [click here](#)
 - Highline Academy Instagram feed - [click here](#)
 - Highline Academy YouTube channel - [click here](#)

Highline's 2024 - 2025 Fundraising Policy is available to read [here](#).

Field Trips and Field Day

Field Trips

Highline Academy Charter Schools makes use of community and regional resources to enhance its curriculum. Elementary classroom teachers plan an average of three field trips per year that support students' understanding of key academic and cultural concepts. All students are expected to attend field trips as they are expected to participate in all other academic activities. Field trips are not optional attendance activities, and Highline is not responsible for providing individualized instruction to students who are unable, for approved reasons, to attend. Instead, such students will be supervised in another classroom while doing independent work.

Highline will never deny participation to a student based on funding. Families for whom the field trip fee is prohibitive should speak directly with their classroom teacher well before the date of the field trip. Students without a signed permission slip on the date of the activity will not be permitted to attend the field trip. Students must wear the school uniform, (unless directed otherwise by the teacher), and uphold all school- wide behavioral expectations while on Highline Academy sponsored field trips, including while being transported to these activities. The school will apply its discipline policy consistently on field trips, including during bus transportation.

Parents/guardians must sign a permission slip and submit student fees prior to a student's participation in a field trip. Field trip money should be turned in to the classroom teacher, in an envelope, with the student's name on the outside. Please note that all bounced checks will incur a fee of \$10.00.

Field Day

Both of our campuses organize an annual Field Day for students. Field Day is hosted on campus and typically organized by our Athletic Department. Activities at Field Day are intentionally designed to be inclusive and enjoyable for all students. Families are encouraged to volunteer to provide resource and station support. Field Day is a free event for Highline Students. Students are expected to uphold all schoolwide behavior expectations while participating in field day. The school will apply its discipline policy consistently during field day.

Spirit Days and Dress Down Days

Dress Down Days - Southeast Campus Middle School

- Each advisory teacher chooses one student to recognize on Friday afternoon for exemplifying REACH IN, OUT or UP at a grade level meeting. That student can dress down on the following Monday.
- Dress down days will be given after a student earns 10 REACH cards. Dress down days are awarded after each set of 10. Receiving 30 REACH cards = 3 dress down days. 20 REACH cards results in receiving a REACH shirt which can be worn on Fridays with uniform pants.

Dress Down Days - Southeast and Northeast Campus Elementary

In elementary, classes are able to work together towards class rewards which may include dress down days. There are occasions where there are whole-school spirit days (with dress down) and this is communicated in the weekly newsletter a week prior.

Culture Celebrations

Culture Fair

Every year Highline hosts an annual Culture Fair. This is a beautiful event where our community brings their cultural dishes, music, games, dress, and performances. It is our most anticipated event of the year! We encourage everyone to come out and share their culture with us!

GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT PROCESS

Highline Academy Charter Schools values open communication amongst and between members of our school community, including parents/guardians, students, faculty, staff, administration and the Board of Directors. Highline's grievance policies and procedures pertain to grievances of varied natures; they regulate how parents and students are expected to express grievances about faculty, staff or administrators, and they regulate how faculty and staff are expected to express grievances about other members of the professional community, including peers, supervisors or the administration. Grievances may pertain to interpersonal disputes, to the violation of other Highline policies and procedures, or to perceived or real discrimination or disparities.

The objectives of the Highline Academy Charter Schools grievance policy are threefold: to help members of our community resolve conflicts in an open and direct manner; to provide a safe avenue for members of our community to express grievances or report alleged or actual wrongdoing, including behaviors considered discriminatory; to prompt, when necessary, further investigation and outside resolution. Our grievance procedure establishes both a formal and an informal avenue through which community members can express concern or report discrimination without fear of retaliation.

Highline's procedures for settling differences are designed to support prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level. To ensure that all members of our community have the support needed to utilize the grievance process, we offer a neutral 3rd party team, the resolution team, to help resolve disputes and serve as a facilitator. The resolution team will have at least one board member and one school faculty/staff to be named each year and listed publicly in the school's handbook. For the 2022-23 school year at Highline Academy Southeast, Colin Shaw and a member of the Board of Directors will comprise the resolution team. At Highline Academy Northeast, Abby Arriaga and a member of the Board of Directors will comprise the resolution team. While the administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed following the fewest steps of the procedures below, should resolution not be obtained at the lowest faculty or administrative level, each member of the school community is guaranteed both substantive and procedural due process.

Informal Grievances

Highline's informal grievance process is intended to provide parties an opportunity to express and resolve grievances at the lowest level possible. The informal process provides neutral facilitation and mediation, with the goal of informal resolution, restitution, and relationship repair.

In an attempt to encourage prompt resolution of potential grievances, Highline Academy community members are encouraged to address their disputes directly with the individual(s) involved, with or without the presence or intervention from the school's resolution team. Should the resolution team be involved, the team will work with the grievant to facilitate a conversation with those directly involved in the dispute.

Specifically, as the first step of making an informal grievance, a grievant should:

- Approach directly the person with whom there is a conflict in an effort to have a direct conversation to seek resolution; or

- Approach the designated contact for the school’s resolution team to begin the process. The designated contact is noted on the contact sheet in the school’s family handbook.

Once notified, the resolution team has 30 days to complete its settlement process, which might include an informal investigation, a restorative dialogue, and/or the creation of a follow up plan.

If satisfactory resolution is not realized after a direct conversation between the conflicted parties, the situation should be brought to the attention of the supervising administrator by either the grievant or by the resolution team. The supervising administrator, the conflicted parties, and the resolution team (if involved) will address the situation and develop goals for conflict resolution. The administrator will monitor this process until resolution is realized. In the case of grievances with the principal, the grievant or resolution team will inform and involve the chair of the Board. Once notified, the supervising administrators or Board Chair will hold the initial conflict resolution meeting and establish a follow up plan within 15 days.

Informal grievance proceedings will not extend beyond 45 days unless there is a written agreement between all parties to extend the informal process. Should resolution not be reached within 45 days from the informal grievance being registered (step 1), parties are encouraged to use the formal grievance procedure (noted below).

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator Sara Taylor STaylor@highlineacademy.org	Highline Academy SE 2170 S. Dahlia St. Denver, CO 80222	Highline Academy NE 19451 E. Maxwell Pl. Denver, CO 80247
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Formal Grievances

The formal grievance procedure is intended to provide an opportunity for grievances that are either not resolved via the informal process or are significant enough in the mind of the grievant to require a formal investigative and resolution process that is documented in writing.

To initiate the formal grievance process, a grievant should submit a signed and dated grievance to resolution team member Colin Shaw, HASE Assistant Principal, at cshaw@highlineacademy.org or Abby Arriaga, HANE Assistant principal aariaga@highlineacademy.org. The written grievance should detail the allegations of dispute, breach of policy, or discrimination and should cite the contract, policy or procedure that has been violated.

The resolution team will provide acknowledgement of receipt of the written grievance within five work days. In addition, within 5 work days, the resolution team will provide a copy of the written grievance to the individuals named in the grievances as well as to the direct supervisor of that individual, the Executive Director if it is the principal and the Chair of the Board in the case of the Executive Director.

Within 30 work days, the resolution team will conduct its own internal investigation, including conducting interviews with all relevant parties, reviewing pertinent documents, reviewing policy, etc.

Within 45 work days of the submission of the written grievance, the resolution team will issue a written resolution plan that might include plans for facilitated conflict resolution meetings, recommendations for change in policy or procedure, or suggested next steps.

Should a grievance not be satisfied with the manner in which the school’s resolution team handles the grievance, s/he should bring the matter to the attention of the Board by contacting the Board Chair or Vice Chair. It is important to the integrity of our school that grievances be handled in an informed, direct, fair and equitable manner. The administration and board share responsibility in ensuring the integrity of the vision and its implementation through the system of due process described in this grievance policy. The final forum for conflict resolution, after a grievant has followed the steps outlined above, will be at the level of the Board of Directors. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

<p>Title IX Coordinator</p> <p>Sara Taylor</p> <p>STaylor@highlineacademy.org</p>	<p>Highline Academy SE</p> <p>2170 S. Dahlia St.</p> <p>Denver, CO 80222</p>	<p>Highline Academy NE</p> <p>19451 E. Maxwell Pl.</p> <p>Denver, CO 80247</p>
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Complaint or Grievance with DPS

Parents or community members may file a complaint directly with Denver Public Schools at any point if they are not satisfied with the school’s response. Families can contact either the Office of

Family and Community Engagement and/or the Portfolio Management team, which oversees the charter schools within DPS. The contact information for both are below:

The DPS Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) FACE@dpsk12.org Family & Community Helpline - 720-423-3054 The Portfolio Management Team:

<http://portfolio.dpsk12.org/about-us/contact-us-2/> or call 720-423-3200 and ask for the Portfolio Management Team member who supports Highline.

APPENDIX: COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

General

LEA	Local Educational Agency
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
DPS	Denver Public Schools
SEA	State Educational Agency
HANE	Highline Academy Northeast
HASE	Highline Academy Southeast
ELL	English Language Learner
LEP	Limited English
EL	English Learner
ESL	English as a Second Language
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
GT	Gifted and Talented
GATE	Gifted and Talented Education
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
RTI	Response to Intervention
CPS	Child Protective Services
ECE	Early Childhood Education

ELD	English Language Development
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
SAC	School Advisory Council
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
FRL	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Title IX	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
IT	Information Technology
PE	Physical Education
CMAS	Colorado Measures of Academic Success
CoAlt	Colorado Alternative Assessment

Students with Exceptionalities

IEP	Individualized Education Program
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
SWD	Students with Disabilities
Section 504	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder

ADHD	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
AU	Autism
ED	Emotional Disturbance
HI	Hearing Impairment
VI	Vision Impairment
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
BIP	Behavioral Intervention Plan
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
AT	Assistive Technology
DD	Developmental Delay
ESY	Extended School Year
ID	Intellectually Disabled
IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation
MD	Multiple Disabilities
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OT	Occupational Therapist
OHI	Other Health Impairment

PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SLP	Speech and Language Pathologist
SPED	Special Education
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
Title II	Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
OI	Orthopedic Impairment
SED	Serious Emotional Disability

APPENDIX: ENRICHMENT WITHIN AN HOUR OF HIGHLINE CAMPUSES

Museums and Community Resources

- [Butterfly Pavilion](#)
- [Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus](#)
- [Denver Art Museum](#)
- [Denver Museum of Nature and Science](#)
- [History Colorado Center](#)
- [Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum](#)
- [WOW! Children's Museum](#)
- [Denver Public Library](#)
- [Barr Lake State Park](#)
- [Denver Botanic Gardens](#)
- [Denver Firefighters Museum](#)
- [Denver Zoo](#)
- [Dinosaur Ridge](#)
- [Downtown Aquarium](#)
- [Lookout Mountain Nature Center](#)
- [Mines Museum of Earth Science](#)
- [Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch](#)
- [National Center for Atmospheric Research](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge](#)
- [Roxborough State Park](#)
- [University of Colorado Museum of Natural History](#)
- [The Wild Animal Sanctuary](#)

APPENDIX: FORMS AND AGREEMENTS

- [Parent/Guardian Responsibilities](#)
- [Parent Support Team Volunteer Agreement](#)
- [Social Media Code of Conduct](#)

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

As the parent or guardian of a student at Highline Academy, I will, to the best of my ability and to the greatest extent possible as appropriate:

- read this handbook in its entirety and follow the policies and procedures contained and referenced herein;
- review this handbook with my child and help him or her understand its contents;
- ensure that my child exercises for at least 30 minutes everyday;
- ensure that my child has a place at home, free of distractions, for my child to complete homework and read
- check my child's planner and homework every day night;
- ensure that my child gets at least eight hours of sleep each night;
- ensure that all of my child's clothing and property are marked with his or her first and last name;
- ensure that my child has a nutritious breakfast every morning before school begins;
- keep my child out of school if he or she has an illness that may be contagious (such as flu, fever, vomiting, strep throat, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, pink eye, coughing, rash, etc.);
- provide notice to my child's school if he or she is going to be absent;
- ensure that my child attends school and arrives at school on time every school day;
- ensure that my child's school has the most up-to-date contact information for me and an emergency contact;
- read all communications from school staff, and promptly respond as necessary; and
- notify my child's teacher or a school administrator if my child experiences a major life event that may impact his or her attendance, behavior, or academic performance (such as hospitalization, divorce or separation, death of a family member, or other trauma).

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand all of my responsibilities as the parent or guardian of a student at Highline Academy. You may also download and print / email this acknowledgement, request a hard copy from the main office, or access the form [here](#).

Printed name of parent or guardian

Printed Name of Student

Signature of parent or guardian

Date

Please return this form - for each of your children who attend Highline Academy - to your child's teacher by the 2nd week of the school year.



Parent Support Team Volunteer Agreement

SY 2024-2025

1. I will not speak about any child I am working with to other parents or community members
2. I will follow staff member's directions
3. I will be respectful and friendly towards all children.
4. I will communicate directly to the teacher if I observe anything I am concerned about.
5. I will communicate directly with the staff members supervising if I have a question about what I should do.
6. I understand that the purpose of this volunteer service is to help children and that it is not my responsibility to supervise any adult at school.
7. If a child seems to me to need a consequence or disciplinary action I will communicate that to grade level staff or administration.
8. I will send the office and the teacher a message as soon as possible if I am unable to volunteer for a time I am committed to.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Initial of Staff Member