Charleston Development Academy

Public Charter School

-STUDENT HANDBOOK-

P perserverance
R respect
I integrity
D discipline
E excellence

Thank you for choosing Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School for your child's educational experience! The school's leadership team, faculty, and staff are eager to continue building on our past successes at CDA. We are rigorously preparing to tackle achievement gaps we have not mastered to date. We have been busy analyzing our school's test results and data revelations. We have spent a lot of time preparing ourselves through Professional Development Training locally and regionally.

This Student Handbook is designed to guide you through this exciting new year. We encourage you to read the sections of this booklet thoroughly and discuss them with your child(ren) for clarity.

The Student Handbook includes relevant general information about our proven curriculum, instructional design, and specific school procedures, policies, goals and expectations which, if followed consistently, will contribute to the positive development of our community and the success of Charleston Development Academy. As always, we welcome your sincere engagement and ardent support.

At Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School, we recognize that positive home/school relationships and acquisition of excellence for our children require a team effort. We look forward to you joining us in this vital pursuit of partnership and working together to realize our shared vision of obtaining excellence in public education.

The school's highly skilled and experienced educational team is eager to serve you and our child/ren through utilizing "back to basics" best practices. Should you have questions or additional concerns, please feel free to contact me, another member of the school's leadership team, or your child's teacher. Again, welcome to Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School.

Yours in education,

Shawn Johnson, School Director

MISSION

The mission of
Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School is
to provide a safe and nurturing environment
that will encourage excellence and character-building
initiatives in order to ultimately promote
the personal and social development of
motivated, responsible, and caring students.

VISION

CDA is "An Intellect Construction Enterprise;
Developing Minds, Building Character, and Engineering Futures"
Where excellence is a standard expectation and
standards are expected to be excellent.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY The mission of the school integrates school, family, and cultural values throughout the governance, personnel, curriculum, and facility. Therefore, the educational philosophy promotes a dynamic and diverse learning community. The central principle of the philosophy is the belief that families are accountable for the ultimate responsibility of their child's personal and academic growth. Additionally, school and community mentors and partners serve as resources to the children and families.

The CDA educational approach encourages the student to think, to excel, and to problem solve. Students needing interventions or specific programs are gently guided by CDA educators. In guiding the student, the educator presents the curriculum in a way that best responds to the student's individual and diverse learning style. Rigorous curricular and co-curricular initiatives such as arts integration, technology integration, character development strengths overall student literacy competencies and learning outcomes. Therefore, the CDA Learning Community provides the necessary support system to ensure the holistic development of each student.

PBIS CHARACTER RULES

(Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support)

1. *Follow teacher/staff directions at all times*
2. *Walk quietly in the building*
3. *Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself at all times*
4. *Use kind words and caring actions*

BASED ON EXPECTED CHARACTER TRAITS

Honesty	*Accountability*	*Caring*
Honor	*Excellence*	*Civility*
Respect	*Self-Control*	*Perseverance*
	Fairness	

COMMUNICATION CDA recognizes that communication between faculty, teachers, students and parents is what makes a community strong. Your child's teacher will let you know at the beginning of the year how he/she plans to keep you informed with classroom updates in addition to our class newsletter. The CDA office will keep you informed of school-wide news via e-mail or by updating the school website, social media, and call system. Please call the school office if you need to request a newsletter to be sent home by email.

CHARACTER EDUCATION Character education will be taught daily and is focused on social-emotional development. The curriculum is designed to reduce aggression and promote social competence. Students will develop skills that are central for healthy social and emotional development such as empathy, impulse control, problem solving, and anger management. The program will also focus on ideals such as, but not limited to, the following: personal integrity and honesty, respect, trustworthiness, patriotism, citizenship, compassion, and pride.

UNIFORM POLICY Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School observes an adopted uniform policy. Appropriate dress is a daily requirement at CDA. The observance of the dress code is another CDA signature core value to showcase neat appearance of students, faculty, staff and parents.

Students are required to wear uniforms daily because it immediately displays a sense of pride and unity. Our school colors are purple and gray. Therefore, students will wear the CDA logo designed purple shirts with khaki skirts, jumpers, or pants.

During cold seasons and inclement weather, students should wear their gray school sweatshirts over the purple polo shirts. The gray sweatshirt and letterman jacket are an official part of the uniform outfit. Uniform polo shirts, sweatshirts and letterman jackets can be purchased at the school for a small fee through the School Improvement Committee. **Students will not be permitted to wear any other sweatshirts.**

Footwear must be worn at all times. Crocs, Heelies, flip flops, and slippers are not permitted.

STUDENT PLEDGE - JESSE JACKSON PLEDGE

I will take the opportunity to learn all that I can about life.
I will help my school and community by exercising discipline and by becoming a positive thinker.
I will sacrifice some of wants of today, so that I may satisfy most of my needs of tomorrow.
I will learn the secrets of success and practice them daily.
I must be motivated to accept responsibility because nobody will save us for us, but us.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

As a parent I will maintain a home learning environment by:

- Ensuring that my child arrives at school on time daily.
- Ensuring that my child is prepared to learn.
- Encouraging my child to follow school rules.
- Ensuring that my child is in full uniform daily.
- Reviewing all homework, report cards and assessment results with my child.
- Providing reading time with my child.
- Attending parent-teacher conferences, workshops and other school events.

REGISTRATION/ENROLLMENT Charleston Development Academy is open for students from all ethnic backgrounds, keeping in practice the provisions of Title IX (see non-discrimination statement under public notices on our website.) All currently enrolled students do need to reapply for the coming school year. Any student who does not return their application prior to the date of the lottery cannot be guaranteed an open spot. For this situation, a new student application will be accepted and that particular student will be subject to the same process as a new student.

CDA accepts applications for grades PreK-8 from students during open enrollment in the current school year, and for the coming school year. Open enrollment will be from the month of November

through February. Please check the school calendar for the specific dates. Class sizes are limited.

To apply for Pre-Kindergarten, students must be at least four (4) years old by September 1st of the upcoming school year. In the event that there are more applications received than spots available, a lottery for the coming school year will be held following open enrollment and will be listed on the school calendar yearly.

To apply for Kindergarten, students must be at least five (5) years old by September 1st of the upcoming school year. In the event that there are more applications received than spots available, a lottery for the coming school year will be held following open enrollment and will be listed on the school calendar yearly.

As a District approved charter school in the Charleston County School District, CDA may accept students from any community within the district. Parents will be expected to provide transportation to school. School hours for Elementary are 7:30 AM to 2:45 PM and Middle 7:30 AM to 3:15 PM. Students may be dropped off beginning at 7:30 AM.

TRANSFERS As soon as a parent knows the date of an anticipated transfer, please notify the teacher and the office in writing. We need this information a minimum of two days prior to leaving. You will need to come into the office to transfer your child.

RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION/STUDENT RECORDS

CDA will handle each student's educational record with confidentiality. CDA expects its employees to use good judgment in releasing directory information so that it serves the best interests of the student.

Parents have the right to review their child's education records maintained by the school. Parents also have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading.

Schools must have written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act allow schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

School officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. It is CDA policy to release records to schools for transfer or consultation purposes only when a parent or legal guardian has signed a form for release of information.

ATTENDANCE

In accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance Law and S.C. Code of Regulations, uniform rules have been adopted at CDA to ensure that students attend school regularly. Students are expected to attend school each day and are counted present only when they are actually in school, on homebound instruction, or are present at an activity authorized by the school administration.

The school year consists of 180 days. To receive credit, students must attend at least 170 days of each 180-day year course, as well as meet the minimum requirements for each course. Accrued student absences may not exceed 10 days during the school year. The first 10 absences may be lawful, unlawful, or a combination. Any absence in excess of 10 may cause the student to lose credit for the year.

A. Lawful Absences

Absences caused by a student's own illness* and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others. (*Verified by a statement from a physician within two days of the student's return to school. Absences for CHRONIC or EXTENDED illness will be approved only when verified by a physician's statement.).

Absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family verified by a statement from the parent within two days of the student's return to school. Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith when approved in advance. Such requests must be made to administration in writing.

Absences for students whose parents/guardians are experiencing a military deployment. A principal may grant up to five days of excused absences with work to be made up at the teacher's discretion.

Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal. This would include absences for extreme hardships. Such approval should be prearranged when possible.

B. Unlawful Absences

Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents. Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.

Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

C. Truancy

Although the state requires students to only attend 170 of the 180 day school year, parents and students should be aware that SC Code of Regulations - Chapter 43-274 stipulates that a child ages 6 to 17 years is considered truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.

D. Tardiness

Punctuality is one of the most important skills that a person can learn. It is a skill that directly correlates to an individual's success in the business world. Parents should have students at school on time each day. Furthermore, Middle School students are expected to be in their individual classes on time. Late arrival (tardiness) results in interruptions to the learning process – not only for the tardy student but for the other students in the class as well. Additionally, the tardy student misses important instruction. After **three (3) tardies**, the School Director will send a notification letter to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Students are expected to attend school regularly. Any student who fails to bring a valid excuse to school within three days automatically receives an unexcused absence. Students must be in school more than half the day to be counted present. Parents will receive written notification when their child reaches the following absence thresholds; 5 days and 10 days. In addition, a school intervention in the form of a parent-teacher conference is mandatory when any child has ten days of documented unexcused absences. Excessive absences may result in additional school attendance at the parents expense (i.e. tutoring for missed instruction) and or referral to Truancy Court.

TARDY POLICY School begins at 7:30 a.m. Students are to be in the building before 7:30. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be accompanied to the office by a parent or guardian who must sign them in. Records of these occurrences will be kept and tallied periodically and annually. Frequent tardies constituting absences from the same class may jeopardize promotion to the next grade.

STUDENT ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL PROCEDURES – REGULAR

ARRIVAL	7:30 AM
BREAKFAST	7:30 AM
SCHOOL BEGINS	8:00 AM
DISMISSALS:	
Elementary Campus	2:45 PM
Middle Campus	3:15 PM

Arrival and Dismissal Students may arrive beginning at 7:30 a.m. each morning. Please do not drop off your child before 7:30 a.m. The school doors will remain locked, and staff will not be available to supervise students prior to that time.

The morning bell will ring at 8:00 a.m., and instruction will begin promptly. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be marked tardy. Any student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in at the front office by a parent or guardian.

Car Pool Procedures Drop-off will begin at 7:30 and end at 8:00 each morning at the school's main entrance. Car rider pick-up will begin at 2:45 each afternoon at the main campus and 3:15 at the south campus. Please pick up your children timely. In order to provide optimal safety for your child and our staff, please comply with the staff directions.

If you wish to walk up to the school with your child in the morning, please don't block the driveway. All cars must be legally parked on the street. Cars illegally parked will be ticketed by City of Charleston Police Department.

Upon entering the building, you must sign-in at the front office. This includes parents who walk their children to class in the morning. If you consistently walk your child to the classroom in the morning, please consider allowing your child to walk alone. This procedure will help foster your child's independence and helps us maintain order and safety. We have adults on duty to help our

students get safely to and from their classes. You are responsible for safely walking your child all the way up to the main entrance. Under no circumstances should a child walk any portion of this route unescorted by an adult.

Your help is needed and will be and appreciated to help us navigate a smooth and safe arrival and dismissal. Children safety is our main objective and concern.

EARLY DISMISSAL Early dismissals cause a disruption in the classroom. Please try to schedule appointments after school. Early dismissals will not be granted after 2:30 p.m. (Elementary) and 2:45 p.m. (Middle) Please send a note with your child in the morning or phone the school as early as possible to make arrangements.

If a parent must pick up a child early for a doctor's appointment, etc., we require that parents send a note stating the reason and time the child will need to leave school and a telephone number for us to verify the note. The parent must come to the office to sign the child out. A child will not be called to the front office until the parent arrives. For the safety of our students, we are unable to take phone requests for student dismissal changes.

A student must have all directions for any changes in his/her afternoon schedule before he/she leaves home. While we make every effort to communicate correctly to students any parent messages, we have found it increasingly difficult to handle the large number of messages on a daily basis. Of course, emergencies happen and, naturally, we understand those circumstances. However, we will not be able to repeatedly contact the same students for change of plans.

If someone other than the parent/guardian must pick up a student, the parent must call the school and send a written statement giving permission for that person to pick up the child. A picture identification will be required. Please include a phone number where you can be reached for verification. We will only release students to adults whose names are on the emergency cards. Parents and teachers need to keep these updated.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES – EMERGENCY

It is essential that we have on our CDA Emergency Card a dismissal plan for each student in the event a weather emergency results in the early dismissal of students. Local media will announce school closings. Sometimes, limited time, lack of available personnel, and phone lines make it difficult to communicate to parents by phone.

*****Please confirm that you have reviewed this policy and agree to abide by it by checking 'yes' on your child's emergency card next to 'Dismissal Procedures – Regular and Emergency' as well as 'Security/Arrival /Dismissal Times'. *****

For the safety and security of all students, please remain in the car rider line during afternoon dismissal. Once you arrive, school staff will notify your child's classroom, and your child will be escorted to your vehicle.

To help ensure an orderly and efficient dismissal process, please remain in your vehicle and follow the directions of school personnel at all times. Thank you for your cooperation and patience.

In order to limit distraction during instructional periods, and to observe safety of the students, parents are discouraged from walking to classes without prior permission from the office. If a parent needs to conference with a teacher, please make arrangements in advance via telephone, email etc. to set convenient appointments.

LEAVING SCHOOL WITH OTHERS If a child is to leave school in a manner other than his/her usual manner, please send written notice to the teacher (and the main office) the same morning. This is important for the safety of your child. Students will not be released to anyone who is not authorized to pick them up by the parent or legal guardian.

EMERGENCY DRILLS South Carolina State Law requires that we conduct fire drills and they are to be conducted without warning. The drills are very important to help teach students how to react in cases of emergency. Instructions are also given in preparation for tornadoes, earthquakes, bomb threats, or severe weather warnings.

LOCKED DOORS For safety and security reasons, all exterior doors are locked. All visitors must report to the front office, and sign in with the receptionist using a valid ID to be admitted.

VISITORS All parents or visitors MUST come through the main office, and request a visitor pass. No parent or visitor is allowed access to the building without first coming to the main office. All visitors, to include parents must provide their driver's license or state Id to be scanned through the school's computer security program. Once approved, the visitors tag provided must be worn at all times. Visitors are reminded they must check out in the office when leaving the building. Faculty and staff are instructed to stop anyone in the building without a visitor's sticker. This is for the safety of our children. Visitors other than parents or legal guardians must be designated on student registration forms in order to gain access to the students.

TRANSPORTATION RESPONSIBILITY NOTICE Parents are responsible for having their children to school each day and on time. CDA does not provide transportation for students. If you plan to allow your child to walk to and from school, an authorization request form must be completed. This will be available at registration or by contacting the school office. Walkers should live within 1 mile of the school in order to be allowed to walk home in the afternoons.

TELEPHONE Please give your child all necessary instructions at home. We will only receive emergency calls. We cannot and will not interrupt a class during instructional time.

PARENT CONFERENCES Parent-Teacher Conferences are an essential part of the educational partnership between home and school. These conferences provide an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss each student's academic progress, strengths, areas for growth, and overall performance.

To accommodate conferences, students will be dismissed early on designated conference days. A school-wide, face-to-face **Student Data Conference** will also be held during the fall semester to review individual student achievement data and discuss academic goals.

When necessary, targeted interventions and support strategies will be implemented to help students achieve academic success. At Charleston Development Academy, we believe that **"Failure Is Not an Option."** Through collaboration, accountability, and data-driven instruction, we are committed to closing the achievement gap and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

CLASS VISITATION Charleston Development Academy parents are encouraged to visit the school. However, please notify the office and the teacher if a classroom observation is desired. Stop by the school office upon arrival. You will receive an identification sticker to wear while you are in the school building/campus. For the safety of our children, teachers are required to enforce our visitation policy. **Please do not visit your child's class without first establishing an appropriate visit time with your child's teacher.**

GRADING SCALE

A: 90-100
B: 80-90
C: 70-80
D: 60-70
Failing: Below 60

Report cards are issued four times a year with interim reports being sent home midterm of the grading period. What you work for is what you earn.

At Charleston Development Academy, we believe that **"What you work for is what you earn."** Student grades reflect individual effort, participation, responsibility, and mastery of academic standards. We encourage all students to consistently put forth their best effort, complete assignments on time, and actively participate in the learning process. Working together, parents, teachers, and students can ensure continued academic growth and success.

REPORT CARDS:

First Nine Weeks
Second Nine Weeks
Third Nine Weeks
Fourth Nine Weeks

CONTACT PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS WITH CONCERNS

FIRST contact the child's teacher with a written documentation of your concern.
Please communicate with your child's teacher first.
*Please set appointments to meet with teachers and administration with the office.

TESTING CDA conducts standardized testing as prescribed by the state for grades 3 – 8 (i.e. SC Ready) and MAP testing (Middle) iReady (Elementary). All 2nd graders will also take the ITBS and CoGat tests.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Charleston Development Academy creates instructional experiences designed to provide maximum opportunity for students to succeed as they progress through each grade. At the end of each school year, a student is promoted to the next grade if that student's educational growth is satisfactory for his or her level of ability.

The primary considerations are the student's mastery of: state and district academic standards; academic aptitude; physical, social and emotional development; and SC Ready and/or norm- referenced test results.

If a student fails to make adequate progress, CDA Academic Staff to include administration and classroom or special services teachers may determine that the student will benefit by repeating the same grade level for another year.

When dealing with promotion or retention, CDA and CCSD adhere to the S.C. Accountability Act of 1998 and Board Policy and Administrative Rule IKE and IKE-R. Retention decisions are made by the last day of school, and all retention decisions are final. Students who are found to need retention at CDA will not be reassessed before the coming school year and will only be held a space in the grade they are retained in.

A. Retention in Kindergarten

Kindergarten retention is rare, however, a small number of students could benefit from more time and nurturing at this level. No student should be retained more than once in kindergarten.

B. Retention in Grades 1–2

A student in Grades 1 or 2 may be retained if the student has not made adequate progress in reading and mathematics as determined

by classroom performance and assessment of State Academic Achievement Standards. No student should be retained more than once in Grades 1 or 2.

C. Retention in Grades 3–6

CDA makes promotion and retention decisions for students in Grades 3-6 in accordance with the South Carolina Accountability Act of 1998. Teachers keep in contact with parents of students who are not meeting standards at each quarter in the school year.

CDA Academic Staff reviews the student's progress at the end of the school year. If a student is not meeting academic achievement standards or is not meeting the terms of his/her academic plan, CDA may retain the student at his/her present grade. No student should be retained more than once in Grades 3 through 6.

D. Retention in Grades 6–8

Students in the seventh and eighth grades may be retained if the school's Academic Staff believes it is in the student's best interest to be retained or if the student scores below standard on district-mandated tests; fails two or more core academic subjects within one school year; or fails the same basic skills subject for two consecutive years.

INTERVENTION AND ADVANCEMENT Each student's daily schedule will include intervention or advancement time. CDA will provide high quality instruction and intervention matched to each students need. Teachers will monitor progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction or goals, and apply child response data to important educational decisions, such as need for remediation or advancement. Lack of progress will lead to change in intervention.

BULLYING/INTIMIDATION POLICY CDA is a bully-free school. All CDA staff members are trained in anti-bullying safeguards. CDA defines the term bullying as any gesture, an electronic communication, or written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that takes place on school property, or at any school sponsored function that:

1. Will have the effect of harming a student, physically or emotionally, or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property; or
2. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or

group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

HEALTH SERVICES Services will be available should your child get sick or injured. Please encourage your child not to make unnecessary trips to the health room. It is important that you complete the emergency forms you are given at registration and notify us if there are any changes. Children with specific health needs (e.g. taking medication daily) must have a note filed in the nurse's office. Student health plans will be kept in the nurse's office. The school nurse will coordinate with teachers to ensure student health needs are consistently taken into consideration.

EMERGENCY CARDS

Each student will receive two emergency cards (one for the front office and one for the nurse) to be completed by the parents and returned to school. Parents must fill out this information COMPLETELY and notify the school anytime there is a change in information. It is very important that we can reach you in case of an emergency. We must have the names and telephone numbers of two other people we can contact in case of an emergency. Please let these people know that they are listed as emergency contacts on your child's emergency card.

We STRONGLY urge you to provide accurate and complete information on these emergency cards. It is extremely unfortunate if an emergency occurs, and we cannot contact the parent or another responsible adult. If anything changes on the card, parents should immediately contact the school. If necessary in an emergency, EMS will be called when no one can be reached on the emergency card. It is very important that an emergency card be kept on file for each student in this school.

DISPENSING OF MEDICATION Prescribed medication may be distributed by authorized school staff only if there is a signed statement from the doctor and a signed statement from the parent/guardian. Once medication is received at school, it cannot be sent home with a student. A parent/ guardian must pick it up. Medication must be in the original labeled container, accompanied by written instructions from the doctor. Any medication that will be given on a long-term basis, for chronic illness, or those medications which must be administered in case of exposure to allergens will need to have a medical needs form filled out. These forms will be given to you on registration day or you can acquire them from the office. Students should never be given medication of any kind to self-administer.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES Every effort is made to prevent accidents. However, in case of an accident, the procedure is as follows: First Aid is given only by authorized school personnel. If it is considered serious or if the child is uncomfortable, a parent is called. In all cases, every effort is made to contact the parents. However, if we are unsuccessful in reaching you, the school will follow your directions on the enrollment form to secure an individual to pick up your child.

IMMUNIZATIONS All students must have a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization from their doctor or the health department before entering the school. When a student enters from another school, the permanent record will be checked to make sure all immunizations have been completed. If not, the student will be required to get the necessary shot(s) within 30 days of enrollment. Students who fail to meet immunization requirements are subject to being dis-enrolled.

CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS REMAINING HOME OR BEING SENT HOME WHEN SICK

Students should remain home or will be sent home from school if they have any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever, temperature of 100 degrees or higher, with or without symptoms.
2. A cold in the contagious stage. (Severe nasal discharge that is not clear in color.)
3. Any communicable disease (chicken pox, measles, pink eye).
4. Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions.
5. Vomiting/diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
6. Untreated head lice or scabies.
7. Students with diagnosis of strep-throat must be on antibiotics for 24 hours and be fever-free before returning to school.

Parents are required to pick up their child no later than one hour after notification their child has a temperature or is vomiting. This policy is necessary to protect other children in the school from being exposed to serious illness.

BREAKFAST & LUNCHES CDA is a Title I school and students have breakfast and lunch provided through Charleston County School District. Breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. Lunch on the Main Campus is served by grade in the classroom. Lunch at the Middle School is served in the Café by grade level.

Students may bring their lunch to school. We will not receive outside food during the day.

MOBILE DEVICES

Videos/TV/iPads/iPods/Chromebooks Videos, TV, iPads, iPods will only be utilized for instructional purposes and must directly relate to a unit or theme being taught. Since we emphasize to parents the importance of limiting TV/video viewing, we must model that philosophy at school. Children spend an excessive amount of time passively viewing videos and TV. Only instructional "G" rated videos appropriate to the age level and previewed by teachers will be shown. *(Please refer to CDA Acceptable Use Policy)*

Cellphones To maintain a focused, safe, and distraction-free learning environment, student cell phones and other personal electronic devices—including smart watches, headphones, earbuds, tablets, and gaming devices—may only be used **before school begins and after dismissal**.

Upon arrival each morning, all electronic devices must be **powered off** and turned in to the front office. Devices will be securely stored in locked containers and returned to students at the end of the school day during dismissal.

Students are **not permitted** to possess or use personal electronic devices during the instructional day unless specifically authorized by school administration for an educational purpose or emergency.

In the event of an emergency, students may use the school office telephone after following the appropriate procedures. Likewise, parents or guardians who need to communicate with their child during the school day should contact the front office. Any emergency messages or changes to dismissal arrangements will be relayed to the student by school personnel.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.

(Please refer to CDA Acceptable Use Policy)

RECESS Recess is scheduled for 30 minutes per day. Students must remain within the main playground area within the teacher's immediate sight/radar. Teachers must notify the office of unauthorized adults who are on the school grounds. Teachers, students, and parents are requested to immediately report any safety hazards concerning the playground equipment, broken glass, or other dangerous objects. Teachers will instruct children concerning safety rules of the playground. Scheduled physical fitness will occur each day as a new rotation within the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/SPORTS CDA believes that healthy kids make better students. Students will participate in physical education activities for the amount of time, at a minimum, specified by the State of South Carolina. All students are expected to participate in physical education unless they are excused in writing by a physician. All students participating in the CDA Sports Program must provide documentation that they have passed a physical examination by a medical doctor prior to trying out for any athletic team. CDA is pleased to provide several opportunities for school sponsored after school activities, however, students with schedule conflicts between CDA activities, or out-of-school activities must choose one activity to participate in. Scheduling conflicts may be cause for removal from an CDA team or activity.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES All visitors, in the building must wear identification badges. Teachers will not permit parents or other visitors to enter their classroom without required identification. All visitors must check in with the office. Staff members are expected to ask any adult without identification to please check in with the office. This is for the safety of all our children when in our care.

CHECKS/MONEY Please send **separate checks or payments for each child** and make checks payable to **Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School**, unless otherwise instructed.

Each student should bring his or her own lunch money, field trip fees, and other payments. Students may not deliver money or payments to siblings in other classrooms.

Please label all payments with the student's name, teacher, grade, and the purpose of the payment.

TEXTBOOK RESPONSIBILITY The state provides textbooks for students in elementary school. While we want our students to enjoy reading both textbooks and library books, we hold them accountable for their care and return. All lost books are the responsibility of the student and parent and lost books must be paid for. If a textbook is lost or damaged by a student, he/she must pay the assessed amount.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM All volunteers are required to fill out a volunteer application form. Volunteer applications will be processed the same as employee applications. These forms are available online or from the school office. There are many ways to volunteer. Please ask your teacher, Principal or volunteer coordinator how you can help or call the school office for more information.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS CDA currently partners with **WINGS** and **Kids on Point** to provide afterschool programming for eligible students. For enrollment information, program availability, and schedules, please contact the school office or the respective program provider.

BIRTHDAYS Class birthday party celebrations can be arranged at the end of the day with teacher's permission and collaborative efforts (parents and teachers). Please make sure each child in the class has an opportunity to participate at school. Baked cookies and cupcakes, etc. are welcomed. However, disruption to our academic learning environment must be minimized. All school birthday celebrations should be scheduled the Friday of the child's birthday.

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed unless each child in the class is invited. Private party invitations should be mailed to individual homes. Thank you for your understanding hearts and nurturing care.

FOOD POLICY

Charleston Development Academy is committed to providing a safe school setting for all of our students. We also believe that teaching children to eat in a healthy manner is an important life skill that has become less enforced in recent years. The high number of life-threatening food allergies, coupled with the extreme concerns with childhood obesity has resulted in the following food policy for Charleston Development Academy:

- We have greatly reduced the amount of food sent to school, also known as 'outside food'. Outside food will only consist of daily lunch, daily snack, and food for scheduled classroom parties (ex. Valentine's Day, end-of-year party, etc.).
- Items to be eaten in the classroom during daily snack shall be healthy. A list of recommended items (as well as discouraged items) will be provided to parents.
- The availability of candy will be greatly reduced and only used for rare, educational purposes.

***Please confirm that you have reviewed this policy and agree to abide by it by checking 'yes' on your child's emergency card next to 'Food Policy'. ***

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

In the Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School community, we believe every student has the right to learn in a safe, clean, and pleasant environment. We will help students understand reasons for and learn the skills of self-control while developing positive attitudes and behaviors toward self and others. In order to reach our academic and social goals, parents, teachers, and staff will assume an active role in implementing our discipline system.

Educators are responsible for teaching and students are responsible for learning. We are committed to a rigorous academic program for all students. Therefore, we need your complete cooperation to help encourage positive quality academic performances. We want to help students make positive choices. We will call their attention to inappropriate behavior. We will discuss quickly the inappropriate behavior, re-direct and immediately return to teaching.
Parents are responsible for setting limits, tutoring their children in ethical standards, expecting children to be responsible for their actions, communicating high expectations to their children and expecting them to be careful listeners and to actively engage in learning in order to achieve.

Please share and discuss the following CDA Rules with your child/children:

1. FOLLOW TEACHER, AND STAFF DIRECTIONS AT ALL TIMES
2. USE KIND WORDS AND CARING ACTIONS
3. KEEP HANDS, FEET AND OBJECTS TO YOURSELF AT ALL TIMES
4. WALK QUIETLY AT ALL TIMES

Parent/Teacher approach to discipline will include the following

steps:

- Help the child see that he/she has made a poor choice when necessary.
- Encourage that the child accepts responsibility and consequences for his/her own actions.
- Help the child solve the problem that he/she has created.
- Help the child maintain a sense of self-worth.
- Provide reciprocal respectful actions at all times.

Discipline Referrals to the Principal/Assistant are FINAL **STEPS IN THIS PLAN** (not first step).

INCIDENT REPORTS Incident Reports that go home must be signed by a parent and returned to school the following day.

REFERRAL TO THE PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
We regard disruptive behavior that results in referral to the Principal/Assistant Principal as VERY SERIOUS. Referral to the Principal/Assistant Principal only occurs after the teacher has tried the classroom management interventions. In all cases, the Principal/Assistant Principal will conference with student and contact parents.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT We know that Charleston Development Academy students are an exceptional group of young people and we emphasize cooperation, respect, and responsibility. Therefore, we recognize appropriate and exemplary behavior. We also agree that while students deserve and earn rewards, they should not be rewarded materially for expected behavior. We will, of course, continue to encourage positive behavior through various acts of kindnesses and verbal encouragements. However, we will discourage candy or gum rewards. In addition to each teacher's plan for positive reinforcement, our school-wide discipline plan includes:

- Invitations to Read to the Principal / Assistant Principal
- Positive Calls Home
- Positive Notes
- Specific Verbal Praise
- Student of the Day or Month

HOMEWORK PHILOSOPHY We believe that spending time with family each day is critical to the welfare and happiness of children. Rather than spend the evenings completing worksheets, workbook

pages, and projects, we believe it is important for families to interact with each other through such activities as reading, writing, and talking about their day. Playing games together is also an excellent activity to promote cooperation and good sportsmanship, as well as making learning fun.

We believe parents who encourage an active lifestyle by discouraging idleness, and by helping guide their children's time into wholesome activities, provide their children with tools and experiences for healthy bodies and minds. We believe that playing video games and viewing television for excessive periods of time negatively affects school performance and health. Please encourage your child to play outdoors, join sports teams, etc. in an effort to stay healthy and active.

Homework involves practice, review and extended projects. New information should not be given to students without perusal or explanation shared by teacher/instructor. Teachers should provide email contact for students and their parents, should they need further explanation while working at home.

Homework Suggestions:

- Nightly reading and math practice/problem solving.
- Assign specific topics or subjects for reading, researching on writing prompts.

- Major project completions can be shared at home.
- The student is responsible for the homework signed by a parent/guardian each night. If homework continuously appears unsigned, the teacher will call the parent to explain some concern.

SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

LIMIT TELEVISION VIEWING AND VIDEO GAMES. We ask that each family turn off the television for one hour each night. You also may want to consider having a "No TV Night" one night a week. We believe that by following this practice, not only will your children become more capable readers, but that your family will become a closer unit.

DAILY READING Have your child read aloud to you daily. You may also use part of the time to read aloud to your child. Silent reading together is, of course, encouraged. Be a model for your child by letting him/her see you enjoy reading. Recreational reading is encouraged nightly.

DAILY MATH PRACTICE Games and board games are a fun way to practice math. Ask your children to identify shapes. Have them help estimate how much the groceries will cost. You can work on measurements together by checking off your child's growth at the first of each month. Fractions can be learned by having your child cut the pie or cake for dessert and asking him/her what fraction of the pie or cake each piece constitutes. It is important for parents to communicate a positive attitude toward math and to give examples of how math is used in everyday life. Problem solving is an essential skill.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS / CDA ACTIVITIES

TECHNOLOGY All of our students have the opportunity to become computer literate in our fully equipped Computer Lab or by utilizing their individual personal iPads and Chromebooks. Skills such as keyboarding, word-processing, graphics integration and multi-media usage will be the program's focus, and are taught each week by our technology team. Through computer-assisted instruction, students are taught problem solving skills and encouraged to explore their creative sides. Each classroom is equipped with minimum computers as well.

RESOURCE The Resource Program provides personalize individualized to students who qualify for special education services (IEP). Referrals are made by the student's classroom teacher, as well as any teacher who serves the student or by the parent. Students are served by the Resource teacher each day for academic assistance and/or behavioral modification. Students may not be placed in special programs such as Resource without parental permission.

SPEECH The program is designed to help students overcome language and speech barriers. Referrals are made by the classroom teacher, parent, or any teacher who serves the student. We also provide speech services to four year olds who qualify. Students may not be placed in special programs such as Resource without parental permission and complete assessment of student needs and academic assessment.

ENGAGING CREATIVE MINDS THROUGH LITERACY The art program at CDA provides each student with the opportunity to express themselves through a wide range of artistic media including painting, drawing, photography, writing, utilizing imagery and ceramics. Students at each grade level are instructed in both art

history and art making which follow both the National Art Curriculum and the South Carolina Art Curriculum. This year we will work closely with "Engaging Creative Minds Through Literacy" and will enjoy various performances by artists in residency.

MUSIC: CDA Singing Eagles Choir is the Signature Project for CDA! The music program is designed to give each student an opportunity to study music in many ways. Students are introduced to music history and theory. Students are able to experience music through singing, moving, and playing instruments. Many different cultures are studied in music class which enables students to develop several types of listening vocabularies.

CREATIVE MOVEMENT and PHYSICAL EDUCATION Our physical education is in collaboration with the Arthur Christopher Community Center, which implements a Physical Education program that stresses physical fitness, self-concept, and good use of leisure time. Recognizing that children (especially young children) need additional time for activity each day, we have been proactive in providing students with the new state-mandated requirements of physical education each week.

LIVE ANIMAL / PET POLICY

1. **PURPOSE**
   The purpose of this policy is to insure a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff by controlling the impact that animals have on the environment.
2. **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**
   Charleston Development Academy recognizes that certain individuals are susceptible to various allergens, diseases or may have other medical complications while in the vicinity of animals. As a result, CDA has developed this policy to insure the well being of all individuals.
3. **Procedures** for allowing animals or pets in school facilities or busses
   - For purposes of instruction, the teaching staff is encouraged to use alternative methods
   - and avoid the use of live animals when possible.
   - Written permission from the building administrator must be obtained when requesting to bring animals into the building.
   - Cages must be cleaned daily (including vacations and holidays) dispose of waste properly
   - (double bagged and immediately removed to outside dumpster).

- Students and staff are not allowed to bring animals in school
- Animals used for the purpose of assisting individuals must be registered in the building
- office upon arrival.

The Board supports the idea of extending the school program by providing learning experiences and other activities away from school which are of value in helping achieve educational objectives. These extensions of classroom instruction and the school program are referred to as field trips. For purposes of this policy, a field trip is defined as any school sponsored activity which takes one or more students away from the school setting.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Internet – Terms and Conditions of Use

Define a Purpose for Internet Use: All use of the Internet during school hours must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Users must have a well-defined, documented reason for accessing the Internet. "No surfing" is allowed. "Surfing" is the term for unstructured searches, or just exploring to see what is out there. Students must have a topic, or subject, to be researched; and it must be directly related to a given assignment from a teacher. There should be adult supervision while any student is researching on the Internet.

Maintain Network Etiquette (sometimes called "Netiquette"):

- Be polite. Do not send abusive or threatening messages to others.
- Do not swear or use vulgarities or other inappropriate language.
- Do not send credit card numbers, bank account numbers, social security numbers, personal addresses or personal phone numbers across the Internet.
- The Internet is not a secure or private means of communication; you never really know who else may be "listening in." People who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Do not disrupt network communications. Disruptions would include downloading large files, sending mass e-mail messages, transmitting virus routines, or annoying other users.
- All information accessible via the network should be

assumed to be private property of the person presenting the material.

1. **Acceptable Use:** The purpose of NSFNET (National Science Foundation NETwork), which is the backbone network to the Internet, is to support research and education in and among academic institutions of the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work.

2. **Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of the privilege.(Before students log on to the Internet, they will be part of a discussion with a CDA teacher pertaining to the proper use of the network.) Any misuse of the Internet will result in disciplinary action by an administrator in the school.

3. **Security:** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If a user feels he can identify a security problem on the Internet, he must notify a system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the network as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

4. **Denying Access:** If a parent or guardian is uncomfortable with the option of his or her child(ren) accessing the Internet, the student(s) may be assigned to a different activity when classmates are using the Internet. That decision may be indicated in the parent signature part of the Student Technology Use Agreement: the student(s) will then be assigned an alternate activity.

5. **Disclaimer:** Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School will not be responsible for any damages suffered while using the Internet. This includes loss of data resulting from delays,

non-deliveries, incorrect deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

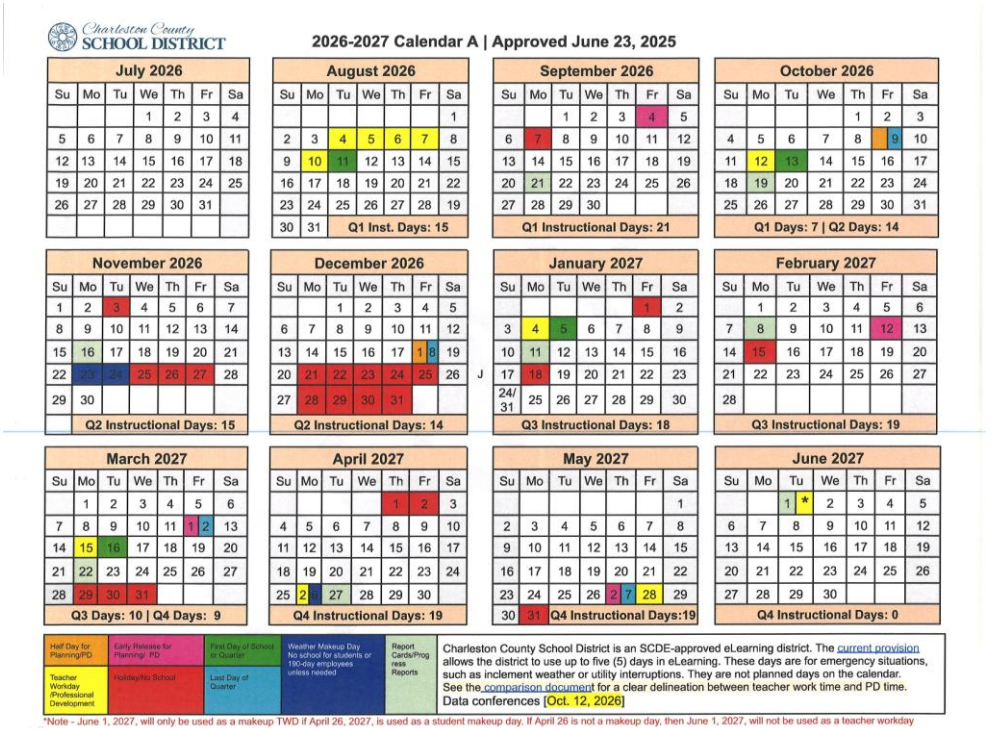
6. **Filtering and Blocking:** Filtering and Blocking nternet sites is in response to the need to meet federal requirements such as the CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act). CIPA is a federal law that requires schools to protect students from inappropriate content on the internet. The technology of Internet filtering software is not guaranteed. Anything that is brought to our attention will be addressed immediately.

I have read and understand the rules and requirements for accessing information on the Internet. I agree to abide by the rules and I further understand that any violation of the rules is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked for the remainder of the year. School disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

CHARLESTON DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

2026-2027

CALENDAR



Where Excellence is a Standard Expectation

Charleston Development Academy Public Charter School

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