Scholarship. Character. Craftsmanship. Purpose.

Student and Family Handbook
2026 – 2027

Chester Charter Scholars Academy
An Arts-Integrated K-12 Public, Non-Profit Charter School
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Updated September 23, 2026

Dear Families and Students,

This handbook is presented as a guide to success at CCSA. We seek to inform and empower students, parents, families, community members, and all others involved in the education of our students. The policies and procedures presented in these pages relate to the academic, social, emotional, and safety goals important to defining and sustaining an engaged, successful learning community.

We have identified several key expectations to maintain the safe, nurturing environment that will help foster academic success and positive character development. Our students, families, staff and friends are expected to follow the CCSA Code of Expectations ***(Be Safe, Be Peaceful, Be Respectful, Be Caring, Be Responsible and Be Honest)*** while attending school, while traveling to and from school, and while representing CCSA in any capacity.

Thank You,
CCSA Leadership, Faculty
and Staff

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Vision

CCSA creates a joyful, equitable and aspirational educational environment, modeling excellence through continuous improvement. CCSA fosters intellectual curiosity, resilience and confidence, inspiring students to employ their intellectual and creative power to enrich their lives, family and community.

Mission

With an arts integrated rigorous K-12 curriculum, ALL of CCSA graduates complete their high school education prepared for college, conservatory, technical school, the military or gainful employment. They graduate demonstrating four essential qualities:

1. Scholarship - All students will meet or exceed CCSA standards in all academic areas.
2. Character - All students will demonstrate scholarly habits.
3. Craftsmanship - All students will possess the 21st century skills to create academic and artistic works with high quality craftsmanship.
4. Purpose - All students will have a clear goal and action plan for their future academic/career pursuits.

Strategic Approach

To bring the vision to fruition, we will embark upon a strategic approach that focuses on developing and maintaining each of the following essential elements:

- A rigorous standards-based, arts integrated curriculum
- A safe, nurturing learning environment where self-expression is encouraged
- A collaborative faculty cultivated through purposeful, ongoing professional development
- A family involvement program that provides parents and guardians with a variety of opportunities to learn about and serve the school community
  Community partnerships that increase academic and arts offerings for students

Our Values

Lifelong Learning

We cultivate a culture where curiosity and continuous growth are paramount. At CCSA, we believe that education is an ongoing journey. We encourage our staff, students and community to pursue knowledge relentlessly, fostering an environment where learning and critical thinking is a shared and perpetual endeavor. (Aligned with Scholarship)

Integrity & Accountability

We uphold the highest standards of honesty and responsibility. Our actions are guided by a strong moral compass. We take ownership of our decisions and their outcomes, ensuring that trust and transparency are at the heart of our community interactions. (Aligned with Strong Character)

Excellence in Craft

We are dedicated to the pursuit of quality and precision in all we do. Inspired by the arts-integrated approach of our curriculum, we approach every task with attention to detail and a commitment to excellence, recognizing that mastery is achieved through diligence and dedication. (Aligned with Craftsmanship)

Purpose Driven Engagement

We align our efforts with meaningful goals that impact our community. Our work is intentional and directed towards making a positive difference. We connect our daily responsibilities to the broader mission of empowering students to enrich their lives and communities. (Aligned with Purpose)

Arts Integration at CCSA

CCSA was founded on the principle that arts education is vital to each child's learning process and development. We seek to empower all students to reach their full potential through arts education. The study of art for its own sake is essential for its contributions to the hearts and souls of the artist and audience. Research has shown that exposure to and instruction in the arts helps children develop memory, comprehension and critical-thinking skills allowing children to develop self-efficacy and success in other academic areas.

At CCSA, we believe in the added benefits of Arts Integration—instruction that integrates content and skills from the arts (dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts) with other core subjects. Arts integration takes place when there is a seamless blending of content and skills between the art form and a co-curricular subject. A rich array of arts skills and intellectual processes provide multiple entry points for students linking to content in other subject areas. Similarly, arts instruction is deepened through the integration of content from other subjects.

Arts integration is highly effective in engaging and motivating students. It supports academic achievement and improved social behavior of students while enhancing school climate and parental involvement. CCSA use arts integration as a learning strategy, not only for its power in engaging and motivating students, but for its ability to nurture creativity, imagination, and innovation and to provide the opportunity for divergent thinking—the ability to see multiple ways of interpreting and solving problems.

In addition to the arts-integrated study built into the daily curriculum, CCSA partners with cultural institutions in the area. These partnerships offer students the opportunity to take master classes from working artists, to attend performances or exhibitions connected directly to curriculum, and to meet professionals in each art field. We also have the opportunity for visiting artists in grade classrooms and/or arts classes to work on long-term, content-related projects.

It is imperative that our families understand that CCSA’s mission centers on the concepts of arts integration and arts education. With this understanding, we expect CCSA families to support their children's education in this unique environment. Equal commitment and dedication to both academics and the arts is essential to CCSA's objective: to guide all children to develop their full potential.

Our Partner

CCSA Foundation

(Formerly Chester Fund for Education and the Arts)

Chester Charter Scholars Academy has been created as the result of a charter school application sponsored by CCSA Foundation (the Foundation), a charitable non-profit organization that was founded by a group of community members from Swarthmore College and the surrounding area.

CCSA Foundation raises money to pay for items that would otherwise not be provided at Chester Charter Scholars Academy, including:

- A new building designed to meet our arts and academic programming
- A Teaching Assistant at most grade levels
- Full-time teachers of music, dance, visual arts, drama, physical education and math lab
- An instructional-technology equipment that features Chromebooks and iPads and interactive educational software

The CCSA Foundation will contribute more than $600,000 per year to fund these innovative programs. The Foundation serves in a supportive role and has no operating responsibilities in the school.

CCSA
FOUNDATION

School Leaders

Akosua Watts, *Head of School / CEO*
Lisa Wilson, *Director of Non-Academic Operations*
Nicole DeRitis, *Director of Elementary School*
Dana DeMinico, *Director of Middle School*
Stephanie Donofry, *Director of High School*
Mindy Nguyen-Balli, *Director of Curriculum & Arts Integration*
Ryan Fisher, *Director of Athletics & Partnerships*
Julie Nicols, *Student Support Services Coordinator*

Board of Trustees

Frances Hoover, *President*
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Laura Kirkpatrick, *Trustee*
Zachary Oberfield, *Trustee*
Judy Owen, *Trustee*
Nikkia Walton, *Trustee & Parent*
Judy Wertheimer, *Trustee*
Chanel Young, *Trustee & Parent*

General Information

School Hours

8:00am – 3:00pm for Kindergarten through High School

Student Arrival

- The building is open to students beginning at 7:15am.
- Car Riders and Walkers come in through the Front Door facing Highland Avenue.
- Students go directly to their classrooms when they enter the building.
- **No one dropping off for arrival is allowed to visit the classroom.**
- Students are expected to immediately unpack, enter class, get breakfast and start their Morning Work.
- Any student who has not reported to class by **8:00am** will be marked late (unless they are a late bus arrival).
- Video announcements will be played during morning the routine.

Punctuality is an important habit for professionalism and success. Arrive on-time!

Student Dismissal

- Dismissal is at 3:00pm.
- Students who are dismissed before this time will be marked for early dismissal.
- Walkers are dismissed through the Front Door facing Highland Avenue.
    - Please make sure the Permission to Walk form from the Welcome Packet is signed and returned to school.
- Pick-up students are dismissed at 3:00pm from the Cafeteria or the Front Door.
    - Enter on Township Line and drive up the circular drive near the Front Door.
    - **No one coming for pick-up is allowed to visit the classroom** or go anywhere in the building except for the cafeteria.
    - **Staff are not permitted to speak at length with adults at dismissal**. They are required to focus on student supervision during this time. Parents/Guardians may request a call or meeting to talk at an appropriate time.
- Sports and 21st Century Afterschool Programming are dismissed to their designated areas.
    - *NOTE: For safety reasons, if students leave their designated areas without permission during afterschool hours more than two times, CCSA reserves the right to dismiss them from any and all after hours programming (sports, afterschool, rehearsals, etc).

Lateness and early dismissal cause disruptions to the educational program of your child and the other students. Excessive lateness/early dismissals may impact your child's ability to remain at CCSA. (See Attendance Policy)

Early Release Days

- Dismissal is *promptly* at 1:00pm.
- Early Release Days are on the CCSA School Calendar. Please make note of them.

Early Dismissal

When in the building, except in the case of a pre-arranged early dismissal, please wait until students are dismissed rather than asking for them to be called from class early. Students **WILL NOT** be dismissed from class between **2:30 – 3:00pm** unless previously arranged. Early dismissals should occur only for appointments that cannot be scheduled during non-school hours and for family emergencies. It is vital that children arrive on time and remain for the entire day. Students are responsible for any work missed.

*NOTE: If a student is repeatedly picked up late, it will be documented and may impact your child's ability to remain at CCSA.

Emergency Closings

CCSA follows the Chester Upland School District for closings due to weather. We will post closing information on Fox29. In the event of an emergency closing during the school day, CCSA will send an automated call, text message and/or email to all families to the most recent contact information provided. CCSA will also post closing information on the school website. Classroom teachers will also attempt to contact families.

Breakfast Program

Breakfast will be served to students from 7:50am to 8:10am in classrooms only. Breakfast ends by 8:10am. It is crucial that your child arrives to school promptly to allow time to eat breakfast to help them concentrate better. **Students who arrive late and before 8:45am will be allowed 5-10 minutes to eat school breakfast, if desired, but not outside food.**

Lunch Program

All CCSA students are entitled to receive lunch free daily. The monthly lunch menu will be posted on the website. If your child is particularly picky, please send him/her with a lunch. During lunch, students are to remain seated and conduct themselves according to CCSA Expectations and cafeteria rules, including taking responsibility for cleaning their eating area when finished. We "Leave No Trace".

Scheduled Lunch Times

10:50am	Kindergarten, 1st Gr., 2nd Gr.
11:10am	3rd Grade & 4th Grade
11:15am	5th Grade

11:47pm	6th Gr., 7th Gr., 8th Gr.
12:40pm	High School

Lunch Policy

- Students MAY NOT heat food at school, except in case of medical need.
- Students MAY NOT leave school grounds to get lunch.
- Students MAY NOT order lunch delivery to the school nor will any restaurant, DoorDash, UBER Eats, GrubHub, etc. deliveries be accepted for students, even if sent by a parent or family member.
- For safety reasons, we are no longer accepting lunch deliveries for students from anyone. School lunch is available to all students or work with your child to pack lunch daily. In case of emergency, parents will contact the Director. NOTE: Students will NOT be provided class time to eat lunch that is delivered late.

UNIFORM POLICY

Mandatory In-School Uniform Policy

Students must be in uniform daily unless otherwise communicated in writing to CCSA administrators or staff. The CCSA uniform consists of the following:

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS (2026–27)

CCSA reserves the right to prohibit any garment, shoe or accessory that interferes with safety or causes a distraction to learning or the school community.

Important Notes:

- CCSA Sweater is optional for all students but is strongly recommended as it is the ONLY outerwear students will be permitted to wear in the building if they are chilly.
- Students MAY NOT sag pants or wear uniforms in a way that shows undergarments.
- Gym/Dance Uniform items are no longer permitted for any students. If purchased, they may only be worn on CCSA swag or dress down days.
- NO hoodies, jean jackets or other non-uniform garments may be worn in the building.
- NO CCSA t-shirts, spiritwear or athletic items may be worn unless allowed for special days as communicated in writing by CCSA staff.
- NO headscarves, doo-rags, bandanas or hats may be worn in the building.
- NO nose rings or large hoop earrings are permitted. Any accessories must be modest and small in size.
- NO jeans or leggings
- NO slides, bubble slides, flip flops, slippers, fuzzy or furry shoes/boots
- NO fuzzy or furry shoes/boots
- Religious garments (hijab, khimar, abaya, kofi, yarmulke, etc.) are permitted, if the items are in school colors (red, black, gray, white).

All priced items are available at Clothes Quarters

CCSA UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS (2026–27)

Our uniform policy is one of many strategies that support the outcome of helping to establish school unity and to ensure a focus on academics. Students must be in uniform EVERY DAY unless otherwise communicated in writing by CCSA administrators or staff. The CCSA uniform consists of the following:

	Elementary (K-4)	Middle School (5-8)	High School (9-12)
Top	**Solid GRAY** collared golf (polo-style) short or long sleeved with the **CCSA cap logo.**	**Solid RED** collared golf (polo-style) short or long sleeved with the **CCSA cap logo.**	**Solid WHITE or BLACK** collared golf (polo-style) or button down, short or long sleeved with the **CCSA round logo.**
Bottom	Black uniform pants, shorts, or skirts (No denim or leggings). *Shorts/skirts MUST be knee length.		Black uniform pants, shorts, or CCSA plaid uniform skirts (No denim or leggings).
Shoes	School shoes or sneakers in any solid school color (black, gray, red, or white) or combination of ONLY those colors.		
Socks/Tights	SOLID uniform color (black, gray, red or white) socks/tights.		
Sweaters	If needed, students may wear a SOLID black cardigan style sweater with CCSA round logo. HS ONLY – May wear a black full zip jacket with CCSA round logo		
Other notes and possible uniform infractions	• Student MUST have his/her own mask, if needed. • NO meta-glasses or sunglasses. • NO slides, bubble slides, flip flops or slippers, fuzzy or furry shoes/boots • Accessories should be modest and should not provide a distraction. • Earrings cannot be larger than one inch in size. • NO do-rags, bonnets, headscarves, bandanas or hats may be worn. • Students MAY NOT sag pants or wear uniforms in a way that shows undergarments. • Students who wish to wear religious garments (hijab, khimar, abaya, kofi, yarmulke, etc.) are permitted to do so as long as the items are in school colors (red, black, gray or white).		

Uniforms can be purchased at http://www.clothesquarters.com/
Clothes Quarters: 521 Macdade Blvd, Folsom PA ~ Phone Number: 610-522-1412

*NOTE: Uniform items that belong to CCSA are used for in-school emergencies ONLY. If a parent/guardian communicates directly to a CCSA staff member, these items may be borrowed for a family emergency on a temporary and limited basis. We also have a washer / dryer on site if support is needed to launder uniforms.

In-School Uniform Violations

Students are expected to be in full and proper uniform every day. Consequences for violation of uniform policy are as follows:

Grade K - 4	Grades 5 - 12
• 1st Infraction - Parent/Guardian is notified by the classroom teacher. Change of clothes/shoes will be provided or parent can bring the student a change of clothes/shoes. • 2nd Infraction - Letter will go home from classroom teacher with the policy restated and the infraction documented. • 3rd Infraction - Parent/Guardian will be notified by the Director/ Climate Manager AND the student will serve a recess detention. • 4th Infraction - A conference will be required with school administration that may impact the student's ability to remain in the school.	• Uniform Infraction is an automatic detention

*NOTE: Uniform items that belong to CCSA are used for in-school emergencies ONLY. If a parent/guardian communicates directly to a CCSA staff member, these items may be borrowed for a family emergency on a temporary and limited basis. Students will be issued a uniform pass for the day and MUST return borrowed items by the end of the day. Students may still be issued consequences for violating the uniform policy. We also have a washer / dryer on site, if support is needed to launder uniforms.

NO Physical Education / Dance Uniform

CCSA does not have gym/dance uniform or allow anything other than standard uniform. Any CCSA gear (t-shirts, sweatpants, shorts, etc.) purchased may ONLY be worn on designated CCSA Swag/Dress Down Days. If worn on days other than designated swag/dress down days, students will be issued consequences according to the Uniform Violation Policy.

Uniform Purchases

ALL official uniform items are available from *Clothes Quarters*. They are conveniently located at 521 MacDade Blvd, Folsom, PA, (610) 522-1412.

*NOTE: Some select items will be onsite for purchase. During the school year, you may contact Tara Park, (tpark@CCSAscholars.org) to inquire about availability of items.

Attendance Policy

In order for our students to grow academically, socially, and emotionally, they must make every effort to attend school every day. This includes arriving at school on time (by 8:00am) and remaining in school until dismissal (at 3:00pm). **Our attendance goal at CCSA is 95%.**

Daily Attendance

Daily attendance is recorded in the student information system when a student physically reports to his/her homeroom/first period class.

- Note: When classes are in session, online work completion alone is NOT a substitute for attendance. Students will be marked absent, if not physically present.

According to the CCSA Attendance Policy, the following are considered excused/lawful absences when school is either:

- **Death in the immediate family:** An absence resulting from the death of a member of the student's immediate family including but is not necessarily limited to, parents, grandparents, brother and sister is excused.
- **Illness or Injury:** An absence resulting from illness or injury is excused. Absence lasting three (3) or more consecutive school days requires a note from a physician.
- **Medical or Dental Appointment:** An absence resulting from a medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of regular school hours and when a full day is required for the appointment. NOTE: Students should attend school before and/or after the appointment as much as possible.
- **Quarantine:** An absence that is ordered by the local health office or by the State Board of Health is excused.
- **Observance of a Religious Holiday:** An absence may be considered excused, if the tenets of a religion, to which a student or his/her parent adhere, require observance of a religious event. Excuse for no more than 6 days per school year.
- **Family emergency:** Family emergencies shall be strictly determined.
- **Court or Administrative Proceedings:** An absence resulting from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal, if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness is excused.
- Educational family trip (If granted prior approval from an administrator)
- Out-of-School suspension (Reinstatement meeting required)

Excused Absence Notes

Students will only be permitted up to 10 excused absences, except in the case of a medically documented absence. For the absence to be excused, a note written by the parent/guardian should accompany the child upon returning to school. Excuse notes may be emailed to Mrs. Ahmed (lahmed@CCSAscholars.org). Excuse notes **MUST** be received within 3 days of the absence. If the note is received after that time, the absence will remain unexcused and be processed for truancy, if applicable. The note must include:

1. Child's name and teacher
2. Excusable reason for the absence
3. Date of the absence
4. Parent or guardian's signature and date
5. Valid telephone number

*NOTE: Skipping class is unacceptable. Skipped classes are recorded as an unexcused absence; parents will be notified. See Behavior Guidelines for further consequences.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences (Truancy)

If a child is absent for three or more consecutive days, the student must provide a medical excuse from the treating physician upon returning to school. The absences are considered unexcused/unlawful, if the note is not submitted to school **within 3 days**.

*NOTE: Repeated truancy also carries consequences per the Behavior Guidelines, including possible referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing. Students are required to complete all work missed during their absences.

Consequences for Unexcused/Unlawful absences:

- *3 Unexcused/Unlawful absences*: warning letter from the Attendance Coordinator.
- *6 Unexcused/Unlawful absences:* Mandatory meeting with school staff to develop a SAIP. A conference MAY be scheduled to develop a Students Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). The SAIP is developed cooperatively with involved stakeholders (student, parent, school personnel) through a school-family conference.
- *9 Unexcused/Unlawful absences:* Mandatory meeting with an administrator to revisit the SAIP to determine if changes are needed.
- *10 Unexcused/Unlawful absences:* legally, the case must be reported to District Court. Parent/guardians are held accountable for truancy. After ten unexcused/unlawful absences, parents may be fined for each day of the unexcused/unlawful absence and sentenced to jail time for failure to pay.

Chronic Lateness and Early Dismissals

Arrival after 8:00am is defined as a "Tardy" (except for late buses). Leaving school before 2:55pm (or standard dismissal) is defined as an "Early Dismissal".

Students are expected to arrive to school and each class on time and remain in school for the full instructional day. If students repeatedly arrive late without excuse the time, will accumulate and count toward truancy. Additionally, if a middle or high school student accumulates one hour of unexcused lateness, they will have an after-school detention.

Early dismissal is reserved for students who have a medical appointment or a single-time obligation that cannot be avoided. Early dismissals are not intended to be a regular occurrence; parents should not pick up students early because the student is asking to leave early. Students who are picked up early with no doctor's note will be considered 'unexcused' and this time will accumulate to an assigned detention.

Patterns of chronic lateness or early dismissals may also result in parent conferences and additional administrative interventions at the discretion of the Director.

Excused Lateness and Early Dismissals include:

- A medical appointment or a family emergency (death, hospitalization) with signed documentation provided to CCSA within 48 hours
- Exceptional circumstances approved by an administrator with a note from parent/guardian stating reason for the early dismissal, time of dismissal, and who will be picking up the student

Without acceptable documentation, Lateness and Early Dismissals will be classified as Unexcused/Unlawful.

*NOTE: Repeated, habitual reasons such as car trouble, personal/family issues, heavy traffic are not acceptable excuses and will be marked as an unexcused tardy.

Consequences for excessive unexcused Lateness/Early Dismissal:

- 3 Unexcused: letter sent home outlining CCSA's Lateness/Early Dismissal policy
- 6 Unexcused: mandatory family meeting with a school administrator to develop a plan and signed Student/Family/CCSA contract to eliminate tardiness
- 9 Unexcused: mandatory family meeting with a school administrator; depending upon the circumstances and compliance with the plan, the administrator will also make a determination if other actions are to be taken, including but not limited to: 1) in-school suspension; (2) suspension or exclusion from afterschool and extracurricular activities; (3) requiring Academic Detention to make up missed work; (4) informal hearing with the Head of School; 5) referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing.

Attendance Award

Each Trimester and at the end of the year, CCSA will celebrate students who have exceptional attendance. Students who have been present every day within the identified period of time with no more that 1 late arrival and/or 1 early dismissal will be designated as having achieved perfect attendance. Any student with repeated tardies and/or early dismissals is not eligible for this distinction.

Attendance & High School Credits

Regular attendance is essential to student success. To earn credit in each core academic course, students must be present for a minimum of 120 instructional hours during the school year. Instructional hours are based on the time a student is physically present in class. Any absence, late arrival, early dismissal, or missed class time will reduce the student's accumulated instructional hours, regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Failure to complete the required 120 instructional hours in a core course will result in the loss of course credit, regardless of the student's academic average. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments and vacations outside of school hours whenever possible to help students meet this requirement.

Students who are at risk of falling below the 120-hour requirement will be monitored and informed throughout the year. An attendance conference with the student and parent/guardian will be scheduled to review attendance, discuss the remaining hours needed, and develop a recovery plan. An opportunity to make up missed instructional hours will be offered through school-approved attendance recovery opportunities, including after-school sessions, Saturday programs, and summer sessions.

Note: High School Students MUST earn 7 credits to move to the next grade, which requires a passing grade in all subjects and student attendance for at least 120 hours per core subject course.

School Culture

Behavior Expectations

It is our expectation that CCSA is a safe, peaceful, scholarly school. We expect CCSA students to follow the CCSA Conduct for Professionalism – "The CCSA Way" at all times while in a "school setting". School setting is defined as: on campus, during online learning, at bus stops, while traveling to and from school on the bus, and at school-sponsored activities, on and off campus. CCSA also reserves the right to address issues for off-campus, off-hours actions when they impact the daily learning and culture at school. CCSA does not tolerate fighting, teasing, bullying, rough play, inappropriate language and conduct, or disrespect to a staff member, student, or visitor. CCSA has clear expectations for appropriate behavior detailed in our *Discipline Guidelines for Student Behavior*.

Conduct for Professionalism "The CCSA Way"

Professionalism refers to the conduct, character, skills, and behavior expected of working professionals. CCSA teaches the qualities to help students succeed as scholars now and professionals later.

Note: Students should exhibit the expectations of their current grade and all prior grades.

	K-4	5-8	9-12
Be Safe	**Professional Skill: Self-Management**		
	• Identify emotions • Use strategies to calm down • Ask for help when needed • Manage personal space and stay aware of area	• Demonstrate self-regulation and awareness • Avoid conflict and maintain safe boundaries	• Regulate emotions under stress and balance responsibilities • Maintain mature behavior across settings • Avoid unsafe or confrontational situations
	Professional Skill: Professional Behavior		
	• Follow directions and rules • Keep hands / body to self • Use appropriate language • Walk calmly in lines • Maintain self-control	• Understand personal image • Act with integrity • Dress appropriately	• Demonstrate ethical behavior • Choose appropriate conduct at all times • Model integrity and self-discipline
Be Respectful	**Professional Skill: Communication**		
	• Use a clear voice and active listening • Take turns in conversation • Use calm tone	• Speak clearly in discussions, • Listen fully to others • Use appropriate tone and non-verbal expression in conversations	• Use appropriate tone • Demonstrate respectful speech • Deliver presentations • Write formal communications
	Professional Skill: Cultural Competence		
	• Show kindness • Respect differences • Learn about different people and traditions	• Respect classmates' differences • Demonstrate inclusive behavior • Resolve conflicts peacefully	• Practice equity-minded leadership • Show cultural sensitivity and inclusion

Conduct for Professionalism "The CCSA Way" *(cont.)*

Be Responsible	**Professional Skill: Responsibility**		
	• Organize and care for materials and devices • Complete class/home work • Be honest and own mistakes	• Follow through with commitments • Take accountability • Track assignments	• Take ownership of decisions and academic growth • Manage complex schedules
	Professional Skill: Attendance & Time Mgt		
	• Understand routines • Arrive on time • Follow daily schedules	• Prepare independently for the day • Manage class transitions • Use planners or schedule to manage tasks	• Maintain punctuality • Independently manage time • Meet deadlines
	Professional Skill: Problem Solving		
	• Express needs clearly • Try different solutions with help from adults	• Identify problems • Explore multiple solutions • Reflect on outcomes	• Solve real-world problems using data and teamwork • Think critically & act responsibly
Be Engaged	**Professional Skill: Work Ethic**		
	• Finish tasks with care • Stay focused during work time	• Show persistence and pride in completed work • Set personal and academic goals • Monitor progress toward goals • Revise work to improve	• Sustain focus on long-term tasks • Manage workload • Pursue excellence
	Professional Skill: Teamwork & Collaboration		
	• Take turns and share materials • Cooperate with peers	• Work in groups, contribute ideas • Solve conflicts with guidance	• Lead team roles • Collaborate with diverse groups • Resolve disagreements
	Professional Skill: Leadership		
	• Volunteer to help • Try new activities • Show kindness by supporting classmates	• Take class jobs • Lead by example • Ask for feedback • Mentor younger peers	• Lead discussions • Engage in extracurricular activities • Take initiative in leadership opportunities • Mentor others incl. peers
Demonstrate our CCSA Pillars: Scholarship, Character, Craftsmanship and Purpose			

Student Supports

For the safety and education of all CCSA students, the job of every adult in the building is to help students learn. The below staff members provide specific supports as described:

- Head of School (HoS) / CEO – HoS will be consulted to offer support for serious and/or repeated behavioral and academic concerns. HoS may serve as primary point of contact for specifically identified students and families. HoS will always be consulted in situations with potential legal consequences.
- Directors of Elementary, Middle and High School – With the HoS, the directors create and instill an overall school philosophy of discipline. They provide reinforcement to teachers for students with repeated behavioral challenges. They also work with families to provide support for the student. Directors address Level 3 and 4 infractions determining appropriate consequences after review of the discipline referral and investigating the issue.
- Student Support Services Coordinator – Collaborates with staff, families, and students to ensure that students receive specialized academic and behavioral supports and services as needed.
- Climate Managers – Climate Managers address Level 2 infractions and above. They help students repair and resolve behavior, returning to the classroom as soon as possible. They maintain contact with families regarding students' behavior, positive and negative.
- Guidance Counselors – Guidance counselors support students, families, and staff with academic and behavior issues related, but not limited, to peer relationships, organization, and self-esteem. Counseling is provided in small group or individually for a designated period of time.
- School Social Worker – The Social Worker provides direct counseling and socio-emotional support to students in grades 9-12 and support for specifically targeted students/families in grades K-8.
- School Nurse – The nurse provides first aid, treatment of illness, medication, and mandated screenings. The nurse can also assist with contacting outside agencies to help a child and support our families.
- Homeless Liaison – The homeless liaison provides resources to help support family stability (i.e., shelter, food, clothing) that may affect a student's behavior.
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports - This school-wide framework designed to provide high-quality instruction and interventions tailored to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students.

Damage to School Property

At CCSA, we teach our students to respect and value our school building, equipment, and learning materials. If a student damages any school property (defined as but not restricted to: technology devices, books, desks, tables, walls, lockers, equipment, bathrooms), the student will receive consequences outlined in the *Discipline Guidelines*. The parent/guardian is held responsible for restoring the damaged item(s), including any repair or replacement costs.

Discipline Plan

CCSA's Discipline Plan is based on our school-wide expectations. We aim to prevent inappropriate behaviors by explicitly modeling and consistently reinforcing appropriate behaviors. CCSA's goal is to address the inappropriate behavior, identify antecedents that may cause behavior, and develop strategies to improve student behavior.
The CCSA Discipline Plan is based on our Conduct Expectations and provides:

1. Opportunities for student achievement and exemplary behavior to be acknowledged including, but not limited, to: "Shout-Outs" during Morning Announcements; "Scholar Dollars", behavior incentive events.
2. Occasions to reinforce positive behavior through daily Morning Meeting (grades K through 5) and Advisory (MS). Town Hall Meetings are also held as a proactive strategy to keep CCSA scholars engaged and on point (MS and HS).
3. The use of data to identify students who may need behavior interventions.
4. Incentives based on Scholarly Conduct Grade.
5. Immediate consequences for inappropriate student behavior. Plan as outlined in our *Discipline Guidelines for Student Behavior.*

As a parent/guardian, you provide support to the plan when you:

1. Sign CCSA correspondence and have your child return it to school.
2. Discuss daily developments/issues with your child.
3. Ensure that your child follows the CCSA Code of Conduct and Expectations.
4. Reinforce expectations by matching CCSA consequences and rewards at home.

School Bus Rules and Regulations

A student riding a school bus is expected to behave as expected in a classroom. The opportunity to ride **the bus is a privilege not a right**. ALL STUDENTS MUST ADHERE TO THE RULES AND DIRECTIONS OF THE BUS DRIVER. Misconduct on a bus will not be tolerated, as it may endanger the safety of others. Any student misbehavior is reported to CCSA by the bus driver. The report will be given to an administrator who will determine the appropriate disciplinary consequence. Consequences may include, but not limited to: lunch detention, after school detention, suspension from the bus or school, or complete loss of bus privileges. Recurring or Level 4 bus violations may lead to a disciplinary hearing with the Board to determine if the student should be expelled.

BUS RULES:

- Once students arrive on campus and exit the bus, they MAY NOT leave campus to go to other locations (ie. Dollar General, Demarco's, etc.)
- Follow all instructions given by the bus driver and/or attendant.
- Be at the bus stop on time. The driver WILL NOT wait.
- Remain seated during the entire ride; seats may be assigned.
- Keep hands, feet and head inside the bus at all times.
- Throwing of objects, inside or outside, the bus is prohibited.
- Speak using a conversational voice. Screaming is NOT permitted.
- NO eating or drinking on buses.
- Keep the bus clean.
- NO cursing or inappropriate language.
- Fighting, bullying or any type of horseplay is NOT allowed.
- Quiet when the bus stops at railroads crossings.
- Observe safety precautions at bus stops.
    - When it is necessary to cross the street, students should proceed to a point at least 10 feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the street, looking at the traffic in both directions, waiting for the signal from the bus driver to cross safely.

***Safety is our number one priority. Three suspensions from the bus will result in losing the privilege of riding the school bus for the remainder of the school year.**

Cell Phone/Personal Technology Policy

Cell phones/smartwatch are a tremendous distraction to the academic environment. When used by students during the school day they often contribute to conflicts between students. For these reasons, possession and use of personal devices (cell phones, smart watches, tablets, laptops, meta-glasses, etc.) is prohibited. Students are not permitted to display, turn on, or use personal devices on school property during the school day. Cell phones and devices **MUST be "OFF and AWAY"** in their LOCKER or BACKPACK upon arrival. **Students in grades 5-12 will be required to place their phone/smartwatch in a Yondr pouch upon arrival.** The devices MUST remain in the pouch until dismissal. Headphones may only be used/worn in classrooms and only at times assigned by teachers for instructional purposes. Headphones MUST be school issued or school approved. Beats or other bluetooth enabled headphones are strictly prohibited.

The use of mobile phones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in restroom areas while at school or at school-related or school-sponsored events. Use of a cell phone or any other device to take unauthorized images of students or staff is an immediate Level 3 infraction with resulting consequences.

Please **DO NOT contact your child on his/her phone during the school day** as this is in direct conflict with school rules. Please make every effort to arrange family matters before or after school hours. When necessary, messages should be relayed to the Front Desk or your child's teacher. If any student has a phone or other electronic device visible while in school, it will be confiscated by a staff member. A parent/guardian must then come to retrieve it. **Students who repeatedly violate the Cell Phone Policy are required to turn in their phone at the beginning of the day until otherwise determined by an administrator.** CCSA does not assume responsibility for the loss or theft of any electronic device. Students will be allowed to use their phones at 3:00pm for dismissal purposes only.

Student Technology

School-issued technology is an extension of the classroom and is provided to support student learning both at school and at home. Students are expected to use all school-issued devices, accounts, and internet resources responsibly and in accordance with the school's technology policies, regardless of location. The same expectations for appropriate, respectful, and educational use apply at home as they do during the school day. Misuse of school-issued technology or violations of the Acceptable Use Policy, whether on or off campus, will result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of technology privileges.

Computer/Internet Acceptable Use and Prohibitions Policy

Students are NOT PERMITTED to bring any personal laptop, tablet, Meta-glasses, or other device for use while at school. The purpose of the CCSA Computer Network is to provide students with access to educational and research resources to promote the fluent use and understanding of technology. All use of the CCSA Computer Network must be consistent with each network user's role and responsibility as a member of the community and with the educational objectives and mission of CCSA.

The acceptable-use policy governs student conduct while using school issued technology devices and digital platforms, both on campus and off-campus. Students represent CCSA at all times, including vacations, nights and weekends. Any inappropriate behavior which is harmful or negatively affects the educational environment of the School, the reputation of the School, or potentially impacts the safety or privacy of students or staff (including posts on social networking sites) are subject to discipline by CCSA according to our *Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct*.

*NOTE: Parents/Guardians must read and sign the **Computer and Internet Acceptable Use and Prohibitions Policy** in the Forms section at the end of the CCSA Student and Family Handbook for their child to access the CCSA Computer Network.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement

CCSA seeks to equip students with the skills and mindset to responsibly and meaningfully engage with AI tools. AI as a powerful tool that, when used ethically and intentionally, can enhance learning, foster creativity, and support real-world problem-solving. It should not be used as a replacement for original thought or writing. Improper use of AI may be considered plagiarism as referenced in the *Acceptable Use Policy* and could be subject to resubmission requirements or other disciplinary action as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Non-Violence Policy

Through our CCSA Conduct Expectations and the Peace Path, CCSA students are taught and modeled peaceful strategies to resolve issues. CCSA students are always expected to communicate issues in a calm, respectful manner. Violence is NEVER an option to solve a problem. When conflict arises staff engage students in a resolution conference and when appropriate creates a written document that captures agreements by both parties.

CCSA students are also expected to refrain from words, gestures or actions to provoke ("boost") a physical fight. The consequence for a student who boosts a fight may be the same as if they were involved in the physical altercation.

While in the school setting, CCSA students are expected to refrain from responding in a physical manner if provoked. Returning a physical hit is considered participation in a fight and treated with the same consequence. If a student is physically hit, the expectation is for the student to use a minimal amount of force in self-defense before help arrives.

Anti-Bullying Policy

CCSA is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for our students. CCSA recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of intimidation, detracts from the safe learning environment, and may lead to physical violence.

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, non-verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students that is severe, persistent or pervasive where the student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. Bullying is further defined as intentional harming of another person where the bully has more power than the victim.

Cyber-bullying falls under the umbrella of bullying and includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member through technology, such as sending or posting inappropriate/derogatory emails, or text messages, digital images, or social media/web postings (including blogs). The consequences for bullying are listed in the *Discipline Guidelines for Student Behavior.*

Academics

Homework / Independent Work

At CCSA, these assignments are given to students as an extension or reinforcement of class lessons. Please consult your child's teacher, if you have any questions about specific expectations. Students may be given independent assignments in class that may require some additional work after class has concluded.

Homework includes reading every night to help students develop the habits of being a lifelong reader. Homework reading can be, but not limited to the following: independent reading, reading to and discussing the text with your child, an older sibling reading with a younger sibling. Students should read on their reading level when reading independently. Reading with your child is strongly suggested, especially in the lower grades. Reading with an adult helps with phonics, fluency, and comprehension skills. The expected reading time is 20 minutes each night.

Written assignments are assigned from all content areas (reading, writing, spelling, math, social studies, science) and long-term projects. A general time frame is listed below for homework assignments in addition to the 20 minutes of reading.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade	15 minutes
2nd Grade	20 minutes
3rd Grade	30 minutes
4th Grade	40 minutes
5th Grade	50 minutes
6th Grade	60 minutes
7th Grade	70 minutes
8th Grade	80 minutes
High School	90 to 120 minutes

The times are in alignment with the recommendations by parent and educators across the nation. This is not a requirement for teachers to assign homework each night. CCSA teachers strive to provide assignments that are meaningful and reinforce lessons skills and content taught in class.

Grading System

Students in grades 3 – 12 receive a percentage grades for applicable subject areas. Students will receive a report card at the end of each trimester. It will ONLY be issued to the parent/guardian during the student-led conference. Your involvement is essential in your child's academic success. The grading system for all grades are provided below.

All Classes (Grades 3-8)	Grades K & 2 Cultural Arts (K-5) + Rdg. Interv.
A: 100 – 90	4: Advanced/ Exemplary
B: 89 – 80	3: Proficient/ Satisfactory
C: 79 – 70	2: Basic/ Needs Improvement
D: 69 – 60	1: Below Basic/ Unsatisfactory
F: 59 and below	N/A: Not Applicable

General Classes (Grades 9-12)	Honors Classes (Grades 9-12)	Dual Enrollment / College (Grades 9-12)
A+: 100%–97% = 4.3 A: 96%–93% = 4.0 A-: 92%–90% = 3.7	A+: 100%–97% = 4.7 A: 96%–93% = 4.5 A-: 92%–90% = 4.3	A+: 100%–97% = 5.0 A: 96%–93% = 4.8 A-: 92%–90% = 4.6
B+: 89%–87% = 3.3 B: 86%–83% = 3.0 B-: 82%–80% = 2.7	B+: 89%–87% = 3.7 B: 86%–83% = 3.5 B-: 82%–80% = 3.3	B+: 89%–87% = 4.0 B: 86%–83% = 3.8 B-: 82%–80% = 3.6
C+: 79%–77% = 2.3 C: 76%–73% = 2.0 C-: 72%–70% = 1.7	C+: 79%–77% = 2.7 C: 76%–73% = 2.5 C-: 72%–70% = 2.3	C+: 79%–77% = 3.0 C: 76%–73% = 2.8 C-: 72%–70% = 2.6
D+: 69%–67% = 1.3 D-: 66%–60% = 1.0	D+: 69%–67% = 1.7 D-: 66%–60% = 1.5	D+: 69%–67% = 2.0 D-: 66%–60% = 1.8
F: < 60% = 0	F: < 60% = 0	F: < 60% = 0

Academic Eligibility

To remain eligible to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities, students must meet the following requirements:

- Academic Performance: Students must be passing all classes. Grades will be reviewed weekly. Any student earning below 60% in any class will be ineligible to participate in meets and games until the grade is improved or up to five (5) school days. Eligibility will be reviewed at the end of the five-day period.
- Attendance: Student-athletes must maintain a minimum of 90% attendance for the year. Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be ineligible to participate until their attendance returns to 90% or higher.

- Detention: Students assigned detention for chronic tardiness or late arrival to school must attend detention on the day it is assigned. Detention takes priority over all practices, games, and extracurricular activities.

Attendance Grade

Students receive an attendance grade each trimester reflecting the percentage of days they were present at school. Excessive tardiness reduces this percentage even if the student is present.

Scholarly Conduct Grade & Account

Students in grades 2 – 4 receive a percentage-based Scholarly Conduct Grade each trimester. The scholarly conduct grade represents your child's behavior in all spaces in CCSA. Not following CCSA expectations reduces a student's Scholarly Conduct Grade. Students receive an update of their scholarly conduct grade on the Friday Letter.

- 2 points for every Level 2 referral
- 5 points for every In-School Suspension
- 7 points for every Out-of-School Suspension

Students in grades 5 – 12 have a "Scholarly Conduct Account". Each student begins the trimester with 100 points deposited into their Scholarly Conduct Account. Scholarly Conduct points may be earned by going above and beyond regular student responsibilities. Points are deducted as follows:

- 1 point for every demerit
- 2 points for every behavior referral form
- 5 points for every In-School Suspension
- 7 points for every Out-of-School Suspension

In Middle and High School, a student's Scholarly Conduct Grade determines their participation in dress down days, sports, extra-curricular activities (i.e., Spring Musical), behavioral incentives, end of trimester incentives, trips, 8th Grade Formal, Senior Prom and other school-sponsored events. Directors and teachers will communicate specific Scholarly Conduct Grade requirements for each activity.

Recognition for Excellence

At the end of each trimester, we will recognize scholars for their outstanding efforts and achievements.

- Grades 3–12: Students will receive grades in each subject area as well as grades for attendance and scholarly conduct. They are eligible to achieve the following distinctions:
    - Distinguished Honors – Students who received A's in ALL subject areas, attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct.

    - Honor Roll – Students who received A's and/or B's in ALL subject areas, attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct.
    - *Note: Students who receive a report from Reading Intervention must have 3's or higher in all areas to be considered for Honor Roll.*
    - Individual Certificates – Students may also be eligible to receive certificates for achieving 100% attendance.
- Grades K–2: Students will receive grades in each subject area as well as grades for attendance, homework completion and scholarly conduct. They are eligible to achieve the following distinctions:
    - Individual Certificates – Students may be eligible to receive certificates for achieving 100% attendance or a grade of 95%.

Academic Integrity

According to CCSA's Conduct Expectations, "Be Honest" refers to integrity in all of our words and actions, including our academic work. Chester Charter Scholars Academy strives to create an environment of academic integrity in which all students take pride in their work and represent their own academic contributions honestly and accurately. Learning requires that students are responsible for their own assignments at all times, displaying their own knowledge, judgment, and creativity. This means that no cheating, plagiarizing, or inappropriate use of technology including the internet will be permitted. Academic dishonesty is a very serious offense.

Student Responsibilities

1. Understand the teacher's expectations for how their assignments are to be completed, asking for clarification, if necessary.
2. Seek academic assistance only as permitted by the teacher, and provide only appropriate assistance to others. Unless the teacher specifies otherwise, every assignment must be an individual honest effort.
3. Do the fair share on collaborative assignments.
4. Cite all sources completely and properly.

Failure to Maintain Academic Integrity

Failure to comply with CCSA's policy regarding academic integrity will result in disciplinary actions in accordance with the Code of Conduct, which may include, but are not limited to:

1. A mandatory conference with student, parents, teachers and/or school administrators
2. A failing grade for the assignment, report period or course

Disciplinary action will be determined based on the severity of the infraction with repeat violators of this policy being penalized more severely.

Consequences for plagiarism and/or other forms of academic dishonesty are listed in the *Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct.*

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a school-wide framework designed to provide high-quality instruction and interventions tailored to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. MTSS operates on three tiers: Tier 1 includes universal supports for all students; Tier 2 provides targeted interventions for students who need additional assistance; and Tier 3 offers intensive, more individualized support for students with significant needs. Teachers play a key role in implementing Tier 1 strategies, identifying students in need of additional support, and collaborating with intervention teams to monitor student progress and adjust instruction based on data. The goal of MTSS is to ensure every student receives the support they need to succeed. Teachers engage in decisions at MTSS meetings once per month to determine if students require additional support. Students should receive Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 supports in advance of considering an evaluation for Special Education services.

Special Education Services and IEPs

CCSA believes that all students can and must have an opportunity to reach their potential. CCSA strives to ensure that the needs of students who have an individualized education plan (IEP) are met in the appropriate least restrictive setting. Each student's IEP will outline the goals for the student as well as the interventions and supports required to assist the student in meeting those goals. Although we do not provide Gifted Support (per Chapter 711), teachers provide differentiated learning opportunities that allow for enrichment within the classroom. More information about the special education process can be found in the "Annual Notice of Special Education Programs and Services and Rights for Students with Disabilities" on our website. For more information, questions or concerns, please contact the Student and Support Services Coordinator, Julie Nicols at jnicols@CCSAscholars.org.

High School Graduation Requirements

In order to receive a high school diploma from Chester Charter Scholars Academy, all students must meet the following requirements:

- complete the Senior Project; and
- earn 28 required credits in the content areas outlined
- satisfactorily meet PA State Keystone requirement

The credit and course requirements below align with Pennsylvania state requirements. In order to graduate, students must receive the credits listed below in each content area.

Content	Credits	Courses
Math	4.0	Pre-Algebra and/or Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, or Statistics
English	4.0	English I, II, III and IV *OR* English Foundations I, II, III and IV
Science	4.0	Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physical Science or Physics
History	4.0	African American History, World History Interactions, U.S. History & Civics I & II
World Language	2.0	Spanish I, Spanish II
Electives/Arts	8.5	Courses in Visual Art, Music, Dance, Theatre and other subj.
Health	1.0	Heath Education or Health & Safety
Physical Ed.	0.5	Dance may be counted
Total Credits	28	

Students with disabilities who satisfactorily complete a special education program developed by their Individualized Education Program team shall be granted a regular high school diploma.

High School Transfer Credit Policy

Chester Charter Scholars Academy will transfer credits from another educational institution to the CCSA transcript under certain conditions. Documentation of the credits is required for an analysis to be done. Acceptable forms of documentation include an official transcript and/or school record.

An initial, unofficial, transcript analysis will be completed based upon unofficial transcripts submitted by students/parents. Transfer credits will be in "pending" status until Chester Charter Scholars Academy receives official transcripts from the student's previous school and confirms the validity of the courses for which credits are transferred.

The following limitations apply to credits:

- Only one (1) credit will be awarded for Health/PE.
- A maximum of two (2) credits will be awarded for Fine Arts.
- A maximum of two (2) credits will be awarded for Humanities.
- Only one (1) elective credit will be accepted for Religion courses.
- Only one (1) elective credit will be accepted for Vocational courses.
- No credit will be awarded for Driver Education courses.

Credits awarded as transfer credit must be earned after completion of 8th grade, with the following exceptions:

- Up to 2 credits of math at Algebra 1 (high school equivalent) or higher taken prior to completion of 8th grade may be awarded upon receipt of an official transcript/school record. The student MUST take the Algebra I Keystone exam and score earn proficient or advanced in order to receive credit for the course taken in 8th grade.

- 1 credit of foreign language (high school equivalent) taken prior to completion of 8th grade may be awarded upon receipt of an official transcript/school record.

Limitations applied to all transfer credits:

- ESL and academic support course credits will be applied towards the elective requirement

Policy for Repeating High School Courses

Students at Chester Charter Scholars Academy are required to pass courses the first time taken. In the event that a student falls short of the required final average to pass a course, that student MUST participate in summer credit recovery to earn a passing grade.

If a student does not pass all courses in a given year, the student will be required to repeat the grade level and retake those courses. Credit toward the high school diploma is given 1 time for each course, and it will be noted on the transcript that the course was repeated. The higher of the two grades will be counted toward the cumulative GPA.

Home and School Partnership

Chester Charter Scholars Academy recognizes that parents, grandparents, guardians, and other family members are the children's primary teachers. CCSA is dedicated to strengthening and reaffirming the family, because as our families grow stronger, so will our school. Our children benefit academically, behaviorally, and emotionally from a strong, united partnership between families and the staff of CCSA.

CCSA believes in the power of a strong home and school partnership. We will not be successful without your help, support, and continued academic, emotional, and behavioral reinforcement. To this end, every parent/guardian will sign a compact, committing themselves to behaviors and actions that help ensure our student's success.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

As a parent/guardian, your involvement is an important and powerful key to your child's academic success. Showing an interest in your child's education, setting high expectations for achievement and letting your child know you believe in his/her abilities creates a positive atmosphere for growth and achievement. Ways you may be involved at CCSA include but are not limited to: attending conferences, performances, sports events, workshops, and Parent/Family meetings, volunteering in the class, and chaperoning trips.

Protocol for Addressing Concerns

CCSA teachers and staff will make every effort to meet the needs of your child(ren) and your family. In the event that you have a concern or question that requires attention, the protocol is outlined:

1. Discuss the concern privately and respectfully with the staff member. If you are unable to find resolution, proceed to step 2.
2. Share the concern with the appropriate Director. If necessary, the Director will arrange a meeting between to discuss the concern and come to a resolution.
3. If the above steps are not successful in resolving the concern, the Director will request a meeting with the Head of School.
4. If the resolution is not resolved, the Head of School will determine whether to request a meeting with a member of the CCSA Board of Trustees.

Parent Communication

Open communication between home and school is essential to student success. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact staff with questions or concerns. Staff will make every effort to respond to phone calls and emails within 48 hours. While many do, staff are not expected to check or respond to messages after hours or on non-working days.

Assistance for Homelessness

Under the Mc-Kinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, CCSA can help provide school stability for a child who does not have a permanent home. This includes children/families: 1) staying with friends or family because of lost housing, 2) Living in a shelter, including transitional programs, 3) Staying in motels because of inability to secure a home, 4) Living on the streets, in a car, van, tent or other nonpermanent structure. If any situation applies, contact School Operations Coordinator, Tracie Carr (tcarr@CCSAscholars.org)

Classroom Celebrations

Each grade level is responsible for deciding whether or not to plan classroom celebrations during the year. ***If the teachers decide that a celebration is appropriate***, the following dates and times will be standard for the entire school:

- Harvest Celebration: Thursday, October 29, 2026 at 2:00pm
- Winter Celebration: Friday, December 18, 2026 between 11:00am – 1:00pm
- Valentine's Celebration: Thursday, February 11, 2027 at 2:00pm

Your child's homeroom teacher will communicate with you directly if the team decides to plan any celebrations or other class events.

Birthdays/Life Celebrations

We celebrate the birth and life of each child. We hope to make room to honor students' birthdays, while minimizing disruptions to learning. For Grades K – 5, CCSA allows for celebrations at the end of each month to honor students who had a birthday. Birthday/Life celebrations will be held once a month in the classrooms. Your child's teacher will inform you of the Birthday/Life Celebration date for the month.

For Grades 6-8, students are permitted to bring 1 item (cupcakes, cookies, etc.) to share with each student in their last period class. Parents are required to communicate with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance to request approval. Contact Dr. Deminico at ddeminico@CCSAscholars.org.

High School Life Celebrations students are permitted to bring 1 item (cupcakes, cookies, etc.) to share with selected students at lunch time. Students/Parents must communicate with Stephanie Donofry, Director of High School at least 24 hours in advance to request approval. Contact Dr. Donofry at sdonofry@CCSAscholars.org.

Note: Any birthday/celebratory items sent to school without prior approval or not in accordance with the guidelines outlined above will be sent home with the student.

Senior Prom & Trip Eligibility

Participation in the Senior Prom and trip are a privilege afforded to students who have been present and engaged in their education throughout high school, particularly senior year. In addition to being on track to on-time graduation, students are required to meet the following expectations:

- Attendance
  - Maintain at least 90% attendance for the year
  - Have limited lateness and few early departures
- Conduct
  - Maintain a Scholarly Conduct average score of 85% for the year AND 90% for the trimester 3 (with no major referrals)
- Academics
  - Remain on pace to graduate throughout the year as marked by specific progress report check points.
  - Pass all classes
  - Meet the Keystone Proficiency earned
  - Senior Project completed

8th Grade Formal & Trip Eligibility

Participation in the 8th Grade Formal is a privilege afforded to students who have been present and engaged in their education, particularly in their 8th grade year. Students are required to meet the following expectations to be eligible to participate in the 8th grade formal dance:

- Attendance
  - Maintain at least 90% attendance for the year
  - Have limited lateness and few early departures
- Conduct
  - Maintain a Scholarly Conduct average score of 85% for the year AND 90% for the trimester 3
- Academics
  - Earn at least a C in all classes

Immunization Records & Requirements

Immunizations are mandated for enrollment and entry into new grade levels. All Pennsylvania school students must be fully compliant with immunizations or risk exclusion. Your child may be required to receive further immunizations. An ongoing audit may alert you to noncompliant immunizations. It is possible that the immunization record PA possesses on file is incomplete or inaccurate. Please share the updated chart below with your physician to be sure student immunizations are current. Remember to forward an updated immunization record to CCSA's office anytime your child receives additional immunizations. You can also take a picture and upload forms to CCSA's website under Student Life > Family Information > Health Record

Pennsylvania School Immunization Requirements	
Diphtheria Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP and DTP) Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)	Grades K-12: Four properly spaced doses with one dose on or after the 4th birthday. Grade 7: One dose before the first day of school and after the age of 10
Polio	Grades K-12: Four properly spaced doses with one dose on or after the 4th birthday.
Measles, Mumps, Rubella* (given as MMR)	Grades K-12: Two doses after 1st Birthday
Hepatitis B	Grades K-12: Three properly spaced doses
Varicella*	Grades K-12: Two doses after 1st birthday. Parent statement of chickenpox disease (month/year) is also accepted.
Meningococcal conjugate (MCV4)	Grade 7: One dose before the first day of school. Grade 12: Two doses, with the second dose given on or after the 16th birthday.
*Please note: The MMR and Varicella vaccines are live virus vaccines. This means the vaccines must be given on the same day or at least 28 days apart.	

If your child does not receive the required vaccinations due to a medical or religious/ethical/moral exemption, please contact a CCSA School Nurse to complete an Immunization Exemption Certificate. Pennsylvania's school immunization requirements can be found at: 28 PA Code CH.23 (School Immunization). Contact your healthcare provider or call 1-877-PA-HEALTH for more information.

Dental Examinations

Dental Examinations are mandated for students entering kindergarten (or 1st grade if skipped kindergarten), 3rd grade, 7th grade, and students of any grade who are newly enrolled to the school.

Please note: Dental examinations and Physical examinations performed during the school year prior to the mandated grade are acceptable. For example, you may turn in a physical completed after June 15 of the student's 5th grade year to satisfy the student's 6th grade physical.

Physical Examinations

Physical Examinations are mandated for students entering kindergarten (or first grade if skipped in kindergarten), 6th grade, 11th grade, and students of any grade who are newly enrolled to the school.

Health Screening Examinations

Health Screenings are mandated for every student, of every grade, every year. The breakdown of which particular screenings are due by June 1st for which grades is as follows:

Screenings	Grade Mandated
Height & Weight	Kindergarten – 12th Grade
Body Mass Index	Kindergarten – 12th Grade
Vision (Far & Near)	Kindergarten – 12th Grade
Color vision, stereo/depth perception, convex lens tests	First (or any grade if never performed)
Hearing	Kindergarten – 3rd Grade, 7th & 11th Grades
Scoliosis	6th & 7th Grades

Student Health Screenings may be performed in any of the following ways:

- A private physician may record results of any screening performed as part of a physical or health screening on the school form or provide a print-out.
- Attend a free screening at CCSA during the school year.

Provided to CCSA by Parent														
Grade	K*	1*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	New
Immunization Compliancy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Physician Physical Examination**	x						x						x	x
Dental Examination**	x			x				x						x

Conducted by CCSA														
Growth Screening (Height, Weight & Body Mass Index)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Vision Screening (Near and Far)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Other Vision Screening: Color, Stereo/Depth Perception (3-D), Convex)		x												
Hearing Screening	x	x	x	x				x				x		
Scoliosis Screening							x	x						
*If a student does not attend Kindergarten, Physical & Dental Examinations are mandated for Grade 1.														



Parent/Guardian Conduct Expectations

Chester Charter Scholars Academy (CCSA) has high expectations for the conduct of its students and families as outlined in the CCSA Conduct Expectations. Teachers and staff are also required to follow the CCSA Conduct Expectations and model respectful behavior while functioning in their roles at CCSA. It is expected that CCSA family members will conduct themselves appropriately when communicating with staff (including face to face, phone or email), while on school grounds, on school trips, during meetings, conferences or at any CCSA function (performances, sports games, etc.). Additionally, no parent/guardian or other adult relative may approach another child about any issue at CCSA.

If there is a difference of opinion, the matter should be resolved in a respectful, peaceful manner. It is expected that parents/guardians will follow the rules established within the school, refraining from yelling (or speaking loudly), name-calling, using inappropriate language, making threats or engaging in physical violence or intimidation of any kind.

If a parent/guardian chooses to behave in a manner that is disrespectful, threatening, and/or inappropriate, the school administration will take appropriate actions to protect the safe climate and learning environment of Chester Charter Scholars Academy. These actions may include but are not limited to the following: a mandatory meeting with administration, a strict written warning outlining the infraction and consequences, limiting the parent's/ guardian's access to specified areas of the school, and if warranted, contacting law enforcement authorities.

CCSA Family Compact 2026-2027

Following is the compact teachers, families, and students sign together at the beginning of every school year. Failure to abide by the compact may impact your child's ability to be successful or remain at Chester Charter Scholars Academy.

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

- I will ensure that my child comes to school **EVERY** day and arrives/logs in **on time** by **8:00am** and remain until end of his/her last class.
- I will know and reinforce the *CCSA Conduct Expectations.*
- I will ensure that my child completes his/her homework/independent work every night.
- I will review and sign all school forms/notices.
- I will attend all Family/Teacher Conferences and required meetings.
- I will put my child to bed at a reasonable hour each night. We suggest by 8:00pm for elementary students and by 9:30pm for middle and high school students.
- I understand that, except in the case of illness or legitimate emergency, attendance is required for the entire instructional day so my child does not miss learning time.
- I will immediately inform the school administration and teacher in writing of any change in address, phone number, email or family status for my child. Contact information **must** be current for the safety of the students.
- I will read to, and/or with, my child every night for at least 20 minutes.

How CCSA will be My Partner

- CCSA will be flexible in scheduling parent/teacher conferences so I can attend.
- CCSA will provide the schedule of school events and meetings in ample time for me to attend.
- CCSA administration and staff will be available to meet if a family situation arises that keeps me from meeting my obligation.
- CCSA will offer me a variety of volunteer opportunities to best link the talents and interests of my family with the needs of the school.

Retention Policy
2026-2027 School Year

Process

When there is the risk of non-promotion for any student the teacher will notify the parent/guardian as soon as the possible. The student will be referred to the Solutions team to identify appropriate interventions and instructional support.

Retention Guidelines

Grades K and 1 – Students will be retained if a consensus is reached among the Solutions Team members based on tangible data. The Light Retention Scale may be used to determine if the student is a suitable candidate who would benefit socially, emotionally, and academically from another year in the same grade. Attendance is an important factor in the decision, particularly if the student missed 10% (18 days) or more of the school year.

Grades 2 - 8 – The Light Retention Scale may be used to determine if the student is a fitting candidate to benefit socially, emotionally, and academically from another year in the same grade.

Additionally, if the student in

- 2nd grade student meets 2 or more of the following criteria
- 3rd – 8th grade student meets 3 or more of the following criteria

The student is also likely to be retained in the same grade for the next school year:

- Attendance – Student was absent for 10% (18) or more of the school year.
- Academic Performance – Student received a final cumulative grade of F in the core subjects of Reading and/or Math.
- Reading Growth – Student is reading 1.5 years or more behind grade level. Students who made at least 1 year's growth as measured by the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System will be exempt from this criteria.
- PSSA (Grades 3-8) – Student performed at the Below Basic level in Reading and/or Math.

Grades 9 – 12 – Students must earn 7 credits, which requires a passing grade in all subjects and student attendance for at least 120 hours per core subject course.

*NOTE: Retention decisions for students who receive special education services will be determined by the IEP team.

Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct

Chester Charter Scholars Academy uses discipline to teach appropriate behavior. Our main purpose at CCSA is to provide a safe, learning environment for all students. Any choice that is unsafe and/or disrupts the learning of the classroom is considered misconduct. The goal of these Discipline Guidelines is to help students make the appropriate choices for learning and safety, and to provide them opportunities to learn from and repair their unsafe or disruptive choices in the school setting. School setting is defined as: on campus, at bus stops, while traveling to and from school on the bus, and at school-sponsored activities, on and off campus. These rules shall apply to any conduct:

- On School Property or in a School Setting (including but not limited to the on-line school and at any testing sites, alternative schools or programs, school-sponsored discussion groups or other school-sponsored activities or programs) at any time,
- Off School Property at any school activity, function or event (including but not limited to educational outings and extracurricular activities);
- Off School Property when the conduct may reasonably be expected to:
    - Undermine the proper disciplinary authority of the school
    - Endanger the safety of members of the School Community
    - Disrupt the school or
    - Interfere with the educational process or program in the school, as allowed by law or to undermine the disciplinary authority of the school the safety of students or staff, or to cause disruption within the School or School Setting.
- While traveling to and from School or School events, functions, or activities, including but not limited to actions on any school bus, van or public transportation.

Disciplinary directions can be given by any and all CCSA staff members. Disciplinary consequences are determined at the discretion of the classroom teacher, Climate Managers, Directors, and/or Head of School. Parents/guardians will be notified in a timely fashion of disciplinary actions in accordance with the Discipline Guidelines.

Conduct Warranting Disciplinary Action: Students who make any of the following inappropriate, unsafe choices will earn an appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and a hearing to move for expulsion, as set forth in Chapter 12 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. Misconduct is leveled with suggested disciplinary consequences; any consequence may be lesser or more severe, depending on the severity and repetition of the offense and effect on others. Disciplinary consequences are unique to the circumstances and individuals involved. This list is not exhaustive of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action.

Level 1 – Disruptive Behaviors	Consequences
Level 1 behaviors include but are not limited to the following: • Uniform violation • Repeated instances of incomplete homework/classroom assignments • Talking, yelling, gesturing inappropriately or throwing a tantrum • Rough activity or horseplay • Teasing or name calling • Bringing school property home without teacher permission • Damage or loss to textbooks, library books, or learning tools • Disrespect toward adults and/or peers • Disobedience to teacher or other staff member • Disruption of class, study or instruction • Inappropriate language or gesture • Failure to follow established school rules and/or classroom rules in all spaces on school grounds • Possession or use of cell phones, iPod, MP3 players, or any electronic or digital device, not including a calculator or digital watch, during school hours or programs • First Bus Infraction	Supervising teacher will determine appropriate in-class consequences. These consequences may include but are not limited to: • restitution (logical consequence) • loss of privilege • student/teacher conference • note or phone call to parent/guardian • Lunch Detention • other consequences as determined by the teacher • Confiscation of device

Level 2 – Disruptive or Disorderly Behavior	Consequences
Level 2 behaviors include but are not limited to the following: • Repeated Level 1 offenses • Leaving class without teacher's permission • Blatant disrespect in language and action • Throwing, kicking, damaging school property • Skipping class • Cheating and/or plagiarism • Aggressive behaviors including, but not limited to, hitting, pushing, and shoving • Dishonesty/lying/falsehood: including presentation of forged notes or passes or refusal to identify yourself properly • Misuse of school equipment and property or property of others • Deliberate use of obscene/profane language or gestures • Creation or in possession of obscene writing, pictures or articles • Theft of school or property of others (low valuable/worth) • Repeated Bus Infraction	Supervising teacher may determine appropriate consequences as described under Level 1 and/or seek guidance from other staff members. Administration may determine additional consequences, which may include: • Lunch/Afterschool Detention • In/Out of School Suspension • Suspension from bus

Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct *(cont.)*

Level 3 – Safety Issues / Aggressive / Threatening Behavior	Consequences
Level 3 behaviors include but are not limited to the following: • Repeated Level 2 offenses • Multiple Bus Infractions • Use of profanity toward another student or staff member • Fighting • Bullying or Cyber-bullying when initiated in the school building • Hacking • Violation of the CCSA Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy • Unauthorized entry into restricted areas • Defacing school property • Creation or possession of violent writing, pictures or articles • Threats of violence (verbal or physical) • Gang activity and/or hazing • Student actions that present a danger to the physical safety and/or emotional well-being of themselves or others • Leaving school grounds without permission • Plagiarism or Cheating • Gambling or making wagers • Failure to act safely and appropriately during a Fire, Evacuation or Lockdown Drill	Supervising teacher will refer the student to Climate Manager or Director to determine appropriate consequences. These consequences may include: • immediate In or Out of School Suspension (for up to 10 days) which requires parent and student to attend a Reinstatement Mtg • referral for additional support and/or evaluation • suspension from the school bus • Student may be referred to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing

Level 4 – Egregious Behaviors and/or Criminal Acts	Consequences
Level 4 behaviors include but are not limited to the following: • Repeated Level 3 Offense • Excessive Bus Infractions • Setting false fire alarms or reporting false emergencies • Possession/ Use of prescription or over the counter drugs without permission • Threats of death or serious bodily injury– either written, electronic or verbal • Vandalism or destruction of school property or property of another • Leaving school grounds without proper authorization • Harassment of any kind – verbal, written or gestures • Engaging in lewd or sexual acts • Possession or use of vaping and/or tobacco products • Possession or use of lighters, matches, or laser pointers • Arson or attempted arson • Assault and/or battery of an employee or student • Possession, use, distribution, solicitation or sale of a weapon (may include mace, pepper spray, etc.) • Possession, use, manufacturing, growing, distribution, and/or sale of illegal drugs (including edibles) and/or drug paraphernalia	The Head of School or a Director will determine the appropriate consequences. This may include but is not limited to: • Out of school suspension (up to 10 school days) • removal from the school bus (for repeated bus infraction) • Student may be referred to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing • Referral to law enforcement

Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct *(cont.)*

Level 4 – Egregious Behaviors and/or Criminal Acts	Consequences
• Possession, use, manufacturing, making, distribution, and/or sale of alcohol • Distribution of Child Pornography, as per Child Internet Protection Act 197 • Extortion, attempted extortion, robbery, burglary and/or larceny • Possession of weapons as per Act 26 (see below for details) Possession, distribution, use or lighting of fireworks, stink bombs, or other explosives • Sexual Harassment – see specific policy (on file at the school) • Theft of school or property of others (high valuable/worth) • Other criminal acts in violation of local, state, or federal laws	The Head of School or a Director will determine the appropriate consequences. This may include but is not limited to: • Out of school suspension (up to 10 school days) • removal from the school bus (for repeated bus infraction) • Student may be referred to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing • Referral to law enforcement

Weapons

CCSA will adhere to the requirements of Pennsylvania law in regard to the possession of a weapon at school, during a school activity or going to or from school. Act 26 defines a weapon as to include but not limited to, "any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, numchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury."

CCSA is required to take the following actions to be in compliance with this Act.

1. Update district policies to provide for expulsion for at least one year for any student who brings a weapon onto school property.
2. Report all discoveries of any prohibited weapon on school property to local law enforcement officials.
3. Report all new incidents involving acts of violence or possession of a weapon on school property to the Pennsylvania Department of Education twice during a school year.

Cooperation with Legal Authorities

Our school will cooperate as required with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers who may contact the school in the course of any criminal investigation.

All investigators and law enforcement officers must present proper identification prior to obtaining any information from the school. All investigators or law enforcement officials must identify themselves to the Head of School or designee upon contact with the school. When an investigator or law enforcement officer comes on school property with the appropriate legal

authority to request records and information that person will be provided with access to these records.

Except in cases involving abuse at home, the HoS will contact the parents of a child with whom the law enforcement person wishes to speak. In the former case, the HoS will request permission to call the parents but will follow the decision of the investigative officer. The HoS or designee will select a school administrator or appropriate staff person to be present at any meeting between a student and an investigator or law enforcement officer. In cases involving abuse at home, the HoS will request permission for a school representative to be present at the meeting or within the line of sight of the student but will follow the decision of the investigative officer.

Definitions of Consequences

Detentions: Detentions may be determined by the HoS, Director, Climate Manager or a teacher. It the school's responsibility to give parents advance notice when assigning an afterschool detention. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to and from an assigned detention outside of regular school hours. Failure of a student to report to an afterschool detention may result in additional detentions and/or escalation of the consequences determined by the Climate Managers, Directors or HoS including an out of school suspension.

- **Lunch Detention:** served with a supervising teacher for a classroom infraction or a Climate Manager or Director for other infractions
- **Academic Detention:** served with the classroom or subject teacher for missing assignments or homework
- **Afterschool Detention:** served with a Climate Manager or Director for Level 2 or about infractions

In-school Suspension (ISS): Communication to the parent/guardian will follow the suspension action taken by the school. The school classroom work for student to complete during the period of the ISS. If the ISS exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the Head of School or a Director shall be offered to the student and parent/guardian prior on the 11th school day in accordance with procedures in the Pennsylvania School Code.

Out of School Suspension (OSS): Out of School Suspension is an exclusion from school for Level 3 or Level 4 violation may take the form of an OSS. Out of school suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Parents will be notified in writing of an OSS. Students are responsible for all schoolwork missed during OSS.

- Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond a 10 school-day period.
- When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent will be given the opportunity to request an informal hearing consistent with the requirements of the Pennsylvania School Code.

Behavioral Probation: After the fourth OSS assuming strategies were previously implemented to support a student, the student may be placed on Behavioral Probation. Behavioral Probation entails a meeting with the Head of School, teacher(s), staff, and parent/guardian. At this point,

if the disruptive, unsafe behavior is still recurring without improvement, CCSA administration reserves the right to recommend for an expulsion hearing with the Board of Trustees.

Academic Probation: After the first trimester of failing a class due to incomplete class or homework, student and parent/guardian will meet with teacher(s) and the grade-level Director to determine a strategy for success which may involve an incentive plan, meeting with the guidance counselor, loss of privileges until work is complete. If the student fails the same class for two consecutive semesters, they will be placed on Academic Probation, which may affect their ability to remain at CCSA.

Expulsion Hearing: Expulsion is an exclusion from school for a Level 4 violation. Students will be given due process if they are to be excluded from school. An expulsion requires a formal hearing with the Board of Trustees. Some Level 4 violations come with an automatic recommendation for a minimum one (1) year expulsion from school.

- All formal hearings will take place before a qualified hearing examiner or authorized committee of the Board who will consider the evidence presented by school administration and the student.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
    (1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
    (2) At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.
    (3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
    (4) The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
    (5) The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
    (6) The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
    (7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
    (8) A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
    (9) The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
        a. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.

b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1482).
c. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
d. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

- Any student expelled will be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
- The initial responsibility for providing a student an education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program that is approved by the Chester Upland School District Superintendent.
- Within 30 days of expulsion by the Board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school may take action in accordance with 42 PA. C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

Discipline of Disabled Students

CCSA complies with Chapters 711 and 15 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities and thought-to-be eligible students. Please refer to the school's Discipline of Special Education Students Policy and Annual Notice of Special Education Services for applicable accommodations. Any questions regarding the discipline of special education or Section 504 students should be directed to the CCSA's Student Support Services Coordinator.

Miscellaneous

21st Century After School Program

CCSA is a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant recipient. Parents/Guardians will receive an application for with details and course offerings. Students are encouraged to participate in after-school extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school. Upon acceptance of enrollment, students will be expected to attend everyday, Monday – Thursday, 3:00pm - 5:00pm. Students who wish to participate in any activity must demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, a willingness to meet the standards set forth by the sponsor(s), and follow the CCSA Code of Expectations at all times in all spaces. Participation in the afterschool program is a privilege. Students will not be allowed to participate if they fail to maintain the behavioral expectations at CCSA. In addition to support for students, families are be encouraged to participate in engagement activities offered by afterschool staff such as performances, Celebration of Learning, and family workshops.

Classroom Volunteering/Visits

We strive to ensure that there is as little disruption to the classroom learning environment as possible. There may be structured opportunities for parents/guardians to volunteer and/or visit the classroom for specific events during the year. We welcome you to participate in those opportunities. Non-scheduled visits by parents/guardians are not permitted.

Custody Policy

CCSA follows the provisions of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents.

- In the absence of a court order to the contrary, CCSA will provide the non-custodial parent access to academic records and other school-related information regarding the student. The non-custodial parent must provide a current address and working phone number.
- If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide CCSA with an official copy of the court order.
- It is also the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the addresses where the student records should be sent.
- Divorced parents must provide the school with a court certified copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. If no such copy is on file, school officials will assume that both parents have custodial rights.
- School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court-mandated custody arrangements. However, the parent(s) must accept primary responsibility for such arrangements and should instruct their children as to which parent should have physical custody of them on any given day.

Fad Items

Current fad items (ie. Poppers, spinners, slime, etc.) are not allowed at CCSA. They often distract from the learning environment and can cause disruptive issues. Any items not related to learning may be confiscated by a staff member and returned only to a parent/guardian. An additional disciplinary action may follow.

Field Trips

Most field trips are intended to enrich learning for students by aligning the experience to content and skills taught in class. Occasionally, students may have opportunity to attend trips as an incentive for consistently demonstrating scholarly behavior and academic work. In either case, field trips are considered a privilege. Students may be excluded if there is concern about their ability to demonstrate appropriate and safe behavior while off campus. For incentive trips, students may be excluded if they have not met established expectations or criteria. Staff members endeavor to provide as much advance notice as possible for scheduled field trips and inform you of any required fees. There may be opportunities to chaperone for specific trips. If you are interested in doing so Pennsylvania Law now requires that you have clearances (Child Abuse, Criminal Background Check, and FBI Clearance). These take a significant amount of time to process; please plan ahead to have them prior to the trip. See Mrs. Ahmed at the front desk for information about securing clearances.

Fire, Evacuation, and Lockdown Drills

For the safety of all students and staff at CCSA, fire, evacuation and lockdown drills will be practiced regularly. Students are expected to follow directions, safely exiting the building in an orderly manner. Students silently walk in a single file line during all drills. Failure to practice a drill in this way is a Level 3 violation and will be treated with the appropriate consequence. During fire, evacuation and lockdown drills and in case of a true emergency, sending and receiving phone calls, text messages or any other forms of communication are expressly prohibited. The use of communication devices could endanger the safety of students, staff, and first responders.

Lockers and Searches

While lockers are issued to each student to store school-related items, all lockers are the property of Chester Charter Scholars Academy. No student may use a locker as a depository for illegal or dangerous substances, objects prohibited by the *Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct,* or substances/objects that constitute a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the student body or pose a threat to the building itself. The Head of School, Director and/or his/her designee may inspect a student's locker, personal property, (bookbag, handbag, etc.) and/or person when there is reasonable suspicion that storage of an illegal substance or object, or any substance, object or other material which poses a hazard to the health, safety, welfare, and order of the school is being stored in or on the student's locker, personal property, or person.

Valuable Items and Money

Money and valuables not needed at school should be left at home as CCSA does not accept responsibility for them. Students should only bring money to school for specific reasons. Please be sure to label the purpose for any money brought to school. If a student has a personal cell phone the student is responsible for its safety. CCSA and staff are not liable for lost or stolen cell phones or other items.

Volunteer Clearances

In order to assist teachers in the educational program and to give students the benefits of exposure to the diverse talents and skills represented in the community, CCSA encourages families to volunteer when the occasion arises. Even if you are volunteering for a one-time event, clearances are still required.

Admission and Re-Enrollment Policy

Admission to Chester Charter Scholars Academy is open to all school-aged children living in the Chester Upland School District and surrounding Pennsylvania school districts. Parents must complete an application to enroll and provide all required documentation for each of their eligible children in order to be qualified for enrollment or included in the lottery process. The following documentation is required:

1. A copy of the child's Birth Certificate
2. A copy of the child's Immunization Record
3. A copy of one of the following documents to use for residency verification
    a. Utility bill (electric or gas), or
    b. PA Department of Transportation identification or drivers license, or
    c. PA Department of Transportation vehicle registration, or
    d. Copy of State/Federal program enrollment
    e. Copy of paycheck stub with name and address of employee and employer, or
    f. Residency affidavit, or
    g. Government agency identification card, or
    h. Deed, or
    i. Agreement of Sale.

Admission and Re-Enrollment

The Lottery: If the number of children applying for enrollment in Chester Charter Scholars Academy exceeds the number of available spaces, students will be selected for admission by lottery. Spaces will be offered in the order of the names drawn with the names creating the waiting list. If the number of applicants for a given grade does not exceed the number of available spaces, all applicants will be offered admission to the school in that grade. Specific dates and deadlines will be set each year for the admissions process. Please check at the beginning of each school year for that specific school year's enrollment and lottery dates.

The Re-Enrollment Process: Students attending CCSA must submit a *Re-Enrollment Form* in January for the following school year. The form requires the student's parent/guardian to complete it and return it with current proof of residency by the deadline stated on the re-enrollment form. If any student does not have a completed re-enrollment form by the specified deadline it is *assumed that the student will not be returning* for the following year and his/her *space may be forfeited*. It is mandatory that all parents provide contact information that includes address, telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts.

Sibling Preference: Siblings of enrolled students are given preference over new students on the waiting list for their initial admission to CCSA. If a sibling withdraws from CCSA for any reason after initial admission, the student may reapply during the open enrollment process, but will not be given preference. Only brothers/sisters living in the same household qualify for sibling preference.

Board/Head of School's Right to Amend

The Board and Head of School retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause. CCSA will distribute notification of any changes to parents/guardians in writing.

Full Disclosure Policies

Full policies including but not limited to the list below are available for review upon request. They are located at CCSA in the Student Records Office. Please see the Data Coordinator for additional information.

- Annual Child Find Notice
- Annual FERPA Notice
- Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Asthma Medication and Equipment Policy
- Diabetes Awareness and Management Policy
- Discipline of Special Education Students Policy
- Emergency Care Plan Template
- Epinephrine Auto Injector Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Self Monitoring & Treatment for Diabetes and Asthma Policy
- School Family Conference and Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP)
- Title IX

2026-2027 CALENDAR | CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

9th Grade Summer Bridge (Required)
* July 13 – July 23, 2026

17-21 New Teacher Orientation
24-28 All Staff Development
27 Meet & Greet 2-4p
31 1st Day of School

Student Days: 1
Staff Days: 6

AUGUST 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

07 NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
16 Back to School Night (Gr. 5-12)
23 Back to School Night (Gr. K-4)
25 NO SCHOOL – Prof. Dev.

Student Days: 20
Staff Days: 21

SEPTEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	~~7~~	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	~~25~~	26
27	28	29	30			

12 NO SCHOOL – Indigenous People's Day
30 NO SCHOOL – Prof. Dev.

Student Days: 20
Staff Days: 21

OCTOBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	~~12~~	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	~~30~~	31

25 1st Trimester Ends
25 1pm Dismissal – Begin Holiday
26-27 NO SCHOOL– Thanksgiving
30 2nd Trimester Begins

Student Days: 19
Staff Days: 19
59 Student Days in Trimester 1

NOVEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	~~25~~	~~26~~	~~27~~	28
29	30					

03 1pm Dismissal – Report Conf. until 6pm
04 NO SCHOOL – Report Conf.
18 1pm Dismissal – Begin Holiday
21-31 NO SCHOOL – Winter Break

Student Days: 13
Staff Days: 14

DECEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	~~3~~	~~4~~	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	~~18~~	19
20	~~21~~	~~22~~	~~23~~	~~24~~	~~25~~	26
27	~~28~~	~~29~~	~~30~~	~~31~~		

01 NO SCHOOL – New Year's
04 School Resumes
08 Homecoming Dance
08 1p Dismissal - Prof. Dev.
09 Homecoming Game
18 NO SCHOOL – MLK Day
21 Re-enrollment Forms Due

Student Days: 19
Staff Days: 19

JANUARY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					~~1~~	2
3	4	5	6	7	~~8~~	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	~~18~~	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	~~12~~	13
14	~~15~~	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

12 NO SCHOOL – Prof. Dev.
15 NO SCHOOL – Presidents' Day

Student Days: 18
Staff Days: 19

MARCH 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	~~5~~	6
7	8	9	10	~~11~~	~~12~~	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	~~22~~	~~23~~	~~24~~	~~25~~	~~26~~	27
28	~~29~~	30	31			

05 2nd Trimester Ends
05 1pm Dismissal – Prof. Dev.
08 3rd Trimester Begins
11 1pm Dismissal – Report Conf.
12 NO SCHOOL – Report Conf.
22-26 NO SCHOOL– Spring Break
29 NO SCHOOL – Prof. Dev.

Student Days: 16
Staff Days: 18
56 Student Days in Trimester 2

APRIL 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	~~16~~	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

16 NO SCHOOL – Prof. Dev.
26-30 PSSA ELA (Grades 3 – 8)

Student Days: 21
Staff Days: 22

MAY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	~~28~~	29
30	~~31~~					

03-07 PSSA Math (Grades 3 – 8)
10-14 PSSA Science (Grades 5 & 8)
28 1pm Dismissal – Prof. Dev.
28. Senior Prom
31 NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day

Student Days: 20
Staff Days: 20

JUNE 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	~~4~~	5
6	7	8	~~9~~	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	~~18~~	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

02 Senior Awards & Presentations
04 NO SCHOOL – PD / 8th Formal
08 8th Grade Moving Up Ceremony
09 Last Day Students – 1p Dismiss
10 Graduation
14 Last Day Staff
18 Juneteenth Observed – Closed

Student Days: 6 / Full Year: 173
Staff Days: 9 / Full Year: 188
58 Student Days in Trimester 3

JULY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	~~5~~	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

05 July 4th Observed – Closed

As of 7.14.26

Computer/Internet Acceptable Use and Prohibitions Policy

Unacceptable Uses

1. Users may not power wash computers or otherwise disconnect devices from the CCSA management platforms.
2. Users may not interfere with virtual instruction or activities by using any unauthorized features in Zoom, Google Apps or any other platform.
3. Users may not use the CCSA private network to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography of any kind), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature).
4. Users may not post personal contact information (ie. address, telephone, personal email) on the Internet about themselves or other students or staff.
5. Users may not deliberately disrupt or harm hardware or systems, interfere with computer or network performance, interfere with another's ability to use equipment or destroy data.
6. Users may not use the CCSA's private network to engage in illegal acts, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of others, accessing or sharing unauthorized copyrighted music, movies, and intellectual property.
7. Users may not utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or execute programs to facilitate the downloading or exchange of copyrighted or unauthorized music, movies, and other materials.
8. Users may not use the CCSA's private network to solicit information with the intent of using such information to cause personal harm or bodily injury to another or others.
9. Users may not post information that could endanger an individual, cause personal damage, or presents a possibility of service disruption.
10. Users may not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
11. Users may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.
12. Users may not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, hateful, threatening, or disrespectful language.
13. Users may not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
14. Users may not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses another person.
15. Users may not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
16. Users may not plagiarize works what they find on the Internet or other resources.
17. Users may not use technology resources and Internet for private business activities or unreasonable personal use.

*NOTE: Any student who receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via e-mail, text or on the Internet, should report the concern to a faculty member or school administrator immediately so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately.

CCSA 2026 – 2027
Statement of Understanding and Agreement

Please read each of the following statements, complete and sign this form. Return it to your child's teacher by **Friday, September 4, 2026**.

I understand that I must agree to all the terms in the *CCSA Family Compact* in order for my child to attend Chester Charter Scholars Academy.

I understand that if I do not live up to the terms of this compact, my child may not be able to continue as a student at Chester Charter Scholars Academy.

I acknowledge that I have read the entire ***CCSA Student and Family Handbook*** (including the *Code of Conduct, Discipline Guidelines for Student Conduct* and *Parent/Guardian Conduct Expectations*) which is ***accessible on the school website (Go to "Family Info")***. I am aware of the policies and expectations described and will reinforce them with my child.

Please print clearly.

Student Name _____ Grade_____ Teacher _____

Parent/Guardian #1 Name _____

Parent/Guardian #1 Signature _____

Parent/Guardian #1 Email Address _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Name _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Signature _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Email Address _____

Please **provide working email address(es)** so that we can include you on important CCSA informational messages. Email will be our **primary means of communicating** with families as it is fast, efficient, and reduces paper usage and waste.

Please sign and return this page to your child's teacher,
by: **Friday, September 4, 2026.**