cms School Choice

Cato Middle College High School

Purpose

Cato Middle College High School (Cato MCHS), located on the Cato Campus of Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), is a partnership between Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) and CPCC that serves students in Grades 11–13. Students earn a CMS high school diploma while completing tuition-free college coursework and, when eligible, an associate degree, career credential, or up to two years of transferable college credit.

By signing this compact, students and parents/guardians acknowledge their understanding of the academic, attendance, behavioral, and personal responsibilities required for success at Cato MCHS.

I. Program Overview & School Commitments

Cato MCHS students participate in both a high school and a college environment, taking Honors and AP high school courses with Cato MCHS teachers and college courses with CPCC instructors. As members of CMS and CPCC, students must follow the policies, procedures, calendars, grading practices, and expectations of both institutions.

CMS and Cato MCHS will provide:

- Access to tuition-free CPCC coursework as permitted through the program.
- High school and college academic advising and course planning.
- Textbooks and required instructional materials for scheduled CPCC courses, free of charge.
- Access to tutoring, intervention, ACT preparation, and college readiness supports.
- Teachers who personalize learning, communicate consistently with families, and participate in professional development aligned with student needs.
- Technology (CMS Chromebook, required for CMS classes)
- Transportation limited to free public Charlotte Area Transit System, CATS, bus passes for students who need them. ** **Cato Middle College High School does NOT provide CMS Yellow Bus Transportation.**

II. Student and Family Commitments

Students and families agree to actively participate in and support the Middle College experience:

Enrollment and Participation

- Attend required information sessions and orientation activities.
- Complete all CMS and CPCC enrollment, registration, and program documents by established deadlines.
- Commit to participating in the Middle College program through Grade 12.

- Grade 13 is optional and is restricted to students who have met all high school graduation requirements by the end of Grade 12 but defer their graduation to Grade 13. Grade 13 allows the opportunity to finish the CPCC Associates Degree, if needed.

Communication

- Regularly monitor school and college communications, including email.
- Maintain communication with teachers, CPCC instructors, counselors, advisors, and administrators.
- Seek assistance promptly when academic or personal concerns arise.

Academic Responsibility

- Acknowledge that coursework is accelerated and that high school classes are Honors level.
- Acknowledge that CPCC courses follow college grading, attendance, and integrity policies, and that grades earned become part of the student's permanent college transcript.
- Maintain the academic standards required by CMS and CPCC.
- Complete assignments independently and on time.
- Monitor academic progress in both high school and college courses.
- Participate in required tutoring, intervention, or support programs when assigned.
- Meet course prerequisites, registration requirements, and program deadlines.
- Follow all CMS and CPCC academic integrity expectations.

Attendance and Behavior

- Attend all classes regularly and on time.
- Follow CMS and CPCC attendance policies.
- Follow the CMS and CPCC Codes of Student Conduct.
- Demonstrate mature, respectful, and professional behavior in all settings, including on a college campus shared with adult students.
- Understand that violations of the CMS Code of Student Conduct may result in consequences such as detention, community service, suspension, or reassignment.

- Understand that violations of the CPCC Code of Student Conduct may result in a CPCC student conduct meeting or hearing and may lead to dismissal from the program.
- *Understand that excessive absences or ongoing conduct concerns may result in probation, continuation review, or removal from the program.*

Family Partnership

- Families agree to support student attendance, communication, and academic progress.
- Serve as equal partners with Cato MCHS and respond promptly to school communication about academic progress.
- Participate in orientation, conferences, meetings, and school engagement opportunities as needed.
- Encourage students to take increasing responsibility for their education and college success.

III. Characteristics of Successful Middle College Students

Students who are most successful at Cato MCHS typically:

- Have demonstrated successful completion of previous EOC-tested courses, generally earning at least a Level 3, and are prepared for rigorous Honors, AP, and college-level coursework.
- Demonstrate strong attendance and positive behavior.
- Show self-direction, self-motivation, and a strong commitment to learning.
- Manage time effectively and meet deadlines independently.
- Communicate proactively with instructors and advisors, and advocate for themselves.
- Demonstrate maturity, flexibility, and personal accountability.

IV. Course Progression

- **Grade 11:** Students take CPCC courses aligned with their individual academic plan alongside required Honors or AP high school courses taught by Cato MCHS teachers. All juniors take the ACT and participate in required ACT preparation.
- **Grade 12:** Students complete their remaining CMS graduation requirements while continuing to take CPCC coursework aligned with their individual plan and associate degree, transfer, or credential goals.
- **Grade 13 – Optional Year:** Eligible students may have the opportunity to participate in an optional **Grade 13 year** to complete:
    - Transferable college credits;
    - Career or industry certifications;
    - Associate degree requirements; and/or
    - Other approved college coursework.

All CMS high school graduation requirements must be completed by the end of Grade 12 to qualify for Grade 13; they cannot be completed during Grade 13. Grade 13 students must continue to meet CPCC and Middle College academic progress requirements and complete the Middle College seminar course, which supports the transition to college, during the first semester of Grade 13.

V. Admission and Continuation Requirements

Admission

Students seeking admission must:

- Apply through the CMS School Choice Lottery.
- Have a cumulative unweighted GPA of at least 2.8, or at least 2.5 with qualifying test scores below.
- Include a current high school transcript with the School Choice application.
- Complete all required CMS and CPCC application materials.
- Meet CMS and CPCC eligibility requirements.
- Submit all requested documentation by established deadlines.

Qualifying Test Scores (unweighted GPA of at least 2.5 but below 2.8)

Use one assessment or a combination; send scores directly to the Cato MCHS principal.

Assessment	English	Reading	Math
RISE (CPCC Placement Test)*	Tiers 1 and 2: 70+ each	—	Tiers 1, 2 and 3: 70+ each
SAT (since March 2016)	—	480	530
PreACT (since Oct. 2016)	18	22	22
ACT	18	22	22
PSAT (since Oct. 2016)	26 or composite 460	26 or composite 460	24.5 or composite 510

**Each RISE tier requires a 70+ to move on to the next. RISE can be taken only twice in 10 years, so students with other qualifying scores should not take it.*

Students should review the current Middle College application requirements provided by CMS and Central Piedmont Community College. Admission through the School Choice Lottery does not guarantee continued enrollment; students must meet academic, attendance, behavioral, and program requirements to remain at Cato MCHS.

Continuation

Students must maintain satisfactory academic performance, attendance, behavior, and progress toward program requirements.

- **CMS Expectations**
  - Prospective students whose GPA drops below the admission requirement after the School Choice Lottery may be subject to Academic Probation (listed below) or the district Magnet Continuation Review process with reassignment to the student's neighborhood home school.
  - Students must pass their high school courses and remain on track to complete all CMS graduation requirements by the end of Grade 12.

- **CPCC Expectations**
  - Meet CPCC Standards of Academic Progress.
  - Maintain eligibility for college coursework.
  - Maintain a minimum 2.0 CPCC GPA, subject to current CPCC requirements.
  - Earn a cumulative CPCC GPA of 2.0 or higher by the end of Grade 11 to remain in the program.
  - Students in Grade 12 who do not earn a Fall CPCC GPA of at least 2.0 may be placed on a Middle College academic contract for the Spring semester.
  - Students in Grade 12 who earn below a 2.0 CPCC GPA in both the Fall and Spring semesters are not eligible for the optional Grade 13 year.
  - Students in Grade 12 who meet the Fall CPCC GPA requirement but do not earn at least a 2.0 CPCC GPA in the Spring semester may be placed on an academic contract as a condition of participating in Grade 13.
  - Grade 13 students who do not earn a Fall CPCC GPA of at least 2.0 may be required to participate in mid-year graduation, as determined by the program and applicable requirements.

VI. Transfer or Exit from the Program

Students choosing to leave the Middle College program must:

- Notify school administration.
- Complete any required exit procedures.
- Follow CMS transfer requirements.
- Return to their designated CMS home high school.

Students who do not meet program expectations may be subject to continuation review or reassignment consistent with CMS and CPCC policies.

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Academic Probation and Required Support for Failed College Courses

- Students who fail a college course during the previous semester will be placed on academic probation during the current semester.
- Students on academic probation due to a failed college course are required to report to supervised academic support sessions and complete regular check-ins with designated Cato MCHS staff during the current semester.
- Required academic support may include supervised study sessions, progress monitoring, grade checks, tutoring, academic planning, and communication with Cato MCHS staff regarding college course expectations.
- Students must consistently attend required academic support sessions and participate in assigned check-ins. Failure to consistently attend and participate in required support will jeopardize the student's continuation in the Middle College program and may result in additional administrative review, academic contract requirements, Magnet Continuation Review, or recommendation for reassignment.

VII. Acknowledgment and Agreement

By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read and understand the Middle College School Choice Compact for Cato Middle College High School. We acknowledge that participation in the MiStrong academic effort

- Consistent attendance
- Appropriate behavior
- Effective communication
- Personal responsibility
- Compliance with CMS and CPCC expectations

We acknowledge that continued enrollment depends on meeting applicable academic, attendance, behavioral, and program requirements, and that CMS and CPCC policies may be updated during a student's participation in the program. College program requires:

Student Printed Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____