



Center City Public Charter Schools

Character, Excellence, Service

Student & Family Handbook SY 2026-2027

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Mission & Culture

Mission & Vision

Mission

Center City Public Charter Schools empower our students and families for lifelong success by building moral character, promoting academic excellence, and generating public service throughout Washington, D.C.

Vision

Driven by character, excellence, and service, Center City Public Charter Schools seeks to:

- Foster a community of lifelong learners,
- Graduate students ready to go to and through college; and
- Prepare our alumni to serve and lead others in the 21st century.

Core Values

Character: Achieve with heart.

Excellence: Achieve with greatness.

Service: Achieve with others in mind.

Overview

Center City Public Charter School teaches a broad liberal arts and humanities curriculum to students in PreKindergarten - Eighth Grade. We believe, teach, and live Character, Excellence, and Service. We commit to the intellectual, physical, moral and emotional well-being of each scholar and believe every child can learn, lead and serve. Center City PCS's academic model is built in a disciplined environment that encourages students to strive for excellence in education and their community.

Honor Code

Center City PCS believes that we are each responsible for building and maintaining a positive community where all are valued and can learn. We ask each member of our school community, including our students, to be responsible for his or her actions. Through these statements we commit ourselves to living and working in a manner consistent with our core values:

Today I will show character, excellence, and service;
by treating all with respect and dignity;
by actively engaging in all learning; and
by caring for and protecting my community and environment.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

Center City PCS is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Center City PCS does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, genetic information, status as a victim of an inter-family offense, place of residence, or any other protected characteristics as established by law.

Academic Program

Educational Philosophy

At Center City PCS, we believe that all students can grow into compassionate, curious, and engaged citizens who advocate for themselves and for their communities. Therefore, we commit to providing students with a diverse set of experiences that include a rigorous, socially relevant curriculum and opportunities for service learning. We believe that through these experiences, our students will become self-confident and resilient young adults who are able to think critically, take meaningful risks, and contribute to a productive, just and peaceful global society.

Additionally, we believe in providing the most comprehensive education possible while maintaining the integrity of a small school program. We fully subscribe to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the College, Career, and Civic Life Framework (C3). Our students not only participate in the academic core programs of English Language Arts (ELA), Humanities, Math, and Science, they also engage in enrichment opportunities such as Physical Education (PE), Spanish, Art, Music, Dance, STEM, and Drama as a regular part of their schedule (enrichments vary by campus). This is in addition to a host of extracurricular and club opportunities that prepare our students to get into competitive high schools that will take them to and through college and careers of their choosing. Specific programmatic offerings are described in detail below.

Humanities

Our Humanities curriculum includes a comprehensive research-based literacy program and an English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum that is fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards. In grades K-4, Center City uses the Wilson FUNdations program to help students build foundation skills in phonics, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary, handwriting, and spelling. We also use the Geodes program with students in grades K-2, which includes high-interest decodable texts, in small group reading instruction.

In all grades K-8, students engage with authentic, high-interest literature and visual arts through Wit & Wisdom, a research-based ELA curriculum that engages students in four thematic units of study. Each module includes an anchor text, a wide selection of supplemental fiction and non-fiction texts, and visual art. The curriculum integrates writing instruction at the daily level and each unit ends in a performance task.

Social Studies

In grades K-4, students have the opportunity to delve deeper into the historic content of Wit & Wisdom through the reading of complex nonfiction text in primary and secondary sources. In grades 5-8, students participate in a stand-alone Social Studies course that follows an inquiry design model to authentically engage learners as they develop historical and social science analysis skills. Our curriculum was developed by expert teachers and is aligned to the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework and to the new DC Social Studies Standards.

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Social Studies instruction at Center City is dynamic. Our students do Social Studies. They evaluate the reliability and credibility of sources; gather information from multiple sources with varying perspectives; analyze and critique arguments about the past; and use what they have learned to make claims supported by sound reasoning and relevant evidence. Our students take their arguments and engage key stakeholders; design solutions to problems; and become agents of change in their communities. We use the past as a tool to engage the present and transform our future.

Mathematics

Center City has adopted the Eureka Squared Mathematics curriculum for grades K-8. The Eureka curriculum prioritizes the major work of each grade level, as designated by the PARCC Model Content Framework. Students spend significant time engaging in higher levels of mathematical performance – to persevere in problem-solving, to reason using various mathematical strategies, and to reflect on mistakes, processes, and solutions. Each unit includes opportunities for students to develop procedural skills and fluency while building a solid, conceptual understanding of foundational mathematics content. With a deep conceptual understanding of the content and daily opportunities to apply the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practices, students are empowered to engage in mathematical discussions and to build a level of mathematical literacy that will follow them to high school.

Science

In grades K-4, Center City adopted Ph.D. Science, a Great Minds curriculum that aligns with our Humanities curriculum and with the NGSS. Students investigate scientific phenomena through hands-on exploration, small group collaboration, and non-fiction texts.

Center City adopted the Amplify curriculum for grades 5-8. Amplify utilizes a tech-based and hands-on approach that allows students to learn science through critical thinking and active investigation. Amplify is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and integrates Earth, Life, and Physical Science in all grade levels while building students' capacity to learn both scientific and engineering concepts.

The Arts

Arts offerings vary across the Center City campuses. As such, students may have the opportunity to engage in visual arts, music, dance, drama, Spanish, or STEM enrichment offerings multiple times a week. There are multiple opportunities throughout the school year where students are able to participate in school and district-level performances where they display their talent or work.

Physical and Health Education

Students will have at least two periods of Health and Physical Education (PE) per week. Our PE program includes basic calisthenics and aerobics, as well as team and individual sports. We emphasize the importance of exercise, fitness, and healthy habits to help students develop a positive body image. We build teamwork and good sportsmanship and stress this in the context of several core values, including collaboration, compassion, cooperation, discipline, and respect.

Center City also uses the Health Smart, 2nd Edition curriculum across K-8 to reach the requirements of the DC Health Education Standards. In grades K-4, students engage in lessons that address the following:

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emotional and mental health, personal health and wellness, injury and violence prevention, nutrition and physical activity, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug prevention. In grades 5-8, students continue their study of these topics and begin to discuss healthy relationships and sexual health. To learn more about the DC Health Education Standards, please visit osse.dc.gov/publication/2016-health-education-standards.

Accelerated Math Pathway

In 7th grade, students may be invited to participate in the Accelerated Math Pathway, which includes PreAlgebra in 7th grade and Algebra I in 8th grade. Algebra I is a high school level class, with content that extends above and beyond normal grade-level expectations. As such, participation in this pathway includes a significant time and work commitment from students.

In order to be placed in PreAlgebra in 7th grade, students must meet the following criteria:

- Completed 6th grade Math with a grade of C or higher
- At least TWO of the following:
 - Score at or above the 70th percentile on end of year NWEA MAP for 6-8 Math
 - Score a Level 4 or 5 on DC CAPE Math Assessment for 6th grade
 - Teacher Recommendation

In order to be placed in Algebra I, students must meet the following criteria:

- Completed PreAlgebra with a grade of C or higher
- At least TWO of the following:
 - Score at or above the 70th percentile on end of year NWEA MAP for 6-8 Math
 - Score a Level 4 or 5 on the DC CAPE Math Assessment for 7th grade
 - Teacher recommendation

In order for Center City to recommend placement in Geometry upon transitioning to high school, students must meet the following criteria:

- A final grade of C or higher in Algebra I
- Score at or above the 80th percentile on the NWEA MAP for 6-8 Math
- Teacher recommendation

Curriculum Materials

The following research-based programs and assessments are used in our core subject areas (Humanities, Mathematics, Science):

PreK3 and PreK4

- Primary Resource: Every Child Ready AppleTree Curriculum
- Secondary Resources: Eureka Squared, Heggerty, Foundations

Grades K-4

- Reading & Writing: Wit & Wisdom, Heggerty, Foundations, Geodes
- Math: Eureka Squared

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- Science: PhD Science
- Social Studies: Supplemental Resources

Grades 5-8

- Reading & Writing: Wit & Wisdom
- Math: Eureka Squared
- Science: Amplify Science
- Social Studies: Online databases of primary and secondary sources; supplemental resources

Measuring Student Success

The following assessments allow us to track student growth and achievement:

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

MAP is a computer-adaptive assessment, administered to all of K-8 at the beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the that measures students' growth in Math, ELA, and MS Science (Grades 6-8 only).

Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

DIBELS is a reading foundational skills assessment that measures alphabetic principles, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. DIBELS is administered to grades K-5 three times during the school year. DIBELS helps us identify students who are at risk for dyslexia or who may need additional support in foundational reading.

DC CAPE 2.0

In the spring, all students in grades 3-8 take the computer-based, DC CAPE assessments in math and ELA (English/Language Arts), and 5th and 8th graders take the DC CAPE science assessment. In 2026-27, all DC students will now use a new math and ELA assessment from the Smarter Balanced Consortium which OSSE has named CAPE 2.0.

The ELA assessments require students to demonstrate mastery in reading, listening and speaking, writing, and research and inquiry. The mathematics assessments require students to demonstrate mastery in concepts and procedures, problem solving, communicating reasoning, and modeling and data analysis. In science, students are assessed in the physical sciences, life sciences, and Earth and space sciences.

AppleTree Partnership (PreK3 and PreK4)

Center City PCS is in partnership with AppleTree Institute. As part of the regular program in PreK3 and PreK4, your child's teachers will assess your child's academic and social skills. AppleTree Institute reviews the data internally and with your child's teacher to improve instruction. De-identified data are also shared with staff, consultants, educators, and in educational reports. Within this partnership, AppleTree Institute reserves the right to photograph/videotape students, faculty, staff, and facilities in connection with the activities of the school and to reproduce such images to promote, publicize, or explain the school or its activities. These images may appear in any of a variety of formats and media now

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available or that may be available in the future, including but not limited to print, broadcast, videotape, and electronic/online media. Parents who do not wish to have their child included in the above coverage should inform the principal in writing.

Homework Guidelines

At Center City, we view homework as an opportunity for continued practice, reflection, and extension. Homework is intended to build a sense of personal responsibility, self-discipline, and independent work habits that will benefit students as they prepare for college and beyond.

When used as a practice opportunity, homework can strengthen students' understanding of concepts and skills learned in class.

What is homework?

Homework is defined as tasks assigned by teachers to students that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours. Examples of homework may include, but are not limited to:

- completing worksheets
- visiting museums or other places with an educational focus
- writing essays, poems, or journal entries
- reading novels, newspapers, or magazines (digital and print)
- conducting research for a project, and/or other activities as assigned by the teacher.

How often is homework assigned?

Homework will not necessarily be assigned every night. Rather, homework will be assigned as the teacher sees fit. Students may be given homework on skills in which they need additional practice, or homework may just include reading ahead in a certain text. The quantity of homework may vary in frequency each quarter.

How will I know what homework my student has?

Each campus and/or grade band requires students to use an organizational system which is normed with families at Back to School Night and/or during parent meetings. Students are expected to record assignments at the close of each class using a template or tool normed by the classroom teacher. Common tools include a notebook, agenda book, or a school-provided sheet. Parents are encouraged to monitor student organizational systems and to consult with their child's teacher whenever there is a question about homework.

How much homework should we expect?

When homework is assigned, teachers will ensure that the amount of time required to complete it does not exceed developmentally appropriate guidelines.

These guidelines are as follows:

PreK3-K4	20-30 minutes per week
Grade K	20-30 minutes per week
Grade 1	10 minutes per night
Grade 2	20 minutes per night

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Grade 3	30 minutes per night
Grade 4	40 minutes per night
Grade 5	50 minutes per night
Grade 6	60 minutes per night
Grade 7	70 minutes per night
Grade 8	80 minutes per night

How is homework graded and used to support learning in the classroom?

When homework is assigned, teachers will provide timely and targeted feedback to students so that they may continue to improve their performance towards mastery of grade-level standards. Failure to consistently complete assigned homework will lead to low Character and Participation grades on the report card and/or to other consequences as defined by the teacher and the school leader. If a student consistently fails to complete homework, the parent may be called in for a conference with the teacher and school leader.

Grading System for PreK3 and PreK4

Young students will be graded on their ability to attend to and demonstrate mastery within the domains of physical development, social-emotional development, reading, writing, and number concepts. Students will be graded on the following trajectory based on both concrete and anecdotal notes regarding each of the domains in increasing order: Emerging (EM), Approaching (AP), Progressing (PR), Mastering (MA), or Expanding (EX). These grades are based on the Every Child Ready (ECR) rubric. Students will only receive quarterly report cards, not progress reports, but may still participate in mid-quarter conferences based on data, if necessary.

Grading System for Kindergarten - Grade 2

Students in grades Kindergarten through 2nd will receive quarterly report cards that include a detailed description of how students are progressing on grade-level standards and how well they are able to complete classwork assignments. Additionally, parents will receive information from the DIBELS assessment as an attachment to the report card each quarter that these assessments are administered.

Grading System for Grades 3-8

Center City PCS provides a rigorous academic experience for the students that we serve. To support parents and families in engaging in the academic progress of their children, we use a grading policy that is rigorous, fair, and transparent.

Grades 3-8 Category Weights for Mastery Grades

Core subject areas include Math, Humanities (integrated English Language Arts and Social Studies), and Science. Enrichment and other non-core subject areas may include, PE, Health, Art, Music, Drama, Dance, Spanish, and STEM. Mastery grades reflect a student's progress on grade-level standards and will be calculated using the following guidelines:

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	Percentage	Assignment Descriptions
Formative Assessments	30%	Topic quizzes, short essays or drafts of writing, short projects, etc.
Classwork	30%	Informal writing, daily tasks, problem sets
Summative Assessments	40%	End of module and mid-module assessments, performance tasks, summative projects, presentations, etc.

It is likely that more grades will be recorded in the Formative Assessment and Classwork categories, as students will spend most of their time demonstrating mastery of grade-level standards in the classroom under the guidance of their teachers.

Additionally, there may be instances in which formative assessments are given but are not recorded as grades. Summative assessments include what we traditionally think of as “tests” and will occur less frequently. Teachers should aim to have at least 2 summative assessments in one grading period.

Teachers are required to comprehensively review and grade all Assessments, Performance Tasks, Classwork, and Projects using standards-based criteria and/or rubrics, and immediately upload the grades to PowerSchool. Classwork and other assignments may be quickly reviewed for completeness, group graded, or peer-graded.

Mastery Grade Reporting Requirements for Grades 3-8

Teachers are required to record and report the mandated grades for each student on their roster. In all grades K-8, teachers will report grades in Humanities, Math, Science, PE, and any Enrichment Class.

Letter	Percentage
A+	97 or higher
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79

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C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	59 or lower

Minimum Grade Reporting for Grades 3-8

To balance the need to ensure that mastery grades are truly representative of a student's actual performance and to ensure that students are not able to manipulate a lenient grading policy, the minimum grade recorded will be 40%. If a student is to receive a 40% as a result of a "missing" assignment, that grade must also have the accompanying "M" designation that is available within PowerSchool to indicate to the parent that the grade recorded is a result of an assignment that was never turned in. Missing assignments will also adversely affect participation grades.

Participation Grades for Grades 3-8

The report card will include Participation grades that are separate from the Mastery grade from each core content teacher. The Participation grades will be assigned as indicated in the table below. They should be based on the observations that a teacher makes of students. Participation grades will be given across the following indicators:

- Classwork/project completion
- Participation in-class activities and discussions
- Homework Completion
- Effort and engagement

Character Grades for Grades 3-8

Each student will also receive Character grades. These grades are compiled by each students' team of teachers and are based on observations of the student throughout the quarter. The Character grades will be assigned as indicated in the table below, across the following indicators:

- Treats all with respect
- Accepts responsibility
- Works well independently
- Works cooperatively in groups
- Works cooperatively in groups

Grading Policy for Special Populations

Students with Disabilities will receive grades based on accommodations and modifications outlined on their IEP or 504 plan. Students who are English Learners will receive grades based on accommodations that are appropriate to the student's language proficiency level. They receive the same report card that is used for general education students, which will note progress toward grade-level standards. Students with

Academic Program

Disabilities will receive IEP progress reports four times per year. English Learners will also receive quarterly progress reports that outline growth toward language proficiency goals. Grading for special populations includes the following guidelines:

- Students who are newly arrived in U.S. schools and at the lowest language proficiency level (Level 1 and 2) may receive a grade of N/A in English Language Arts for up to one year if they are exempted from state and/or local testing and cannot demonstrate a basic command of the English language.
- A student that receives accommodations under IDEA or Title III cannot be issued a letter grade of a D or F without a school team meeting and careful consideration of the child's unique needs. Parents should be kept abreast of their child's grades and support on an ongoing basis, and can request a formal team meeting at any time regarding grades.

Progress Reports

To further support parents and families in taking ownership of academic progress as the year moves on, schools will produce and distribute grade details (progress reports) for all core subject areas in grades 3-8. Individual Subject Area Grade Detail Reports will outline each assignment evaluated by the instructor and the grade earned. These progress reports will be printed and sent home to parents by way of their child.

Schools may choose to send two copies of each report, one copy for the parent to keep and the second to be signed by the parent and returned to school. Parents can also monitor student progress by logging into the PowerSchool platform. A user ID and password is required. Please speak to your child's teacher or principal for more information.

The Quarter 4 Report Card will be mailed home at the end of June. All other Quarterly Report Cards will be available for pick up by parents and guardians at Family Conference Days.

Additionally, there are four Mid-Quarter Family-School Conferences: **October, December, March and May.**

Parents/guardians are required to sign and return all report cards and progress reports except for Quarter 4. Parents/guardians are also required to attend all Quarterly Family Conferences and are encouraged to attend all Mid-Quarter Conferences, as they allow families and teachers to share progress, areas of improvement, and areas of strength.

Retention Policy

It is the goal of Center City PCS to ensure that students progress academically in a manner that is developmentally appropriate and commensurate with the growth of their peers. We understand that grade retention as well as grade acceleration are often not an appropriate fix for academic issues and will often lead to impacts that are detrimental to the long-term academic outcomes of students. At the same time, there is a rare set of circumstances that warrant the decision to retain or advance a student.

Academic Program

Students who meet all of the following criteria based upon data from quarters 1-3 may be at risk for retention:

1. For students in grades 3-8: Received a D or an F in both ELA and Math
2. For students in grades K through 2: Has shown proficiency on fewer than 50% of identified grade-level standards in both ELA and Math and has made less than half a year's growth on Reading and Math, as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment.
3. For all students: Received formal interventions in the areas of concern. Additional behavioral and academic data will be considered as well.
4. For all students: Any student with 15 or more excused or unexcused absences may be retained regardless of grades earned.

A parent or guardian may request retention for his/her child via a written letter to the school principal, but the final retention decision will be made by the school team.

For students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504s, ELL Accommodation Plans and students who a Response to Intervention Plan (RTI) the following must be taken into account when reviewing the criteria for retention:

1. Student progress on IEP goals
2. Student growth based upon progress monitoring tools
3. Whether or not the IEP was appropriately implemented
4. Whether or not the student's individual classification precludes them from making sufficient academic progress

Please note: All retentions are made under specific circumstances/under careful consideration and team decision.

Eighth Grade Promotion Policy

Eighth graders must successfully attain mastery in core classes and complete all yearly projects and assignments in order to be promoted. It is the responsibility of the student, with family support, to meet all requirements for promotion. In order to participate in Center City PCS promotional activities, a student must be in good standing behaviorally and not carry a 70 or below grade average in any of their subject areas (Humanities, Mathematics, Science, including all Enrichment Courses).

Campus-based and district-based 8th-grade activities are optional, and participation is at the discretion of the campus principal. Additionally, to participate in the scheduled end-of-year 8th-grade activities, including promotional exercises, a student must maintain a 2.0 GPA for the year and be in good character, behavioral and academic standing.

The valedictorian and salutatorian of each eighth-grade class will be determined by calculating the GPA in the core academic subjects. The principal at each campus will decide if the GPA is calculated over the span of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, or if it is calculated based on 8th grade only. The two highest GPA's based on this methodology will receive recognition. A student must have at least a 3.0 to receive the acknowledgment

Communication & Family Engagement

Family Engagement

At Center City PCS, we believe that families are integral to student success and that effective family engagement will increase parent satisfaction as well as support the culture of the school community. The foundation of student success is relationship building.

What Center City PCS Expects of Families	What Families Can Expect from Center City PCS
Maintain high expectations for their children (Parent Conferences)	Regular communication via phone and email messaging (other campus communication tools)
Monitor their children's performance (Parent Portal-PowerSchool)	Campus newsletters and other communication methods. Newsletters/bulletins may provide information about campus activities and programs, as well as, critical highlights and information.
Ensure a positive learning environment (Volunteer Opportunities, Clear Behavior Expectations, Participate in Family Survey)	Good news calls and relationship-building visits. Teachers will reach out to families during the summer to schedule relationship-building visits.
Advocate for their children (Family/Community Events & Academic Parent Teacher Teams)	If your contact information changes, please alert your campus main office immediately.
Regularly check students' backpacks and folders and sign any necessary documents.	Translation and interpretation of family-facing documents and meetings
Regularly check email and voicemail.	

Our academic partnering models (APTT, GSPTC, SLC) include strategies for sharing student data, establishing student goals, and providing families with activities to practice foundational skills with their children at home. We encourage families to attend all academic partnering meetings each quarter and set up meetings between quarters to address any concerns you may have. All staff members have email addresses and make every effort to follow up with parents/guardians as soon as possible. Please allow at least two school days for a response. Please contact the campus main office for assistance and guidance.

Examples of family engagement opportunities may include, but are not limited to (detailed information available at your campus):

- Campus Celebrations and programs (Honor Roll Assemblies, Winter Concerts, etc.)
- Community-wide Events Relationship Building Home Visits
- Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT)
- Goal Setting Parent-Teacher Conferences (GSPTC)
- Student-Led Conferences (SLC)
- Monitoring Academic Performance
- High School Placement Process

Communication & Family Engagement

Language Access

Center City PCS aims to ensure that all multilingual parents are provided with a meaningful opportunity to participate in and have access to programs and services critical to their child's education. Center City PCS offers interpretation services in the most common languages other than English spoken by parents of Center City PCS children. Center City PCS will translate documents containing critical information regarding a student's education in the major languages and will make translation and interpretation services available to parents.

Family Code of Conduct

We expect our students, faculty, and staff to operate in Character, Excellence, and Service, and we expect the same from our parent/guardian/family community. The speech, actions, and attire (dress) of all adults that our students encounter daily have an impact. It is imperative that everyone supports a peaceful and safe school environment.

We respectfully ask that when visiting the campus, remain aware of what is being modeled for our young future leaders through our speech and actions. To this end, any visitors, including parents/ guardians, choosing to engage in disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior toward students, staff, or other community members while on school property or off, may be permanently barred from the building and all school-related events.

The following are examples of such behaviors (but is not limited to this list):

- Breaching the campus security procedures
- Inappropriate or defaming use of social media
- Abusive or threatening emails, text, voicemail, or other written communication
- Endangering the physical safety of another by the use of force or the threat of force
- Intoxication/Being under the influence
- Failure to model and support Center City values and character expectations
- Interrupting class while in session
- Refusal to leave a class or the school building when asked to do so
- Addressing any student other than your own
- Using profanity or raising your voice to cause disruption
- Engaging in any illegal activities

Family Survey

Parents/guardians are our educational partners. As we partner to ensure every student is successful, your feedback is valued. Families are encouraged to participate in our annual organizational family survey, as well as any other opportunities throughout the school year.

Communication & Family Engagement

DC Says School Climate Survey

In the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) 2023-25 Strategic Plan, the agency committed to administering school climate surveys of students, educators, school-based staff, and caregivers. Center City values your input! Please take this anonymous survey to share feedback with your child's school and district – it will help us to better support our students and our school community.

Volunteering

Center City PCS requires all volunteers, including parents and guardians, to submit to a background check prior to helping in our schools. Forms for the background check can be found in the school office. Center City reserves the right to consider the results of background checks in its decisions to allow participation as a chaperone or in a volunteer capacity.

Volunteers shall not be permitted to administer student discipline, nor will they be permitted to administer first aid, except in the case of an emergency. Volunteers shall not be permitted to review, disclose, or use confidential student information, nor should volunteers participate in conversations in which confidential student information is disclosed. Each volunteer shall keep strictly confidential all information he or she may learn about the students or staff during the course of volunteering at Center City PCS.

All volunteers are responsible for any expenses incurred while volunteering, including fees or food expenses during Center City PCS-sponsored field trips. Check with your campus for specific information, expectations, and guidance.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year to provide students with learning and recreational opportunities outside the traditional classroom. Participating students must submit a completed field trip permission slip. These forms provide parents/guardians with information about the purpose of the trip, destination, date and time, mode of transportation, and cost per student.

Students are not permitted to attend any field trip without a CCPCS permission slip on file. Behavior and daily on-time attendance will be considered in determining if a student is permitted to participate. School administrators will make the final determination regarding student eligibility for field trips. In special situations, some students may be required to be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Chaperones may not bring other children or siblings on field trips. Please confirm with your campus regarding background check requirement.

Athletic & Extracurricular Activities

Co-ed sports programs are offered to students throughout the school year. To participate, students must be in good academic and character standing. Parents/guardians must submit a completed registration form and activity fee, if applicable. Additional communication will be sent to parents/guardians regarding athletic and extracurricular activities offered and corresponding schedules. Note: Siblings of students participating in these activities must be picked up at dismissal unless enrolled in after-care.

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Telephone Use

Telephone calls by students are not permitted unless permission is granted by the office. Telephone calls will be made by school personnel in case of an emergency. Students will not be called out of class to answer telephone calls made to the school office; however, the main office will deliver emergency messages to a student in the classroom. Parents/guardians are expected to adhere to campus-specific protocols.

Personal Electronic Device Policy

The use of personal electronic devices, including cell phones and smart watches, in school, at any time, including during before- and after-care, is strictly prohibited. The policies regarding students and cell phones are as follows:

- Personal electronic devices must be turned off and turned in to the office at the beginning of the day (or as defined by campus protocol)
- Personal electronic devices discovered in a student's possession or in a student's desk/cubby/locker will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian.
- Repeated violations will result in the device being confiscated and the student losing the privilege to bring the device onto school property.
- Center City PCS is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal electronic devices.

Other Electronic Devices

Portable music players, Apple Watches, iPods, PDAs, cameras, electronic games, laser pointers, tablets, and all other electronic devices and toys that are not part of the academic or extracurricular program are prohibited on Center City PCS campuses. Any of these items found/used at school will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian. Center City PCS is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of any of these items.

Social Media and Responsible Technology Use Policy

Student use of the internet is an important component of classroom research and learning. Center City PCS computer systems and networks are any combination of hardware, software, and online services provided for and used for these purposes. The use of these resources and access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right.

Center City PCS is committed to supervising students while they use the internet. Center City PCS does not take responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through the Center City PCS Internet connection. Unacceptable materials downloaded at school will be treated in the same manner as any other unacceptable materials brought to school. Each student assumes full responsibility and liability while using the school's computing technology and Internet connection.

Unacceptable Uses

Students will not use the school's systems to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit, or distribute:

- Obscene, pornographic, or sexually explicit messages or pictures

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- Obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language
- Materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process
- Information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process
- Materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination
- Bullying, harassing, insulting, or threatening others
- Use of social media sites for personal use (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Willful destruction of computer and/or networking equipment
- Violating copyright laws usage licensing agreements
- Submitting documents from the Internet as student's personal work (plagiarism)

Students will not use the school's systems to compromise confidentiality by:

- Using another person's sign-on and/or password
- Sharing passwords with other students
- Revealing personal identifying information (e.g. phone number, name, or address of self or others)
- Accessing, modifying, or deleting other student or staff member's folder, work, or files without permission
- Using the Internet and other school computing resources for commercial or political purposes
- Bypassing or disabling technology protection measures (e.g. content filtering, anti-virus, etc.) managed by the school district's Information Technology Department

NOTE: Check with campus leader for additional campus expectations.

Uniform Policy

Center City PCS takes pride in the appearance of its students as ambassadors of their schools. Check with your campus leader for more details.

Uniform Requirements

**Center City is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items or garments.*

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Shirts/Top	In cold weather, students may wear solid (no design or prints) blue, or red long-sleeved shirts underneath their blue/red CCPCS shirt. Students may also wear a solid blue or black cardigan sweater or fleece jacket with no hood. PreK3 - 5th Grade • White or navy polo-style shirt with Center City PCS logo OR without Center City PCS logo • White Oxford-style button-down shirt WITH Center City PCS logo (if families still have this item) along with red crossbow/red tie • Navy blue Center City t-shirt 6th - 8th Grade • Red polo-style shirt with OR without Center City PCS logo • Red Center City t-shirt • White Oxford-style button down shirt WITH Center City PCS logo (if families still have this item) along with red crossbow/red tie
Bottoms	• Navy pants /shorts or navy/ Center City plaid skort • All skorts and shorts must be an appropriate length, falling right above the knee. • No cargo pants, stretch, spandex, jeans, joggers, jeggings, or leggings. • <i>Uniform bottoms should not fit too tightly. Any bottom more than two inches above the knee is a uniform violation.</i>
Shoes and Socks	• Consult with campus leader for shoe policy • Navy or white socks/tights (no designs/must be solid navy or white) • No open-toed, platform, flip-flops, wedge, high-heeled shoes, or Crocs are permitted
Physical Education Uniform	Students will wear the following on days they have physical education class: • Ash grey T-shirt with Center City PCS logo • Navy mesh shorts with Center City PCS logo • Ash grey sweatshirt with Center City PCS logo • Navy sweatpants with Center City PCS logo
Belts	• Plain black, navy, or brown belt

Jewelry, Headwear, Makeup, Piercings, and Other Distractions to Learning

School administrators will determine if clothing is appropriate for school and complies with district rules.

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NOTE: PLEASE CHECK WITH CAMPUS LEADER FOR CAMPUS SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS.

Consequences for Dress Code Violations

Students are expected to adhere to the dress code outlined above at all times unless otherwise specified by their campus leader.

- Minor infractions occur when students do not wear the school uniform appropriately (un-tucked shirt, sagging pants, popped collars, rolled-up pants, etc.). These violations may result in loss of privilege and possibly, detention for repeated redirection in this area.
- Major infractions of the dress code occur when a student is not wearing specific components of the correct uniform, or when the uniform is incomplete or inappropriate for school.

Desk, Locker, Cubby Use Policy

All students are provided with their own desk, cubby, and/or locker. Depending on the campus that your child attends and the grade that your child is in, a locker may or may not be assigned. We are happy to assign lockers for student use at our campuses and it is important to note that lockers are the property of Center City PCS and are a privilege that are not a required part of our academic program. When a student is assigned a locker, they are required to:

- Keep the locker in clean condition and free of any materials not supporting the academic program of Center City PCS
- Prohibit other students from using their assigned locks or lockers and refuse to use the lock and locker of any other students
- Immediately report problems with their locker to the school principal or middle school lead administrator

Desk, Locker, and Cubby Rules

Students will be held responsible for any stolen or damaged school materials that are stored in their desk, locker, or cubby. Center City PCS reserves the right to search any desk, cubby, or locker at any time for any or no reason, including confiscating suspected contraband or for health and safety reasons. If necessary, Center City PCS may need to cut off the lock in order to conduct a search. Students are not allowed to put any permanent markings or stickers on any part of their lockers, desks, cubbies, and/or locks. Students must clean their desks, lockers, and cubbies frequently and care for all stored school materials and property.

Additional Locker Rules

Students will provide their own lock for their locker. The school may or may not choose to provide a lock if the student is unable to do so. Students will immediately report problems with their locker to the school principal or middle school lead. Students will clear out their locker by the announced deadline at the end of the school year. Damaged lockers will incur a fine of \$100. Violation of locker policies will be enforced using the Student Code of Conduct.

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School Safety and Adult Conduct

Center City Public Charter Schools is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all students.

All employees, volunteers, and contractors are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students at all times. Any form of abuse, neglect, or inappropriate conduct toward a student is strictly prohibited.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate physical contact
- Inappropriate communication with students
- Any behavior that may be interpreted as misconduct or a violation of professional boundaries

All staff and designated volunteers are mandated reporters and are required by law to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the DC Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA).

If a parent, guardian, or community member has concerns about an adult's conduct toward a student, they should report them immediately to a school leader or the Central Office.

Center City will respond promptly to all reports and take appropriate action to ensure student safety.

Child & Family Services Agency Mandated Reporting

Every staff member and long-term volunteer at Center City PCS is a “mandated reporter” and required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to DC Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA). Below are the process and guidelines that Center City staff members and volunteers must follow.

Anyone involved in the care and treatment of children under the age of 18 is considered “mandatory reporters” and is required to report cases of child abuse and neglect. According to DC Code 2-1357, any mandatory reporter who fails to make a report will be fined or imprisoned. If any child abuse or neglect is suspected, mandated reporters must immediately call D.C. Child and Family Services Administration (CFSA) reporting hotline at (202) 671-SAFE (671-7233), even if all the information is unavailable.

If requested, reporters may be required to follow up with a written report. Once an abuse report is filed, CFSA will assess and investigate the case. CFSA determines the nature, extent, and cause of child maltreatment and assesses possible risks to the child if left in the situation. Please note that staff members who report suspected abuse or neglect are not allowed to disclose the report to parents or guardians.

Education Neglect

Educational neglect is the failure of a parent/guardian to ensure that a child attends school consistent with the requirements of the law, including without limitation, the failure to enroll a school-age child in an educational institution or provide appropriate private instruction; permitting habitual absenteeism from school; inattention to special education needs; refusal to allow or failure to obtain recommended remedial

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education services; or the failure to obtain treatment or other special education services without reasonable cause. Please note that CFSA will be contacted in cases of educational neglect.

Attendance Policy

It is the expectation that all students attend school on all school calendar days, whether designated in-person or virtual. Regular attendance is vital to student development and academic success. Center City realizes some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But we also know that when students miss too much school—excused or unexcused—they can fall behind academically.

School hours are from 8:30am to 3:30pm (Wednesday 8:30am-1:30pm). Students must be present in school for 60% of the day to be counted as present; otherwise, they are recorded absent per the rules defined below. Per DC Attendance Laws, students who miss more than 40% of the school day are marked “partial day absent.” Partial day absences count the same as a full day absence for reporting purposes.

NOTE: *Partial attendance will apply if a student arrives at or after 9:55 and leaves at or before 2:55.*

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school before the school day starts at 8:30am. School doors open at 8:15am. Any student arriving after 8:30am must report to the school office to receive a late slip before entering the morning meeting or going to class. Tardiness is noted on a student’s progress report and report card. Excessive tardiness will require intervention from school leadership and/or district agencies.

Dismissal

Students must have signed authorized pick-up and transportation forms on file stating how they are to be dismissed and to whom. Written documentation must be provided by a parent/guardian if a student needs to leave in a different manner. If a student needs to leave early for the day, advanced notification is appreciated. If a parent comes to pick up a child within an hour of dismissal they may be asked to wait. Excessive early dismissals impact students required instructional time and will be addressed in the same manner as absences and tardiness.

If the parent/guardian or other approved dismissal party will be late because of an emergency, please contact the school office as soon as possible. Traffic is an ongoing challenge in our communities – please exercise caution, civility, and patience. If a student is not picked up by 3:45pm (unless enrolled in a CCPCS aftercare program), Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and the police will be contacted. Additionally, a late pickup fee may be assessed.

Absences

Center City PCS is committed to on-time attendance for all students. By law, student attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be in school for the entire day unless the absence is excused. Note excused and unexcused absences impact a student’s academic performance, access to instructional opportunities as well as, social and emotional skill development.

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Unexcused Absence	ANY absence that does not fall into one of the categories listed OR any absence where the parent/guardian does not provide a written valid excuse within 3 days of a student's return to school is considered unexcused. In order to ensure that Center City PCS is aware of the whereabouts of its students, the following steps will be taken in response to unexcused absences:
1st	School will contact the parent/guardian to request written documentation via Robocall (Parents have 5 days to provide written documentation to provide a reason for absence).
3rd	School will refer the student to the Attendance Team. Attendance Team will: • make reasonable and diligent efforts to communicate and collaborate with the student's parent or guardian; • review and address the student's attendance and determine the underlying cause for the unexcused absences; • communicate and collaborate with the student's IEP team (if applicable); • provide timely response to the student's truant behavior; • make recommendations for academic, diagnostic, or social services; • use school and community resources to improve the student's attendance including referral to a community-based organization when available, and; • develop and implement an action plan in consultation with the student and student's parent or guardian
5th	Parent/Guardian will be required to meet with the school principal/designee and the School Counselor to determine an action plan to remedy truancy.
10th	Child family services will be contacted for children ages 5-13. The parent will receive a copy of the Truancy Prevention Resource published by OSSE.
20th	Students age 14 and over will be referred to the Court Social Services Division of the D.C. Superior Court and Office of the Attorney General Juvenile Section.

Center City PCS retains the right to validate absence excuses at the campus' discretion.

Below are the categories for valid excused absences:

- Illness or other legitimate medical cause experienced by the student
- Exclusions, by direction of DC authorities, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical reasons
- Death in a student's immediate family

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- Necessity for a student to attend judiciary or administrative proceedings as a party to the action or under a subpoena
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by school authorities
- Temporary closing of school facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions(s) or emergency requiring a school closing or suspension of classes
- Failure of DC to provide transportation in cases where there is a legal responsibility for transportation of the student
- Medical or dental appointments for the student
- Absences to allow students to visit their parent or a legal guardian, who is in the military; immediately before, during, or after deployment
- An emergency or other circumstance approved by Center City PCS administrators.

Additional Attendance Interventions

- After five consecutive absences, a home visit may be warranted.
- After fifteen or more absences (excused or unexcused), a student may be required to repeat the current grade level regardless of grades earned. Excessive tardies and absences will be factored into retention decisions.
- After twenty consecutive absences, a student will be considered as having withdrawn from Center City PCS and will be automatically unenrolled on the 20th day. Proof of enrollment into another LEA will be requested.
- A student enrolled in PK3 or PK4 that has an attendance rating of 75% or less during Q1 or Q2 may lose their enrollment spot.

Please note, travel plans that require a student to miss a week of school are discouraged. The absences will be unexcused.

Student Records Policy

Center City PCS complies with all federal and District of Columbia regulations regarding student privacy. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. The relevant sections of FERPA are included in Appendix A. Parents/guardians of current students may access their student's file by request at the school office or from the FERPA administrator at our Central Office. Please allow at least a five (5) business day notice to obtain a copy of your student's records.

Media, Photographs, Publications Policy

The media release grants Center City PCS, and any school-approved partner (third-party entity), permission to take and use photographs and video of our students. Photos and videos may be used on social media, the website, ads, and other promotional materials. These materials benefit our schools by helping us share the great teaching and learning taking place in our schools and thereby raising our profile among parents, teacher candidates, and external stakeholders. As part of the enrollment process, all

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parents must complete a media release form to indicate whether they give consent for their child to appear in photos and videos.

Admission Preference

Center City honors 4 enrollment preferences in the following order:

1. Sibling Attending - Sibling already attends
2. Sibling Offered - No sibling currently attends but has already been offered a seat
3. Transfer - Transfer from another Center City school
 - a. Transfer requests can be requested at any time by contacting My School DC
 - b. Once approved, the student will be added to the campus waitlist
 - c. If/when a seat becomes available the parent(s) will be notified
4. Staff - Child of a part-time or full-time employee at any Center City school

Preferences do not guarantee placement. In order to increase the likelihood of a desired outcome, please submit the preference request prior to the annual MSDC lottery deadline.

Before & After Care Program

Center City PCS's Before Care is a fee-based, morning child care program. The program is open to students in PreK3 through 8th grade.

Before Care

Before Care operates Monday-Friday starting at 7:00am. Students may arrive between 7:00 - 7:30am, students may not be dropped off or left outside the building earlier than 7:00am. Doing so may result in a report to CFSA or dismissal from the Before Care Program. Students who arrive after 7:30am will not be admitted into Before Care. The 7:30am cut-off ensures that all participants will receive at least 30 minutes of academic programming, such as homework help, morning energizers, and time to utilize our online interventions. Parents must escort their child into the building and sign them in for Before Care.

After Care

The fee-based Center City PCS After Care program operates from 3:30pm - 6:00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and from 1:30pm - 6:00pm on Wednesdays. The focus is on homework completion and other interventions as determined by the campus leader. Students will have a minimum of 120 minutes of dedicated homework time per week during the program.

After Care Homework Completion

We believe that homework completion should be a shared effort between After Care staff and home. The expectation is not that students are to complete homework during After Care.

Most students are able to complete at least half of their homework during the 30-45 minutes of homework time during After Care.

Parents are required to sign-in at AM drop off and sign-out at PM pick-up.

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Late Pick-Up Policy

Families who fail to pick-up their child from After Care by 6:00pm will be charged \$2/per minute/per child for every minute after 6:00PM that their child remains. This rule will be strictly enforced.

Failure to pay all late pickup fees and late payment fees during the billing cycle in which they were incurred will result in your child's dismissal from the program until payment is made and the account has a \$0 balance. Pickups after 6:15PM may result in a report to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), and after a 3rd late pick-up, your child may be dismissed from the program until the subsequent school year.

Before & After Care Payment Policy

Payment for each extended day program is due on the 15th of every month (*this applies even if the 15th is a Saturday or Sunday*). Failure to submit payment on time will result in the suspension of services until the account has a \$0 balance. This may also result in your child losing their spot in the program to a family on our extended day waitlist. If your child loses their spot in the program, you will be required to reapply, and your application will be processed in the order received.

No refunds or credits will be issued if the child cannot participate in the program during a paid-f month including, but not limited to, instances of non-participation for absences, discipline, sudden withdrawal or holidays.

If a child who is not participating due to non-payment arrives at before care, CFSA may be called. If a child who is not participating due to non-payment arrives at After Care, the student will be sent to the school office and CFSA may be called if the student is not picked up within 30 minutes of school dismissal time.

What is the cost of before and after care?

- Before Care Only M-F: \$85 per child per month
- After Care Wednesday Only: \$70 per child per month
- After Care Only M-F: \$180 per child per month
- Before and After Care: \$195 per child per month

Is there a sibling discount for extended day?

A five percent (5%) discount is offered for each additional child enrolled in the same programs.

What forms of payment are accepted for Center City PCS Extended Day programs?

Center City PCS accepts all major credit cards and debit account payments. No cash, checks, money orders, or cashier checks are accepted under any circumstances. All payments should be made through our EZ Child Track link www.ezchildtrack.com/parentportal/?c=centercitypcs.

Center City PCS does not accept subsidy vouchers as payment for the program.

Can my child register for Extended Day programs only on certain days?

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You may elect for your child to attend aftercare only on Wednesday at a specified cost. Otherwise, registration is for the entire month. There are no drop-ins, and costs are not prorated for any reason. Please check with Central Office for an updated fee schedule.

How do I enroll my child in Extended Day programs?

All families interested in participating in Extended Day programs must complete registration via EZ Child Track (www.ezchildtrack.com/parentportal/?c=centercitypcs). If you need assistance with the registration process, please contact your Campus Operations Manager and they will direct calls as applicable. Families are responsible for making the monthly payment, on-time, every month to maintain your child's placement in the program.

How do I remove my child from an Extended Day program?

Families who wish to discontinue their child's participation in any Extended Day program must complete a Cancellation of Service form. Forms can be found on our website at https://centercitypcs.org/for-families/before_aftercare/. All service changes must be made by the 15th of the month preceding the month that you would like to cancel (i.e. in order to cancel services for October, the service change must be submitted by September 15th) to prevent billing for the upcoming month. Families who do not submit a Cancellation of Service form by the 15th will be billed a \$20.00 processing fee to close out the account.

Is there still Before or After Care if school is closed, delayed, or dismissed early?

Programs are not provided when there are school closures or holidays. For delayed starts, before care will not operate but After Care will operate. After Care is not provided when there are early school closures due to weather or emergencies.

Do you offer breakfast or snack?

Before Care does not offer breakfast. Breakfast is offered at the beginning of the regular school day. After Care offers a snack during program hours.

Do you accept vouchers?

We DO NOT accept vouchers for the Extended Day program. Our goal is to keep our fees affordable. Families are not charged any additional fees for the activities we provide.

Is there preferential treatment for returning applicants?

No, all applications are processed in the order received. If the program is at capacity, your child will be placed on the waitlist.

SEE EXTENDED DAY HANDBOOK (on website or available at campus).

Health, Safety, & Inclement Weather

Illness & Medication Policy

Center City PCS strives to maintain a healthy and safe school environment. We ask parents/guardians not to send their children to school with any contagious diseases such as the flu, strep throat, chickenpox, measles, pink eye, ringworm, scabies, or lice. Please notify us promptly if your child is diagnosed with one of these contagious diseases. Students with any of these conditions will be sent home from school until they are no longer contagious.

Parents must pick up their child within two hours of being notified that their child is sick with a contagious illness. Center City PCS may request that the parent/guardian provide a doctor's note showing that their child is no longer contagious. Please notify the front office if you discover that your child may have been exposed to a contagious disease.

Children should not attend school within 24 hours of vomiting or running a fever of 100 degrees or higher. Students should not return to school until 24 – 36 hours after beginning the course of antibiotics.

If a student is ill, the student will not be permitted to attend school the following day. Please do not send your child to school in the morning if:

- Has a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Has evidence of a severe head cold, persistent cough, or sore throat
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea
- Has a suspicious skin rash or is contagious (i.e. pink eye, head lice, bed bugs)

Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Lice

If your child has lice we ask that the child is treated thoroughly. Upon return, your child needs to be re-checked by our designated staff member BEFORE returning to the classroom. If additional nits/eggs are found, the child will need to return home for additional treatments. Please consult your child's pediatrician regarding the most effective treatments for lice removal.

Bed bugs

Bed bugs are parasitic insects that feed exclusively on blood and are mainly active at night but are not exclusively nocturnal. A common bed bug prefers human blood and typically feeds on its hosts without being noticed. Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease but cause reasonable distress and health concerns for many people. Any staff member who observes what may be a bed bug and/or bed bug bites on a student shall send the student to the school nurse/main office. The principal will contact the student's parent/guardian.

Any student suspected of having bed bugs in their home or on or in their possessions will be treated with discretion, dignity, and respect. The district will offer the student counseling if needed.

Health, Safety, & Inclement Weather

Physical Security

Access to each campus is limited to school personnel, enrolled students, and authorized guests. Access and monitoring are performed with the following systems:

- All-access is gained through locked entry doors via an electronic key fob system. Each entry is logged.
- Each campus has video surveillance equipment to monitor entry, egress, and other high-traffic areas.
- Each campus has an alarm system that uses an array of sensors to warn of unauthorized entry after-hours. All arming and disarming events of this system are logged and monitored.

Early Childhood Toileting Policy

Students must be potty trained before beginning at Center City PCS. While we recognize that young students have accidents, we cannot spend valuable learning time changing clothes and attending to the individual bathroom needs of all students in a classroom. All PK3 and PK4 classes take several bathroom breaks each day and have frequent opportunities to use the restroom at will during the day. However, as our students continue to grow and develop they may occasionally have an accident. For this reason, we require that all families send two (2) changes of uniform clothes in a labeled Ziploc bag to school. One change of clothes will remain in your child's cubby and/or in his/her book bag. We do not provide extra clothes for students at school. If he/she has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, a family member will be called to bring the appropriate items. Accidents should be a rare occurrence.

Our students are given frequent bathroom breaks, and most classrooms have built-in bathrooms. Families of students with frequent accident challenges will be asked to meet with the principal to address the issue. Students with several accidents (5 or more) in a month will be required to have additional assistance from a family member during a school day or stay at home to address those potty-training issues.

In the event of an accident, teachers will provide students with a change of clothes from their cubby/backpack, a bag for soiled clothes, body wipes, and paper towels (if needed). Teachers will then direct students to put on their clean clothes and place bagged soiled clothes in their backpacks.

In the event that teachers need to help the youngest students change, it will be done in the following manner: while wearing gloves, teachers will help unbutton/button pants, remove shoes and socks, and pull-down pants from the feet. Teachers will not, at any time, touch any area of a student's body that would be covered by a bathing suit or close the bathroom stall door with a teacher and student inside. This policy excludes students for reasons associated with a disability.

Medical Appointments

Parents/guardians are discouraged from making medical appointments during the school day. If a student must attend a medical appointment, the parent/guardian must pick the student up from school. Students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds without the physical presence of a parent/guardian to sign them out of school in the main office.

Health, Safety, & Inclement Weather

Allergy Notification

All parents/guardians are asked to provide the school with necessary information and documentation regarding your student's food allergies. Any information provided by a parent/guardian about a student's food allergies will be kept on file and shared with the student's teachers and campus meal service staff.

Administration of Medication Policy

Students are not permitted to be in possession of over-the-counter (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.) or prescription medication in school, as they may not self-administer any form of medication. The school will publish a list of personnel trained and certified to provide medication in case of emergency. The procedure for obtaining parental/guardian consent and physician medication administration authorization permitting authorized personnel to administer prescribed medications to students in school is outlined below:

- Parents/guardians of students who must take OTC or prescribed medication during the school day must bring the medication to the school office with a written note (on letterhead or prescription pad) from the doctor to grant the school permission to administer medication. In lieu of a written note, the student's physician may complete, in layperson terms, Part 2 of the School Permission for the Administration of Medication Release and Indemnification Agreement form.
- No medication will be accepted by authorized personnel without the receipt of the appropriate medication authorization form (completed without deletion or alteration by the student's parent/guardian and physician).
- The parent/guardian must provide an updated form for each new school year or anytime there is a change to the medication or dosage.
- When medication is prescribed for a limited period, medication requests must be renewed whenever medication is prescribed again

The medication should be sealed in its original container and labeled with:

- Student's full name and grade
- Name of the medication
- Correct dosage of the medication to be taken during school
- Frequency of the dose to be administered
- Purpose of the medication
- Emergency contact information for the responsible party
- Contact information for the health care practitioner
- Special instructions or emergency procedures

In the case of self-administered medication, the parent must provide confirmation that the student has been instructed in the proper technique for self-administration and has demonstrated the ability to self-administer the medication effectively. No student shall possess or self-administer medication at the school, school-sponsored activities, or while on school-sponsored transportation unless the school has a valid medication action plan for the student. Parents must sign a written authorization and release from liability allowing trained school personnel to administer medication to a student.

Health, Safety, & Inclement Weather

Parents/guardians with concerns regarding their student's health should discuss their concerns with the principal and/or classroom teacher.

Food Allergen Policy

Food allergies are rising, and food safety and public health concerns are growing in schools nationwide. An estimated 5.6 million children have food allergies, and every three minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room. Food allergy is the most common cause of potentially life-threatening reactions, also known as anaphylaxis. Immediate administration of epinephrine is the first line of treatment for severe allergic reactions.

To ensure that District schools are prepared to manage an anaphylactic emergency, the DC Council passed the Access to Emergency Epinephrine in Schools Amendment Act of 2015 (the Act), which was later signed into law by Mayor Muriel Bowser in 2016.

The Act and subsequent regulations mandate public and public charter schools in the District to have:

- A minimum of two undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors of each dose are to be used in the event of an anaphylactic emergency.
- A minimum of two staff members, outside of the school nurse, trained in identifying an anaphylactic reaction and the emergency administration of epinephrine.

Center City PCS requires all Administrative Assistants and Operations Managers to complete and maintain Epinephrine Injector Certification.

Center City schools are peanut-free zones to better comply with OSSE mandates regarding allergen awareness and safety in schools. Food that contains peanuts is barred from our school breakfast, lunch, and snack service.

Students can bring items to school for breakfast or lunch if the serving size is individually portioned and items are not shared with other students.

Outside vendors, student celebrations, or any other eating occasion must not include food that contains peanuts.

Center City PCS collects allergen information for every student during enrollment. Records are reviewed routinely to ensure all reasonable accommodations are met.

Inclement Weather/School Closings

Snow, rain, and excessive heat may result in closure, early dismissal, or delayed opening. Information about school closings or delayed start will be available through any of the following:

Health, Safety, & Inclement Weather

Radio Station	WTOP (103.5)
Television	WRC/NBC News Channel 4 WTTG FOX News Channel 5 WJLA ABC News Channel 7 News Channel 8 WUSA News Channel 9
School Messenger	Voice/text/email messages (please make sure updates to contact information are provided to campus front office staff)
Online	www.centercitypcs.org

Student Support

Response To Intervention and Student-Teacher Assistance Team

Center City PCS provides support to ensure learning and development for our diverse student needs through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Students in need of academic and behavioral support are provided interventions to address areas of need and monitored through the Response to Intervention (RTI) program. Students are referred for intervention based on a variety of screening tools, including beginning -of-year benchmarks, curriculum-based assessments, observation and careful review of student work samples. Parents may also refer students by contacting their child's classroom teacher. The RTI program is overseen at each campus by an interventionist and includes teachers, an administrator, and if relevant, behavior support staff and related services providers.

Students may eventually be referred for special education evaluation if data indicates they have not made adequate progress and the team suspects an underlying disability. Students may also be referred for special education evaluation without completing interventions in the RTI process if there is reason to suspect a disability before the process is completed.

Dyslexia

Per requirements outlined in the Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020, Center City will use the DIBELS assessment as a screening tool to determine which students are at risk for reading failure and inform intervention needs. Center City's instructional staff will also undergo yearly training on the topic of reading difficulties.

Students with Disabilities

Our goal at Center City is to educate students with disabilities in the general education classroom as much as possible. To meet our goal of inclusion, special and general education teachers work closely to ensure lesson delivery and materials are designed to meet students' individual needs. Students who require intensive remediation may receive part of their instruction outside the classroom in a small group or one-to-one setting as determined by their IEP. Student progress is monitored continuously to ensure students are demonstrating growth and to inform necessary changes to a student's IEP.

At Center City, students are typically referred to the special education process through the RTI process. Parents, school personnel, and outside agencies may also request special education evaluation in person or in writing, after which the parent will be invited to attend a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting to review data and determine whether special education evaluation is necessary. Parent consent is required prior to the evaluation, and as required, formal assessments will be conducted at no cost to the parent in all areas of concern. Eligibility decisions for special education are determined through a MDT decision and require careful consideration of student data and IDEA eligibility criteria.

Students eligible for special education services receive supports as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which may include specialized instruction, related services, as well as supplemental aids that are designed to promote their development as learners.

Student Support

Students with documented disabilities or medical conditions who are not eligible for special education services may be eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A 504 Plan designates specific accommodations that a student may need to alleviate impairments that impact their ability to access the learning environment. At the campus level, the school counselor acts as the 504 Team Chair and leads meetings to determine eligibility and create and update 504 Accommodations Plans.

Child Find

Center City has an affirmative obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate students who may be in need of special education services. A parent is not required to request an evaluation in order for Center City to refer a student for an evaluation. If there is reason to suspect that a student has a disability and requires special education, Center City will refer that student for an evaluation to determine if he/she needs an IEP or 504 plan.

For questions about Center City's services for students or your rights as a parent under Section 504 or IDEA, please contact:

Miakoda Atkins-Mose
Senior Director of Student Support
202-589-0202 xt140
mmose@centercitypcs.org

Parents can also learn more about their rights under IDEA by referring to the Part B Procedural Safeguards available from their campus administrator or located on OSSE's website.

English Language Development Program

Center City PCS provides comprehensive English Language Development (ELD) programming to students whose primary language is not English. Students qualify for the ELD Program following identification from the Home Language Survey and then take a standardized placement exam. Each student that qualifies for the ELD program receives an individualized English Learner Plan (ELP). These plans are customized for each student and include goals in the language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Inclusion teachers work hand-in-hand with general education teachers to adapt grade-level curriculum and incorporate language scaffolds to differentiate instruction and provide individualized support to students. ELD services are provided in the core subject areas with students receiving additional pull-out services as necessary based on their language proficiency. Inclusion teachers provide quarterly progress reports to teachers and families that monitor English language development and ensure that students are exposed to specific language tasks throughout the school year.

Students remain in the ELD program until they meet the DC state exit criteria, which is a score of 4.5 or higher on the ACCESS test in grades 1-8 or 5.0 or higher for Kindergartenders.

Our language access coordinator ensures that linguistically diverse families receive all of the information they need in their language of choice. We provide translation and interpretation services in Spanish

Student Support

through our language access coordinator who is a highly qualified and trained community interpreter. Communication in other languages is available through contracted vendors as requested.

Center City offers a variety of supplemental programs for English Learner students and their families. Since 2012, Center City has offered an after-school language development program called ESL After the Bell. Center City's ESL After the Bell program has been featured by multiple national and local organizations to showcase this innovative way to improve educational outcomes for English Learners.

Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy

Center City PCS is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Center City PCS does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, genetic information, status as a victim of an inter-family offense, place of residence, or any other protected characteristics as established by law.

Student Code of Conduct

Center City PCS student Code of Conduct is aimed at helping students entrusted to our care to make responsible choices about their behavior and to ensure a safe and orderly school environment. Our practices seek to establish an environment that 1) creates and supports positive choices, 2) ensures logical consequences to actions, and 3) engages the entire community. As partners in the learning process, parents' expectations of their child's conduct must align with our code. When a child violates the expressed code, parents support administered consequences and assist the school in changing the behavior.

Parents also have responsibilities to uphold the values and culture of Center City. By signing the "Code of Conduct" Policy, parents officially state their commitment to work alongside Center City staff to achieve the highest academic goals for their child.

The Student Code of Conduct is based on the principles of logical consequences, clear communication of rules and expectations; and family communication to promote positive behavior choices and a safe and orderly school environment.

The Student Code of Conduct is enforceable when a student is traveling to/from school and school events, during the school day, and during all school-related/school-sponsored extracurricular activities. In addition, behavior that occurs outside of school may be subject to the Student Code of Conduct when such conduct is disruptive to the school environment.

Disruptions Requiring Tier 1 Support

These disruptions interfere with and/or compromise a student's ability to learn and develop. Disruptions requiring tier 1 support carry consequences that are teacher-directed and designed to ensure that the

Student Support

student understands why the behavior is inappropriate. If students commit multiple of these disruptions, they may be subject to tier 2 support, issued by an administrator.

Disruptions Requiring Tier 2 Support

These behaviors disrupt the school environment and interfere with other students' opportunities to learn. Disruptions requiring tier 2 support are frequent minor or more severe disruptions to the school's community. Students making disruptions that require tier 2 support, may receive a maximum consequence of in-school suspension in the most severe circumstances but are likely to receive a restorative conversation, detention, reduction of in-school privileges, or other restorative consequences determined by an administrator.

Disruptions Requiring Tier 3 Support

These behaviors are instances of serious misconduct that disrupt classroom instruction, threatens the safety of the school environment, impacts school operations, or threaten/causes harm to members of the school community. The student, his or her parent or guardian, the student's classroom teacher, and the school leader should meet in order to address the student's behavior and develop a plan for improvement and potential restoration of the harm done. Additionally, students may also receive in-school and/or out-of-school suspension.

Severe Misconduct

If a student displays behaviors outlined below, they are subject to a long-term suspension or expulsion. Severe misconduct consequences will be determined in conjunction with district-level staff.

NOTE: In cases where a student attempts to leave school grounds without permission, school-based discipline action may be taken, as well as, contacting MPD, Child & Family Services or CHAMPS.

Student Support

Behavior Disruption Guidelines (including and not limited to - Note, this is just a sample and does not apply to all situations)			
Tier 1 Behavior Examples	Tier 2 Behavior Examples	Tier 3 Behavior Examples	Severe Misconduct Examples
● Failure to complete assignments ● Running in the building ● Excessive noise in the school building ● Dress code infractions ● Inappropriate use of/and or concealment of technology (including but not limited to, cell phones, e-readers, tablets, etc.)	● Disrespectful behavior towards a fellow student, teacher, school personnel, parent, or visitor (i.e. eye rolling, teeth sucking, back talking) ● Bullying-in or out of school...ie. ● Cyberbullying (refer to anti bullying policy) ● Violation of a fellow student's privacy rights (i.e. unauthorized viewing of another student's records, files, or report card) ● Use of inappropriate, harmful, or threatening language ● Insubordination (repeated refusal to follow instructions) ● Leaving class without permission ● Intentional or unintentional horseplay or roughhousing (resulting in emotional distress or physical harm) ● Theft/stealing	● Threats of violence ● Possession of sexually explicit material ● Possession and/or use of lighters/matches ● Throwing objects that have the potential to cause serious injury and/or harm ● Severe, persistent, or pervasive insubordination and disrespect towards a fellow student, teacher, school personnel, parent, or visitor ● Fighting (displaying or engaging in violence, combat, or physical aggression)	● Using, possessing, or bringing to school a weapon—weapons include but are not limited to: loaded or unloaded firearms, pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, toy guns, knives, razor blades, explosives, fireworks, mace, tear gas, and tasers ● Possession, use or distribution of alcohol ● Using, selling or distribution of marijuana, prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia ● Assault/attack on a member of the school community that results in bodily injury ● Student has willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that happens off school grounds ● Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

Student Support

Suspension

In May 2018, the DC Council passed the Student Fair Access to School Act, which was reviewed by the Mayor and enacted on July 12, 2018. This Act places restrictions on the number of consecutive and cumulative days in any out-of-school suspension that students can receive. The exception to the requirements is if a student violates the Gun Free School Act. This federal law requires all schools to expel a student, who is determined to have brought a firearm to a school, or to have possessed a firearm at a school.

- Students in grades K-5 cannot receive an out-of-school suspension for a single discipline incident that exceeds 5 consecutive days.
- Students in grades 6-12 cannot receive an out-of-school suspension for a single incident that exceeds 10 consecutive days.
- Students in grades K-12 cannot receive more than 20 cumulative days of out-of-school suspension.

For students with disabilities (this includes students with IEPs or 504 Plans and students who are in the process of being evaluated for Special Education) who are suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, a multi-disciplinary team will review all relevant educational records contained in the student's file or in possession of the school to determine whether the student's violation of school rules was a manifestation of the student's disability.

- If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be returned to his/her educational placement.
- If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student's file will be reviewed to determine disciplinary action in accordance with the policies contained in this section.

Suspension Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to suspend a student through a formal appeals process. The appeal must be made in writing upon notification of suspension. This appeals process is distinct from that in the Center City PCS Anti-Bullying Policy regarding appeals for investigations related to reports of bullying or retaliation.

- Send request to: Your student's campus Principal and info@centercitypcs.org
- Please indicate "Appeal Request" in the subject field
- Once the appeal request is received you will be contacted by a District-level staff member.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an action taken as a last resort. It is a consequence used for severe misconduct or violations of laws. The Expulsion Process is as follows:

- If a student is under consideration for expulsion, the principal will contact the parent/guardian to arrange a meeting to review the conduct that has led to consideration for expulsion. The student will be considered suspended until the expulsion is final. Students and families must follow the rules in the behavior guidelines outlined above.
- The student is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school-sponsored activities, field trips, or programs.

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- The principal will convene the school's disciplinary committee to decide whether or not to move forward with the recommended expulsion.
- A decision will be made, and parent/guardian notified by school principal in writing.

Expulsion Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to expel a student through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee. The appeal must be made in writing within 48 hours of notification of expulsion and be delivered by email, regular mail, or by hand to the Director of Family & Student Engagement. This appeals process is distinct from that in the Center City PCS Anti-Bullying Policy regarding appeals for investigations related to reports of bullying or retaliation. Send request to:

Center City Public Charter Schools Central Office
Attention: Appeal Request
301 N Street NE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002

-or- Email info@centercitypcs.org; indicate "Appeal Request" in the subject field.

Once the appeal request is received, a hearing is scheduled. To ensure that the student does not fall behind academically while the appeal is underway, the student will receive an academic packet until the appeal process is complete. At the appeals hearing, the principal may present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the decision to expel. The parent/guardian may present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal. The student is encouraged to attend and present an oral or written statement.

The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a written decision within 48 hours of the hearing. The committee's decision to affirm OR reverse a Principal's decision is **final**.

Transfer

When necessary, students may be transferred from their home campus (campus of enrollment) to another Center City campus to better meet their needs. Currently students may be transferred for safety reasons or in cases where the home campus cannot fully meet their IEP. The transfer process will be collaborative between families, campuses, and a Central Office committee, however, final transfer decisions will be up to the discretion of the Central Office committee and will be considered final.

Destruction of Center City PCS Property

Computers are used to support learning and enhance instruction. Students will use computers frequently in their regular classrooms. However, all of these computer privileges depend on a student's using the technology in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Students will be held responsible for the willful destruction of computer equipment. All students and parents/guardians must indicate their agreement to abide by the Student Internet and Computing Technology Use Agreement before they will be permitted to use internet resources.

Student Support

If a student or parent damages, destroys or substantially decreases the value of school property, parents will be responsible for reimbursing Center City PCS for the damaged property and/or computer equipment. Students will lose computer and internet privileges until reimbursement is received.

AI Use Policy at Center City

As part of our commitment to preparing students for the future, we are introducing clear guidelines around the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our schools. AI tools can support student learning when used responsibly. Below are the key things you need to know:

When Can Students Use AI?

- With teacher permission and supervision
- For school-approved assignments
- On district-approved platforms

**Students cannot use AI on their own at school or for homework unless it's part of a teacher-directed task.*

Academic Integrity

- Students must clearly say when they've used AI and how (ex: "I used Magic School to come up with ideas for this essay"). If they do not do this, it counts as plagiarism.
- AI may not be used to cheat, copy, or replace a student's original work.

Privacy & Safety

- Students must not enter personal information (like names, birthdays, address, etc.) into AI tools.
- Students may not use AI to view or create harmful or inappropriate content.
- If students get a strange or unsafe response from an AI tool, they should tell a teacher immediately.

How AI Should Be Used

- Students may use AI to support learning, not to replace effort or creativity.
- Students must always be respectful when interacting with AI platforms.

What Happens If Rules Are Broken?

We use a progressive discipline system for AI misuse:

- First offense – Score of 0 on the assignment and a conversation with the teacher
- Second offense – Score of 0 on the assignment and a parent-teacher conference
- Further misuse – Additional consequences from school administration

We encourage you to talk with your child about the responsible use of technology. Together, we can help them build the skills to think critically, work ethically, and thrive in a digital world.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your campus leadership.

Student Support

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

The DC Council introduced the School Safety Act of 2018, as well as, the Student Safety and Consent Education Act of 2018 in September. The Acts were created to establish a requirement that all schools in the District of Columbia adopt and implement a policy to prevent and address child sexual abuse, as well as, peer-to-peer sexual harassment, assault, and dating violence among students. Center City will adhere to the protocols and reporting requirements set forth by District of Columbia Public Charter School Board.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Center City PCS's policy reflects the guidelines established for educational institutions under the District of Columbia's Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 (YBPA). As specified in this Act, bullying is defined as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an inter-family offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics.
2. Shall be reasonably predicted to place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property; cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health; substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

Center City PCS will respond swiftly to reported instances of bullying and may utilize Solution Teams to address concerns. Additionally, consequences may be flexible and vary in method and severity based on:

- (1) Nature of the incident; (2) Developmental age of the person bullying; and
- (3) Any history of problem behavior from the person bullying. In accordance with the YBPA, an employee, volunteer or youth who promptly and in good faith reports an incident of, or information on, bullying in compliance with the policy of Center City shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from the report.

Center City PCS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Each Center City PCS campus has a School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan that addresses a quick and safe response to emergencies. The plan includes (but is not limited to):

- Training of all school personnel on handling school emergencies
- At least three individuals per campus trained in administering CPR
- Important emergency safety procedures including the practice and frequency of fire-drills, sheltering-in-place, and school evacuations
- Details on necessary policies and procedures for responding to the presence of non-authorized personnel or intruders in the school (active shooter training)

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- Details on necessary policies and procedures for responding to the presence of non-authorized personnel or intruders in the school (active shooter training)

Meal Service Program

Center City PCS will provide lunch at no cost to all of our students on all six campuses for the academic year beginning on the first day of school. In addition, we will continue our practice of providing breakfast at no charge for all of our students, in accordance with the Healthy Schools Act. Center City PCS requests adherence to the following:

- All new and returning families, regardless of income, must complete an application for Free and Reduced Lunch (Traditional locations) or a Household Income Survey (CEP locations) during the school registration period each year. This information is required for District and federal reporting purposes.
- All parents/guardians are asked to provide the school with necessary information and documentation regarding your student's food allergies. Any information provided by a parent/guardian about a student's food allergies will be kept on file and shared with the student's teachers and campus meal service staff.

We know that good nutrition is very important to the health and academic success of our students. This practice of providing both breakfast and lunch at no cost is an indication of our continuing commitment to our students.

Physical & Emotional Health Statement

Center City continues to seek opportunities to build capacity as an organization and create frameworks that support all stakeholders.

Critical to supporting every student, parents/guardians are asked to inform the school if a child has been injured physically or emotionally. Having this information will ensure that the school makes appropriate accommodations for the child (e.g. not going to PE class if physically injured, taking additional care in supporting a child who has just experienced a death in the family, or knowing about an injury that happened over the weekend while playing).

Note: If the school-based team notices the need for additional medical or other supports, such resources will be sought for the well-being of the student. Center City may also encourage seeking school-based and outside mental health supports as situations and concerns arise.

Home or Hospital Instruction (HHI)

In cases where students cannot attend school for extended periods due to a diagnosed health condition, either across 10 consecutive days or 10 cumulative days, they may be eligible for Home or Hospital Instruction (HHI). Center City's HHI policy follows OSSE regulations. Center City PCS' Home or Hospital Instruction program is designed to provide academic instruction in core subjects to the greatest extent possible as well as the provision of special education and related services as appropriate. Eligibility

Student Support

is determined by medical certification completed by the student's physician or other medical professional; if approved, HHI must be recertified every 60 days to be considered active.

Student Withdrawal/Transfer Policy

In order for Center City PCS to transfer records to a receiving school when a student transfers, parents must complete a Student Transfer/Withdrawal Form. The following information is required:

- Student's name
- Student's Date of Birth
- The name and address of the receiving school
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) name, email address, phone number and signature

If the receiving school is unknown at the time of withdrawal from Center City PCS parents may fill out and return (via mail or fax) an updated form once placement in a new school has been made. Records will NOT be transferred until a completed Student Transfer/Withdrawal Form has been submitted. Note: If a withdrawal is in response to an expulsion recommendation, the student cannot be re-enrolled in any Center City school in the future.

If a withdrawn student has not been enrolled in a school within 5 days of withdrawal, or there is suspected educational neglect, Center City will:

- Report the issue to CFSA
- Contact the Office of the Attorney General Juvenile Section (for students ages 5-13) or the Court Social Services Division of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia (for students over 13)
- Contact the point person for attendance and truancy issues at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

High School Placement

At Center City PCS, through collaboration among the student, their family, and the high school placement advisors, all 8th graders will be supported in:

- Having a choice in their high school application process
- Gaining acceptance to college preparatory high schools
- Finding the right high school that will allow them not only to learn but to thrive

In the month of September, Center City PCS distributes a high school placement calendar that outlines key dates, such as, application deadlines for selective, private, and charter high schools; high school open house dates; and school fair dates. Each campus will host high school informational sessions that each parent is strongly encouraged to attend. Advisors support families and students throughout the application process; this process requires a collaborative effort between the school, parent, and student.

Center City PCS strives to support students in applying for and gaining acceptance to the best possible high school that matches student abilities and interests. All students will apply to a minimum of three high schools in order to promote acceptance into at least one high school of choice. High-performing students

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are encouraged to apply to both selective public schools and private schools and are supported through this process.

For more information regarding the high school placement process, please contact your campus counselor.

Homeless Students

Homeless students are protected under the federal law, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The law ensures students experiencing homelessness have equal access to public education as provided to other children.

Center City PCS' MKV program provides students experiencing homelessness with services and support including, uniform vouchers/assistance, transportation benefits for parents, and fee waivers for before- and after-care. If you are homeless or displaced, you qualify for benefits through this Act. Please see the Campus Operations Manager for assistance or to learn more about this program.

Homeless child is defined as:

- Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; including children who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Children who are living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds because they do not have any other choices at the present time; are living in emergency or temporary shelter (including DC transitional housing); or are abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, private or public places not meant for human beings, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or places that are not safe
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above
- Unaccompanied youth, including youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who qualify as homeless because they live in circumstances described above.

School Placement and Dispute Resolution

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, Center City PCS will provide the parent/guardian of said youth, or the unaccompanied youth, with a written explanation, upon enrollment of the child, within three (3) business days, including a statement regarding the right to appeal. If the parent or unaccompanied youth indicates that an appeal will be filed and does so within two (2) business days, Center City PCS must allow the student to remain enrolled and continue to provide transportation assistance and other school services until the dispute is resolved by OSSE. The school will also provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a copy of the District of Columbia Formal State Complaint Policy & Procedures manual.

All appeal requests should be sent to the Homeless Liaison at the following address:

Student Support

Center City Public Charter Schools
c/o LEA Homeless Liaison
301 N Street NE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002

Foster Care Educational Stability

Center City follows DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE's) guidance regarding meeting the educational needs of students in foster care.

Governance

Center City PCS Board of Directors

The Center City PCS Board of Directors is the governing body for Center City PCS. We are fortunate to have a diverse and committed group of individuals who bring their perspectives and skills from different sectors to support our scholars and help build a sustainable future for our organization. The CCPCS Board meets regularly throughout the school year at CCPCS Central Offices, from 8am - 12pm, quarterly. All meetings are open to the public. Information and minutes regarding board meetings are available in the public information section of the CCPCS website.

Annual Notification of FERPA Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. FERPA defines "directory information" as information contained in a student's education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information could include: name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and grade level; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; and the most recent school attended.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to Center City PCS's FERPA Administrator (the contact information for the FERPA Administrator is listed below) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The FERPA Administrator will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the FERPA Administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the FERPA Administrator decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the FERPA Administrator will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Center City PCS as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom Center City PCS has

Governance

contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. If a parent wants to opt out of having any information, considered to be directory information released, the parent should make the request in writing to the Center City PCS FERPA Administrator.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Center City PCS to comply with the requirements of FERPA:

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-5901

Any questions, concerns, or requests to inspect or review records should be sent to:

Center City Public Charter Schools Central Office

c/o FERPA Administrator

301 N Street NE, Suite 200

Washington, DC 20002

info@centercitypcs.org

Parent Complaints and Grievances

Center City PCS is committed to providing the best possible conditions for its students. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from school supervisors and administrators.

Center City PCS strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all students. Everyone is expected to treat each other with mutual respect. If a student, parent, guardian, or visitor disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, or their treatment, he or she may express his or her concerns through the following problem resolution procedure(s). No person will be retaliated against or penalized formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Center City PCS in a reasonable, business-like manner or for participating in the investigation of a complaint pursuant to the grievance procedure. All documentation and communications related to the investigation will remain confidential.

Any student, parent, guardian, or visitor may initiate the Grievance Procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. This grievance procedure does not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law. The Grievance Process outlined below sets forth how complaints will be processed and investigated. The Grievance Process is intended to provide a prompt and equitable resolution of your concerns.

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Parent Complaint Process (General Concerns)

To support families with concerns they may have, Center City PCS has the following procedures in place to assist in resolving concerns or complaints.

Families and students are strongly encouraged to express their concerns first through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher or campus administrator. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to support the immediate resolution. Concerns must always be addressed at the level in which the concern occurred.

If an informal conference regarding a complaint/concern fails to yield a just resolution, the parent may initiate the formal process by timely filing a written complaint form. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns with campus leaders. A parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. If informal attempts at resolution fail, the formal complaint procedures begin with a complaint filed online (www.centercitypcs.org) or via phone with Center City PCS Central Office.

Complaint Resolution Process (General Concerns)

Step 1, Campus Level: Always start with the person with whom you have a concern. If the issue is unresolved, it is essential that the school principal be included in the process. Please schedule an informal conference/discussion with appropriate teachers, staff or campus administrators to share your concerns. This can be done in person, by phone or email.

Step 2, District Level: If informal attempts do not bring resolution, a compliant form may be filed online at www.centercitypcs.org (For Families) or by contacting the Director of Engagement at the Central Office (202-589-0202). You will be contacted within 5 days after receipt of the online complaint form.

Step 3, Executive Level: If after step 2 a resolution is still not reached, you may contact the Board Chair via email at boardchair@centercitypcs.org. You will be contacted within 5 days after receipt of the email.

Section 504

Section 504 is federal civil rights law under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that provides protection against discrimination for individuals with disabilities. Students in school settings fall under the civil rights protection of Section 504. A student is entitled to a Section 504 Accommodation Plan if they have been identified and the evaluation shows that they have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team of knowledgeable individuals, including the parents, who are familiar of the student and his/her disability, makes this determination.

If any person believes that the school or any of its staff or schools have inadequately applied the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he/she may initiate a grievance with the Central Office Section 504 Coordinator. At the district level, that individual is the Associate Director of

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Special Education. The grievance procedures are outlined below and are meant to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint.

Level One Section 504 Grievance:

Individuals may file a grievance by submitting a completed Level One Grievance to the Associate Director of Special Education. If a complaint of discrimination is being made against the Central Office Section 504 Coordinator, the written request can be submitted to the Managing Director of Schools, who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint.

The Level One Grievance form must contain the following information:

- The nature of the grievance;
- The date of informal mediation, if any, and discussion of what remains unresolved (No grievance will be heard unless it has been filed in writing within thirty (30) calendar days after the act or condition giving rise to the grievance and such filing must state with particularity the basis for the grievance, the policy regulation and/or procedure, rule or law believed to have been violated, and the remedy sought);
- The remedy requested; and
- Be signed and dated by the grievant.

The Central Office Coordinator will investigate the grievance and respond in writing within ten (10) business days summarizing the outcome of the investigation and any corrective or remedial action necessary. A copy of the determination will be sent to the student's parent and to student's campus Section 504 Coordinator for placement in the student's file. If the Level One determination is not favorable to the grievant, the grievant may submit a written appeal.

Level Two Section 504 Grievance:

A grievant may appeal any decision by submitting a signed statement of appeal to the President & CEO within ten (10) business days of the issuance of the Central Office's 504 Coordinator's Level One response. The written appeal can be mailed or delivered to 900 2nd Street, NE Suite 221, Washington, DC 20002. The President & CEO and his designee shall review the complaint,

Central Office Section 504 Coordinator's response, all information presented as part of the investigation, and will meet with all parties involved, if necessary. The President & CEO will formulate a conclusion and respond to the grievant in writing within ten (10) business days summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary.

Level Three Section 504 Grievance:

The grievant may appeal the decision of the President & CEO or his designee by filing a signed written statement of appeal to the Board of Directors within ten (10) business days of the issuance of the determination. The written appeal can be mailed or delivered to 301 N Street, NE, Suite 200 Washington DC, 20002. The Board of Directors shall review the complaint, Central Office Section 504 Coordinator's response, President & CEO or designees determination, and all information presented as part of the investigation and, if necessary, meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal summarizing the

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outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary will be mailed to each party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. A copy of the determination will be included in the student's file.

The Grievant also has the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html. For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or ocr.dc@ed.gov.

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Center City PCS is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discrimination based on gender, including inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment (including sexual violence, stalking, domestic violence and/or dating violence) and sexual misconduct in any form are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any individuals who engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

The LEA has designated a Title IX Coordinator to oversee all reports of discrimination based on gender or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. The Coordinator is available to meet with students, staff, and faculty.

Title IX Grievance Procedures - Informal Complaints:

Students, parents and/or guardians with inquiries and/or complaints regarding Title IX non-discrimination policies related to students and student activities can file either an informal or formal complaint. At any time, a Grievant may make an informal complaint to the Gender Equity Review Committee in writing at the Campus. The Committee will investigate the complaint and provide a response within 10 school days. If the grievant is not satisfied with the response, they can file a formal written grievance within 10 calendar days to the Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Grievance Procedures - Formal Complaints:

Students, parents and/or guardians with inquiries and/or complaints regarding Title IX non-discrimination policies related to students and student activities can submit a formal written complaint to the Title IX Coordinator at: titleix@centercitypcs.org. Please detail the nature of the complaint as well as the time, location and parties involved. The Title IX coordinator will conduct an investigation and respond within 30 days.

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ANNUAL NOTICE OF TITLE I

Title I is the largest source of federal funding for education. Schools receive Title I money as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Title I money is used solely to help ensure that children, regardless of family income, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and become academically proficient.

There are two kinds of Title I programs: Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance. A school is eligible to become a Title I Schoolwide Program if 40% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Eligible schools are permitted to use Title I, Part A funds in combination with state and local resources and other federal education program funds to upgrade the entire educational program of the school to raise the academic achievement of all students.

A school is eligible to become a Title I Targeted Assistance Program if between 35-40% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The term “targeted assistance” means that the services are provided to a select group of children—those identified as failing, or most at risk of failing, rather than for overall school improvement.

Title I School budgets allocate 1% of the received funding to be utilized for parental involvement activities. This provision directly supports students because it strengthens the collaborative relationship between the school and the families. For the current school year, Center City PCS schools all fall under the Title I Schoolwide Program classification.

ESSA Parent Right to Know Annual Notification

Our LEA is required to inform you of certain information that you have the right to know, according to the Every Students Succeeds Act of 2015. Upon your request, Center City PCS is required to provide to you in a timely manner, the professional qualifications of your student's teachers and paraprofessionals; and the level of achievement your child attained on the state academic assessments.

Annual Title I Parent Meeting

Center City PCS provides an information meeting to inform parents of the Title I program requirements and how parents can be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program. This information meeting is part of our annual Back to School Night dates (confirm with campus and/or website).

If you have any questions regarding Title I information, please contact:

Center City Central Office
Attention: Title I Inquiry
301 N Street NE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002
info@centercitypcs.org

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Is there a supply list?	Families are asked to refer to the campus supply list for specific requirements and ensure that on the first day of school all students have the necessary supplies. Families will be responsible for replenishing supplies throughout the year as needed.
My contact information has changed and/or I need to update emergency contact information for my child.	Email or visit the campus main office.
My child will be late or absent.	Call the school office before 9am the day of the absence. Ensure that a note/doctor's slip is provided to the main office upon the student's return to school.
I sent a note to excuse my child's absences, but the note was not accepted.	Ensure that if your child was absent for three or more consecutive days, that a doctor's note was submitted to the school and that the parent sets up an appointment with the school counselor/school leaders to discuss attendance and course of action.
I will be late to pick up my student from school and my student is not enrolled in the Extended Learning after school program.	Call the school office as soon as possible once you know you will be late. The school office will contact the Child and Family Services Agency and the police if students are not picked up by 3:45PM and the parent/guardian has not contacted the school. Possible fees assessed.
I need registration forms.	InfoSnap is an online system that allows each student to have a unique account through which parents can update important information (e.g. demographic information, emergency contacts, express interest in Extended Day programs, etc.). At the start of the registration process, the family should receive a unique "snapcode" (login) for each student. Contact the school office for more information.
I need a copy of my student's progress report, report card, or other records.	Contact the school office. Please allow five (5) business days to make the record(s) available.
I have general questions about the curriculum.	Please see the website at www.centercitypcs.org or the Academic Program section of this handbook. Detailed questions can be answered by your student's teacher.
Where do I get uniforms?	You may order uniforms online at: www.rissebrothers.com . See the Risse Brothers Shopping Guide on the website, under Parents' Corner,

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	at www.centercitypcs.org or contact the vendor: Risse Brothers 9700 Martin Luther King Jr. Hwy Lanham, MD 20706 or call 301.220-1987 <i>You may also check with your campus for guidance.</i>
I have concerns about my student's academic progress.	Contact your student's teacher. If you still have concerns, please contact a school leader.
I have concerns about my student's social adjustment and/or behavior.	Contact the student's teacher and/or the school counselor.
I would like my child to be seen by the school counselor.	Contact the school counselor or school leader directly.
I need to pay before/after care fees.	See section on Before and After Care
I have a question or concern about Extended Learning programs.	Contact the Campus Operations Manager. If you still have concerns contact the Central Office Manager of Programs and Partnerships at 202.589.0202.
What time can I drop off my student if they are not enrolled in before care?	Contact your campus main office for specifics.
How will I know if there is an emergency or inclement-related closing of school?	Ensure your contact information remains current. Notifications are sent via our School Messenger system. Also, see the Health, Safety, and Inclement Weather section in this handbook for inclement weather listings via TV and radio.
Where can I find all-black tennis shoes?	Parents have found all-black shoes at Payless, Forman Mills, Walmart, Risse Brothers, and 6pm.com
I have concerns that have not been adequately addressed by my student's teacher, staff, or principal.	Contact Center City Central Office, 202-589-0202 or email, info@centercitypcs.org .
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