



A Challenge Foundation ✨ Academy

# **Cornerstone Charter Academy: A Challenge Foundation Academy**

## **Parent/Student Handbook 2019-2020**

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## **CORNERSTONE CHARTER ACADEMY – A TEAM CFA SCHOOL**

Cornerstone opened as a K-6 in August 2012 and reached full enrollment by its second year. Each year it has expanded one grade. This growth will continue until the school becomes a K-12 in 2018.

The school is a member of the TeamCFA network. TeamCFA is a national network of charter schools enabling the sharing of resources, professional development, and best practices while maintaining local control of the school. The “Challenge Foundation Academy” part of the school name indicates the affiliation with TeamCFA.

### **VISION**

CCA will foster good citizenship through ethical leadership and provide the opportunity for all students to graduate with the knowledge and skills to become positive contributors in their community.

### **MISSION:**

Cornerstone Charter Academy, a tuition-free public charter school, will give every student the opportunity to reach his or her full potential by providing a rigorous academic program, character education, and meaningful parental participation.

A collaborative definition of Rigorous Academics was agreed upon as follows: The focused coherent and challenging application of a content rich curriculum with the goal of every student exceeding current standards.

### **CORE BELIEFS:**

1. Each of us has the capacity to lead in our own way.
2. Throughout our lives, we are presented with circumstances where we function as a leader.
3. Leadership serves to strengthen and integrate our three pillars of Rigorous Academics, Character Education, and Parental Involvement.



## THE THREE PILLARS

### **Rigorous academics**

A collaborative definition of Rigorous Academics was agreed upon as follows: The focused, coherent, and challenging application of a content-rich curriculum with the goal of every student exceeding current standards. By setting high expectations and giving students the tools they need to meet them, Cornerstone Charter Academy students form a strong academic foundation designed to help them meet the challenges of higher education.

High school courses follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study with many options for honors and accelerated (AP) classes. Student preparation for key college entrance tests begins in the freshman year with likely administration of the PSAT in the first two years as well as standard ACT examinations.

### **Character education**

CCA-CFA's character education program teaches students at all grade levels the meaning and benefits of positive moral virtues and ethical decision making through a monthly leadership habit and Foundations of Leadership. School-wide service projects give students, families, community members, and teachers the opportunity to work side by side to put the virtues into action and have an impact beyond the walls of the school.

### **Parental involvement**

Parents are invested and engaged in the school by partnering for student academic growth and leadership development, building and sustaining community, and contributing strengths in the classroom and across the school. Parents are given opportunities to be an integral part of the

school community. A parent room welcomes parents into the school and allows them a place to congregate, hold meetings, work and volunteer. Three parents or community members serve as representatives to the School Improvement Team, and an active Parent/ Teacher organization is encouraged and supported. Parents participate in a variety of volunteer positions at the school including field trip chaperones, reading buddies, and lunch supervisors.

In the high school, some of the leadership responsibility associated with parents in the K-8 is transferred to the students. For example, high school students might lead the character education lesson for a middle school class. Parental engagement in the high school is encouraged in a manner to facilitate leadership by the students.

#### LEADERS:

- Set clear direction, align to it, and commit to success.
- Seek, throughout their life, to grow academically, socially, and physically.
- Build leaders who build leaders. Leaders develop and empower others.
- Demonstrate persistence in the face of challenges, accept responsibility and grow through failure.
- Develop leadership “identity” exhibiting character and integrity.
- Allow others to provide ideas from various perspectives and participate in decisions.
- Value relationships over personal positions on issues creating a strong organic community.
- Engage in healthy dialogue to advance learning and resolve potential conflict.

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

At its inception, Cornerstone Charter Academy established the following goals within its charter:

**Goal 1:** Cornerstone Charter Academy will implement a rigorous academic program that aligns with the NC Common Core Standards and will prepare students for higher education.

**Objective 1:** The school will use the Core Knowledge curriculum in grades K to 8.

**Objective 2:** Students in grades K-8 will use Saxon Math as the primary math instruction program.

**Objective 3:** Students in grades 1 – 8 will use Shurley English as part of the language arts program.

**Goal 2:** Students will achieve appropriate growth over time.

**Objective 1:** Each student will make more than one year of academic growth in each academic year.

**Objective 2:** Students performing below grade level will perform on grade level after being in our program for three years.

**Objective 3:** Teachers will use a variety of strategies including classroom differentiation and acceleration to challenge all students to achieve optimal academic growth.

**Goal 3:** Students will participate in character education based on the common character traits.

**Objective 1:** All grade levels will use a moral focus curriculum as part of their educational program. There will be a school wide virtue for each month. Each grade level will plan activities and discussions centered around that virtue.

**Objective 2:** The school will hold frequent school-wide assemblies where individuals and groups will be recognized for achievement or growth in activities related to the monthly virtue.

**Objective 3:** Students will have multiple opportunities to participate in school wide service projects that highlight one or more virtues. Students will also be encouraged to participate in other service to the school and community and will be recognized for doing so.

**Goal 4:** Parents will be partners in their children’s education. They will feel welcome at school and participate as stakeholders in the decision making processes.

**Objective 1:** A Leadership Team will, in cooperation with the principal, help direct extracurricular, afterschool, and supplemental activities. The Leadership Team will consist of PTO officers, committee chairmen, teacher representatives, and administrators.

**Objective 2:** A School Improvement Team will help direct the educational goals, objectives and programs at the school. The School Improvement Team will consist of administrators, teachers, staff representatives, parent and community representatives.



**Objective 3:** There will be a room designated as a place for parents in the building where they can congregate, hold meetings, and work.

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2018

In 2018, the Board of Directors established a five year strategic plan which set out objectives to be achieved by 2023. These objectives include.

### **Rigorous Academics**

1. Through curriculum design and daily instruction, students will be given the opportunity to develop in the leadership principles adopted by the Board of Directors in a way that will benefit them during their time and after CCA.
2. The Core Knowledge curriculum will be fully realized by explicitly merging content and state standards.
3. CCA will have successfully implemented the Singapore Math program that will allow the school to exceed state standards.
4. There will be school-wide implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model to assess the effectiveness of core instructional practices and monitor the progress of all students.
5. All staff will be fully trained on the MTSS model and will receive ongoing Professional Development on how to provide appropriate interventions for struggling learners and identify students for special education services.
6. CCA's high school program will prepare our students for admission into high level colleges.
7. CCA will have established K-12 writing standards that exceed state standards and align with expectations for successful entrance into colleges and universities.

### **Character Education**

1. Our core habits of character will be defined developmentally and will align with our leadership beliefs and principles.
2. Our habits of character will be evident in the implementation of our curriculum and the design of our daily instruction.
3. Habits of character will be identified and celebrated visibly throughout the building.

4. Extra-curricular activities, including athletics, will promote our core character habits and leadership principles at all times.
5. CCA staff will build a culture of character and leadership through the modeling of our habits of character and leadership principles in all areas of the school and community.
6. CCA staff will use questions of inclusivity to promote unity among its community members.
7. Habits of character will be visible regularly in the behavior of CCA students.
8. High school students will model leadership and the habits of character by being involved with the development of younger students and the school.

### **Meaningful Parental Involvement**

1. Parental interactions within our school community will reflect our core habits of character and leadership principles.
2. CCA will design and create activities which build a community feel within the school.
3. CCA will increase opportunities for, access to, and preparation for meaningful involvement for all families.
4. CCA will train parents to use questions of inclusivity for the promotion of unity in our school community.  
CCA will have a partnership with the PTO designed to support their strategic objectives. Parents will lead within the community to create a positive and successful school culture that promotes unity and character.

## **EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH**

Cornerstone Charter Academy will use results of Effective Schools Research to guide the program and policy choices of the school. The characteristics found to directly affect student achievement will lay a foundation for the continuous development of the school to help each student reach his or her full potential. The defining characteristics of an effective school that we will use are:

### **A Safe and Orderly Climate**

Students will feel safe, welcome, and nurtured. Expectations will be clear and consequences for not meeting expectations will be consistent.

### **Focus on Achievement**

High expectations are set for student behavior and performance. Staff, parents, and students are committed to helping students reach those expectations.

### **Cooperative Work Environment**

The school has a focused mission that is clearly communicated to staff, parents, and students. All stakeholders work together to accomplish the school's mission.

### **Focused Curriculum**

The educational program offers a strong base of content which is sequenced to provide a solid background of knowledge.

### **Strong Instructional Leadership**

The School Director is the educational leader of the school. He guides the teams of teachers in implementing the school's mission and vision.

### **Time on Task**

Students are given frequent, varied and meaningful learning opportunities. Distractions from activities that do not directly affect learning objectives are minimized.

### **Monitoring of Student Progress**

Schools are driven by student performance on standardized tests. Data is used to evaluate programs and guide instruction.

### **Parental Involvement**

As stakeholders in the school, parents are welcomed and encouraged to be involved in many different capacities.

**CORNERSTONE CHARTER ACADEMY – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Paul Stanfield - President	pstanfield@cornerstone12.org
Cyndie Swindlehurst - Secretary	cswindlehurst@cornerstone12.org
Chris Gorham - Board Member	cgorham@cornerstone12.org
Erina Byers - Team CFA Rep	ebyers@cornerstone12.org
Tony Wilkins - Vice President/Treasurer	twilkins@cornerstone12.org

**CORNERSTONE CHARTER ACADEMY – FACULTY AND STAFF**

<b>Kindergarten</b>	
Samantha Entwistle	Jamie Gaulden
Lauren Peabody	Erin Winbush
Mendy Yarborough	
<b>First Grade</b>	
Claudia Beard	Jessica Lee
Kellie Phillips	Alana Sineni
<b>Second Grade</b>	
Kristin Gallagher	Tori Mocharnuk
Caitlin York	Leann Yow
<b>Third Grade</b>	
Melanie Arthurs	Brooke Davis
Leslie Lipford	Ebony Miles
<b>Fourth Grade</b>	
Carolyn Colontonio	Katharine Ewing
Barbara Shanahan	Kristina Zucchini
<b>Fifth Grade</b>	
Karen Carter	Alex Peabody
Shavonda Scales	
<b>Sixth Grade</b>	
Michele Harris	Maggie Martin
Lynn Price	Katie Thekkekandam
<b>Seventh Grade</b>	
Courtney Evans	Vernon Johnson
Anna Kimbrough	James Linz

<b>Eighth Grade</b>	
Rebecca Furrow	Rebecca Johnson
Traci McKee	Jennifer Person
<b>Specials</b>	
Christina Blake	Julie Cascante
Becky Cochrane	Becky Feldmann
Christina Harwell	Sasha Kuznezov
Afeefah Monsanto	
<b>Teacher Assistants</b>	
Jennifer Augustine	Lisa Edwards
Barbara Funderberg	Shannon Hall
Rebecca Wilson	
<b>High School</b>	
Stephen Brame	Melanie Chamberlain
Amy Edwards	Marine Fryar
Sean Garner	Katie Hillestad
Lisa Holler	Erin Kale
Jennifer Lee	Rachel Lowman
Dalarie McGinnis	Talita McKoy
Tracey Marshall-Becker	Casey Martin
Jennifer Martin	Joshua Miller
Athena Mobley	Elsie Moss-Vasquez
Amber Pugh	Scott Pugh
Katelyn Sheets	Jason Tew
Richard Thomas	Michelle Thompson
Joi White-Henderson	
<b>EC</b>	
Jonathan Allred	Karen Apple
Karen Aycock	Natalie Clark
Tina Fiske	Karen Harden
Mandy Miller	Charlotte Sudano
Kirk Zellous	

<b>High School Counselor</b>	
Leigh Bell	
<b>Athletic Director</b>	
John Lawrence	
<b>Computer Specialist</b>	
Chris Lewis	Neil Frankel
<b>Office</b>	
Karen Berg	Jennifer Croatt
Claire Dobbs	Donna Koehler
Donna Thiel	
<b>Administration</b>	
Joe Caraher	Hannah Cobb
Matthew Pugh	Erin Shoemaker
Allyson Waller	

### 2019-2020 PTO Board Contact Information

<b>Executive Board Officers</b>	
President – Anna Hargett	ccaptopre@gmail.com
Vice President – Alyssa Anderson	ccaptovicepre@gmail.com
Secretary – Janet Bryan	ccaptosecre@gmail.com
Treasurer – Laura Lofton/Lisa Thompson	ccaptotreas@gmail.com
<b>PTO Board Staff/Faculty</b>	
Director - Joe Caraher	jcaraher@cornerstonek12.org
Staff – Hannah Cobb	hcobb@cornerstonek12.org
<b>PTO Board Committee Chairs</b>	
Dance – Jenna Grant & Erin Parsons	ccaptodance@gmail.com
Apparel – Ashley Hayes & Anna Magrini	ccaptoapparel@gmail.com
Character Ed – Jen Willard & Joan Hice	ccaptochared@gmail.com
Staff Appreciation – Crystal Osbourne & Anna Smith	ccaptoapprec@gmail.com

Lunch – Chrissy Rogan & Lisa Belland	ccaptolunch@gmail.com
Fundraising – Stephanie Allred	ccaptofundraising@gmail.com
Social- Heather Habeeb & Kelly Heritage HS Social– Ashley Rudd & Dona McCorquodale	ccaptosoc@gmail.com
Library – Christina Blake	ccaptolibrary@gmail.com
Community Building- LeeAnn Leonard & Olivia Weyant	ccaptocommunity@gmail.com
Hospitality – Blair Flowers	ccaptohospitality@gmail.com

## UNIFORM POLICY

### *OFFICIAL UNIFORM POLICY*

**Our CCA-CFA official uniform will be required on special days and consists of a red polo with the CCA-CFA embroidered logo on the left chest area tucked into khaki bottoms with a black or brown belt for ALL students.**

### *DAILY UNIFORM POLICY*

Uniform Polo Shirts must be solid red, gray, white, or black; long or short-sleeved polos, with the **embroidered logo on the left chest**. CCA-CFA embroidered shirts are available for purchase through the apparel committee as well as several approved embroidery locations in Greensboro. Black, grey, red or white long or short sleeve undershirts may be worn under polo shirts.

**High School Only: Students may wear APPROVED CCA-CFA t-shirts. Appropriate jeans, long and short can also be worn.**

Girls may wear polo style dresses or khaki/black jumpers, with the embroidered logo on the left chest and the official Cornerstone plaid jumper, skirt, skorts or shorts. They must be **at least 1 inch longer** than fingertip length when arms are extended to the sides.

Tights, leggings, and undershirts (both long and short sleeve) must be solid red, gray, white, or black and may **ONLY** be worn under the uniform.

Pants, shorts, skirts, jeggings (must have pockets and/or zipper), skorts, and capris must be **khaki** or **black** or official CCA-CFA plaid. No athletic shorts, sweatpants, yoga pants, big-pocketed cargo pants, excessively baggy pants, excessively tight, excessive fading, free of holes, tears, rips or cut-offs are permitted.

Bottoms must be of an approved style and not ill-fitting. To meet the definition of appropriate jeans/jean shorts, jeans must meet the following guidelines: blue or black in color and free of excessive fading or bleaching, free of holes, tears, rips or fraying,



- Girl's bottoms must be at least 1 inch longer than fingertip length when arms extended to the sides.
- Boy's shorts should not be longer than the knees.

### ***MISCELLANEOUS GENERAL POLICY***

- CCA-CFA approved apparel or solid red, grey, white, or black sweaters and sweatshirts (including cardigans, vests, crewneck, pullover, zip up, hoodies, and fleece) may be worn over the uniform shirt.
- Shoes should be closed toe and closed heels.
- Socks must be black, white, red or gray in color. Small logos are permitted. No crazy socks i.e. polka dots, rainbow, stripes, splattered, argyle or plaid.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- No extreme hair or piercings.
- A black or brown belt must be worn every day for students in **K-12<sup>th</sup> grade**, if belt loops are present and shirt is tucked in.
- As part of the Character Education Program, one Friday each month, we have a dollar jean day charity fundraiser. On these Dollar Jean days, students may wear APPROVED CCA-CFA spirit t-shirt and jean shorts/jeans **IF** they pay a dollar. If a student chooses not to participate, they must wear the appropriate daily uniform.
- At the discretion of the administration, alternate spirit days may be added throughout the year. On these days students may wear khaki/black bottoms and uniform polos OR a dress code put forth by the administration. (e.g., Favorite Sports Team Day, Pajama Day, Wacky Tacky Day and Character Day)

### ***APPROVED EMBROIDERY VENDORS***

All approved colors (red, gray, white or black) of polos and khaki/black jumpers will be required to have the CCA-CFA embroidered logo. The embroidery design may be added to your Lands' End orders or other shirts may be embroidered at approved (listed below) embroidery locations in Greensboro.

#### ***EMBROIDERY VENDORS*** (will embroider new/used shirts)

**Carolina Sports** - will accept orders via the website [www.ccacardinalwear.com](http://www.ccacardinalwear.com). Once order is placed, items may be dropped off in the parent room. Include copy of receipt with merchandise to be embroidered. Items will be returned and delivered to your child. Orders placed over the summer may be dropped off at the school and will be available for pickup at Open House.

#### ***ONLINE VENDORS***

**Land's End** - Under the school uniform tab, you may select our school (Cornerstone Charter Academy CFA; Preferred School Number: 900151119). After you set up your profile with our school, the only items you will see on the website are the approved styles/colors. Lands' End has frequent online sales with free shipping or sales on embroidery of the school logo (usually done for a penny). Please sign up online to receive the emails regarding special pricing and save on great quality uniforms. Also note, you may order a free red swatch from Lands' End to have your own approved color swatch.

**(Carolina Sports)** - [www.ccacardinalwear.com](http://www.ccacardinalwear.com) All apparel meets approved styles/colors.

### ***APPROVED VENDORS FOR RED POLO SHIRTS***

The vendors below have the correct shade of red. Please note the correct shades of red are usually from the uniform division of the companies. These may be purchased in-store during the "back to school" season or online year-round. Lands' End may be ordered online from home or online in-store at Sears for free home delivery. Other polo colors (white, black & any shade of grey) may be purchased from any vendor, as the shades are not as specific as the shade of red.

**CCA-CFA PTO Apparel Committee**  
**Lands' End (Uniform Division)**  
**Old Navy (Uniform Division)**  
**Target**  
**Walmart**

## 2019-2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

### CCA-CFA School Year 2019-2020

August				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
<del>12</del>	<del>13</del>	<del>14</del>	<del>15</del>	<del>16</del>
<del>18</del>	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

September				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

October				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

November				
M	T	W	T	F
				<del>1</del>
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

December				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

January				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

February				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
<del>18</del>	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28

March				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	<del>13</del>
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

April				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

May				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

June				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
<del>8</del>	<del>9</del>	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

**AUGUST**  
**August 12 - 19** Teacher Workdays  
**TBA** OPEN HOUSE  
**August 20** First Day of School – Early Release Day for Students

**SEPTEMBER**  
**September 2** Labor Day Holiday

**OCTOBER**  
**October 9-11** Fall Break  
**October 23** 1st Quarter Ends  
**October 31** Early Release Day for Students/Parent Teacher Conference

**NOVEMBER**  
**November 1** Teacher Workday/Parent Teacher Conferences  
**November 11** Veterans Day Holiday  
**November 27-29** Thanksgiving Holiday

**DECEMBER- JANUARY**  
**December 19** Early Release Day for Students & Staff  
**December 20 - January 3** Winter Break  
**January 20** Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday  
**January 21** 2nd Q Ends/First Semester Ends

**FEBRUARY**  
**February 17** Teacher Work Day\*

**MARCH**  
**March 13** Teacher Work Day\*/Parent Teacher Conferences  
**March 26** 3rd Quarter Ends

**APRIL**  
**April 3** Early Release Day for Students & Staff  
**April 6 - April 10** Spring Break

**MAY**  
**May 25** Memorial Day Holiday

**JUNE**  
**June 5** Last Day of School/Early Release Day for Students  
**June 8-9** Teacher Workdays\*

- No School for students and staff
- No school for students, all day for staff
- Early Release for students and staff
- Early release for students, all day for staff
- \* Inclement Weather Make Up Days (if necessary)



#### Start Time & Dismissal Time

K-8 Full Day 7:45 AM - 2:45 PM / Half Day 7:45 AM - 11:45 AM  
 HS Full Day 8:15 AM - 3:20 PM / Half Day 8:15 AM - 12:20 PM

Approved by Board of Directors on 2/21/19

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Students perform best when they arrive to school on time and are in attendance on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of the school and the teacher to provide a productive learning environment. Equally important, it is the responsibility of the student and parents and guardians to make sure the student is at school on time prepared to participate.

Parents and guardians are in the best position to set priorities for their family. Educational experiences come in many forms and parents and guardians should usually be given wide discretion to determine if an experience is important enough for the student to miss school. Students are expected to attend school daily. A student must be in attendance for at least 4 hours a day to be counted as present for that day.

In the event that a family trip or an educational experience requires that a student miss school, the parent or guardian should submit a request for excused absence to the Director. It is preferred that the parent or guardian notify the Director in advance of the absence. If the student is in good standing and does not already have excessive absences The Director may authorize and excuse the absence. The student is required to make up all missed work.

A child may be considered to have excessive absence from school if the days of missed classes or courses exceeds 12%.

In the case of excessive absences, the student and parents and guardians will be referred to the Director/or designee. The Director/or designee will work with the parents and guardians to come up with a corrective action plan to improve the attendance of the student. The Director/or designee will have the authority to put corrective action in place that includes but is not limited to suspension, retention, make-up time, remediation, tutoring, and requiring documentation.

In order to keep parents and guardians informed of student attendance the Director will notify parents/guardians in writing of any student that has accumulated 6 unexcused, or 10 or more excused or unexcused absences.

### N.C. COMPULSARY ATTENDANCE LAW

The principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the child's excessive absences after the child has accumulated three unexcused absences in a semester. After no more than six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he/she may be in violation of the compulsory attendance law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the state board of education.

## TARDINESS

A student is tardy if he or she arrives to school after 8:15 for high school students and 7:45 AM for students enrolled in the K-8. A tardy log will be kept in the main office. All tardy students must be signed in to the main office by a parent or guardian. A student is allowed 3 unexcused tardies in a quarter. At the beginning of each new quarter the tardy count will reset to 0. On the fourth tardy of a given quarter, the student and the student's parents or guardians shall be required to meet with an administrator. The administration will work with the parents or guardians to come up with a corrective action plan to improve the punctuality of the student. The administration will have the authority to implement a corrective action plan.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

School closings or delays due to inclement weather will be announced by email, text and phone call, to CCA parents, on local news channels (WFMY News 2 and Fox 8 News) and on the school website. In the event that CCA is not closed or delayed but the parent makes the determination that travel to and from school will be unsafe, the student's absence will be excused.

## EARLY DISMISSAL

In the event that a student needs to leave school before dismissal, a parent must sign the student out in the front office. The office staff will call the student for dismissal. In order to ensure that the student has the most time in the classroom, a student will be dismissed for early dismissal only upon arrival of the parent to the office. Students will not be allowed to wait in the office if a parent calls early.

## GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### SNACK

Students in grades K-5 will have a snack time in their daily schedule. Students may bring a healthy snack from home to have during that time. Sodas and candy will not be considered healthy snacks.

### LUNCH

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms or assigned area with either their teacher or parent volunteer supervising. Lunches for students who qualify for free and reduced lunches will be provided by the school. Other students may bring their own lunches or purchase lunch from the school.

### DISMISSAL

Students will be dismissed at 2:45. In order to protect the time on task and make the most out of the school day, instruction will occur right up until 2:45. Parents should wait until 2:45 to pick up their students. All students that are not staying for a pre-arranged after school activity should be picked up by 3:20. Our high school students will be dismissed at 3:20.

### COMMUNICATION

Communication between the school and the families of CCA is vital to the success of our students and school. If you have a problem or concern, please contact your teacher, the office staff, or the school administration.

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held after the first quarter. Parents will be able to sign up for a conference time that is convenient for them and the teacher.

Weekly classroom newsletters will be sent home with all students, informing parents of upcoming activities, assignments, and events. Teachers will also update their school websites regularly.

Weekly newsletters will be sent from the school director, as well as periodic emails and phone calls.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Students' health and safety is a priority for CCA. Key members of our staff will be trained as first responders by the American Red Cross. Further, all staff members will be trained on the school's emergency response plan.

NC students are required by law to have certain immunizations prior to attending schools: DTP, DTaP, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hib, Hepatitis B, and Varicella. Cornerstone Charter Academy: A Challenge Foundation Academy staff will work to make sure all students meet the immunization requirements. Parents of students who have not had the proper immunizations will be advised about where and when they may obtain those immunizations. Parents may submit written requests to be exempted from immunizations for medical or religious reasons.

When medically necessary, medications (over the counter or prescription) may be administered by trained school personnel.

School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless they have received a medication permission form properly completed and signed by a parent/guardian, and the medication has been received in an appropriately labeled container. In fairness to those giving the medication and to protect the safety of your child, there will be **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY**.

Cornerstone Charter Academy staff will work with the Health Department, and other providers when appropriate, to offer our students special health screenings. These screenings include hearing, vision, and speech.

## VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of the mission for the school. It is our goal to welcome all visitors and volunteers. When you arrive at school, please sign in at the front office. When you leave, please sign out. Volunteers will be required to fill out a background check, and must meet the requirements of the Board Policy in order to be left alone with students in a volunteer capacity.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All electronics are required to be kept put away for the entire academic day, except with the permission of the teacher. Students bring electronic devices to school at their own risk, and the school will not be responsible for lost or stolen electronics.

Laptops may be brought to school with prior approval from the teacher. Cell phones may be brought to school only after the parent and student have signed the cell phone use policy. Cell

phones are to be put away for the entire academic day. Failure to abide by the cell phone use policy will result in the forfeiture of cell phone privileges.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

In order to protect the time on task, special events will be limited. Holiday parties and other celebrations, such as birthday celebrations, should be limited to non-academic parts of the day such as lunch and recess.

When special events do occur for classes or grade levels, such as an author visit or touring ensemble, parents will be notified in advance.

## CCA TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY

### Internet-Terms and Condition of Use

**Define a Purpose for Internet Use.** All use of the Internet during school hours must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objective of the school district. Users must have a well-defined, documented reason for accessing the Internet. No “surfing” is allowed. “Surfing” is the term describing unstructured searches or exploring with no specific, pre-determined goal or purpose. All Internet users must have a topic, or subject to be researched; student research must be directly related to a given assignment from one or more teacher(s). There should be adult supervision while any student is researching via the Internet.

**Maintain Network Etiquette (sometimes called “Netiquette”):** Use or transmission of offensive or vulgar language or of threatening or abusive language is prohibited. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. Disrupting network communications are prohibited. All information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property of the person or organization presenting the material and may be subject to copyright, trademark or other legal protections.

**Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in the suspension or revocation of the privilege. Any misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action.

**Security:** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

**Denying Access:** Children are not to be granted access to the Internet without proper parental



or guardian permission. If a parent or guardian is uncomfortable with the option of his or her child(ren) accessing the Internet, the student(s) may be assigned to a different activity when classmates are using the Internet. Teachers must provide alternative assignments to students in this circumstance.

**Disclaimer:** CCA makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, of the quality or dependability of the Internet service it is providing or the information obtained from the Internet. CCA will not be responsible for any damages suffered while using the Internet. This includes but may not be limited to loss of data, delays or delivery failures or service interruptions caused by technical problems or by human error. Employees assume all responsibility and risk associated with the use of any general, copyrighted, prohibited or other information obtained via the Internet.

**Username, Account ID, Account Numbers and Passwords:** Usernames, account numbers, account ID and passwords issued to students and staff members must remain confidential.

**Students Use of Computers and the Internet:** Student use of the Internet requires teacher consent and the student signature and parental permission granted via the Student Technology Use Agreement Form. Student Internet use is permitted for school related activities only. Teachers, administrators and staff will always strive to maintain appropriate levels of supervision of Internet use by students. Students are not permitted to search for, download, or print any objectionable, vulgar, or offensive material. Unsupervised participation in group discussion chats or new groups is not permitted. Authorized representatives of the School may monitor the use of the school's equipment and network from time to time. This may include viewing incoming and outgoing e-mail messages. The Student Technology Use Agreement Form will be maintained by the school and should be verified prior to assigning independent research on the Internet.

**Harassment-free Workplace:** CCA strives to maintain a workplace that is free of harassment. Therefore, CCA prohibits the use of computers and the e-mail system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others, or harmful to morale. For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons is not allowed. Other misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disrespectful of others.

**Risk of Prosecution:** "Illegally downloading music, movies, software, and pornography using the school network may result in criminal prosecution. Hacking into the school network may also result in criminal prosecution."

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

### ***OVERVIEW***

The academic program is designed to support the school’s pillar of rigorous academics. The policies included in this section are intended to provide parents with a set of expectations for their experience with their child’s teacher(s).

### **Learning Targets/Objectives**

Learning goals presented in the classroom should emphasize the knowledge students would potentially gain. These goals need to be posted for every subject, elective, and special class.

### **Classwork Assignments**

Classwork should be used as a form of evaluation regarding how much students have learned that class period. In classes that meet 4-5 times per week, the classroom teacher must record in PowerSchool a minimum of two classwork grades per week in each subject for each student. If a class meets once a week then only one classwork grade will need to be recorded weekly.

### **Homework**

Homework reinforces skills, concepts and information learning in the class. It should be an extension of what took place in the classroom. It is another diagnostic tool for teachers evaluate student growth and determine student misconceptions. It is work that is assigned to be completed at home. CCA-CFA believes that homework can be a valuable part of the learning experience. The discipline, study skills, and responsibility that daily homework assignments give a student, can help him be successful in higher education and beyond. Further, daily practice is essential for developing important skills and meeting educational goals. All grades will be expected to give homework at least four times per week that is appropriate in difficulty and designed to help the students reach their educational objectives. No new concepts should be included in homework. It should be purposeful, related to classroom experiences, and be age and grade appropriate. The purpose and the direction for the assignment need to be clearly communicated and homework will be graded by the appropriate teacher.

The average amount of time a student should spend on nightly homework assignments combined is:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
K-2	20-40 minutes total
3-5	30-60 minutes total
6-8	60-90 core classes total*
HS	20-30 per course / 30-45 per A.P. Course**

\*The middle school teachers at Cornerstone greatly value the time a child spends at home with family. For that reason, we will make highly purposeful and intentional choices when assigning homework. We prefer that students have time to complete homework that reflects their best work while maintaining accountability. If your student occasionally needs an extra night to complete an assignment, please communicate that need to their teacher. If your child continues to struggle with homework, please share this information with the teacher so that we can work together to improve student performance and understanding

\*\*High school teachers have an efficient school day, and we believe that focused homework assignments are required for student growth. Therefore, in an enriched, advanced, or standard ability-level class, students should expect 20 to 30 minutes of work per course per night. In an Advanced Placement (A.P.) class, the homework may take from 30 to 45 minutes per night. Students should be aware of individual teachers' homework policies.

### **Tests**

Tests should be created or viewed by the teacher prior to teaching the subject matter. In other words, teachers should know what they test before creating their actual lesson content.

### **Projects/Rubrics**

If a project is assigned, a rubric must be given to students along with the project guidelines. This allows students to have clear direction about instructional targets as well as a description of the project.

### **Progress Reports**

Progress reports must be issued for all students at the middle of each quarter. Teachers may decide to issue progress reports with even greater frequency. Progress reports should reflect weekly grading.

Teachers must notify parents in writing when their child is in danger of failing at any time during the grading period.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are generated from Powerschool. The report card is reviewed by the teacher and placed in the report card envelope. The envelope will be signed by the teacher and used to send the report card home. Parents will keep the report card and return the signed envelope to the teacher. The report card is sent home at the end of each quarter. The final report card will be given to all students on the last day of school, who do not owe money for lunch, damaged or misplaced textbooks, or library books.

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Communicating with parents is one of the most important responsibilities of teachers. Conferences proved an arena for collecting developmental and personal information from parents that may affect a child's learning. Developing rapport and encouraging parent involvement in the child's education process; and reporting and discussing student progress with parent is an integral part of helping students be successful. Parents shall provide any relevant information concerning their child that will enhance their understanding of the child's ability, effort, success, or progress at CCA-CFA.

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held at the conclusion of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

Additionally, a mandatory conference is required at the end of the second quarter with parents whose child is placed on the possible retention list.

### **Promotion and Retentions**

Students will be promoted to the next grade when they have demonstrated a mastery of the previous grade level objectives. Parents of students being considered for retention shall be notified in writing as early as possible, not less than 45 days before the end of the school year. Parents may respond in writing to the Director within 30 days of the written notification to protest the retention. Retention of students will be at the sole discretion of the Director.

The Director will consider the following when deciding to retain or promote a student:

- Teacher recommendation
- Parent recommendation
- Student's test scores (NWEA, EOG)
- Student's academic progress over time
- Student's portfolio of work
- Student's behavior history
- Student's attendance history
- Student's special education needs

### **Compass**

Compass will be monitored by homeroom teachers in grades K-8. Specific directions will be sent home during the first quarter.

### **Textbooks**

Students are expected to take good care of and bring to class the textbooks that have been assigned to them. Students are responsible for all damage that occurs to textbooks assigned to them, and the school will bill parents to recover the cost of damaged textbooks.

## CURRICULUM

The educational program at CCA will be anchored by Core Knowledge, a collaborative and seamless education program. This integration will allow Core Knowledge to provide a coherent foundation for learning while allowing the flexibility to meet and exceed the NC accountability standards.

### **Math**

Cornerstone Charter Academy, a K-12 non-profit public charter school, uses the Singapore Mathematics approach. It is a hands-on approach that builds number sense through concrete, pictorial, and abstract (CPA) modeling, allowing students to think deeply about math in the world and fully explain their thinking. One of the effects of Singapore Math is that our children will be able to solve real-life problems in everyday situations. In addition, this approach provides students with a solid foundation in math by focusing on visual understanding, connections, number sense, mastery, and word problems. We believe this approach adds to what our students already derive from our CCA community, including character education, rigorous academics, and strong leadership skills.

### **Reading and Language Arts**

K-5 grade students will use the Core Knowledge Language Arts Program and the Core Knowledge Sequence. Our middle school will utilize the reading and language arts program as outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence. Shurley English will be used to grades K-8.

Students have different learning styles that well trained and knowledgeable educators take into consideration as they prepare their lessons. The brains of different students assimilate information in different ways. Reading is not a natural act, but rather an acquired skill. Therefore, to meet the needs of all students, reading instruction will be taught using a variety of presentation styles.

### **History and Science**

The Core Knowledge Curriculum is aligned to meet the grade level objectives in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. It is understood that the major areas of study for science in grades K-8 include the following:

- Force and Motion
- Nature of Matter
- Energy
- Processes that Shape the Earth
- Earth and Space

- Process of Life
- How Living Things Interact with Their Environments, and
- The Nature of Science

The major areas of study as set by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for social studies in K-8 include the following:

- Time, Continuity, and Change (History)
- People, Places, and Environments (Geography)
- Government and the Citizen (Civics and Government) and
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption (Economics)

Field trips in both science and history will be used to bring the subject area alive. They will be well planned, focused on the present subject matter, and available to all students at all times.

To extend the learning opportunities for students with various learning styles, teachers will be given the necessary training, materials, and planning time to create lesson plans that touch all students.

### **Character Education**

Character education is one of the pillars of CCA. In grades K-8 time will be set aside each week to explore the school-wide virtue of the month through stories, crafts, drama, and discussions. The middle school grades will take a more integrated approach and explore the same virtue through each curriculum area. Monthly service projects will be tied into the monthly virtues when possible, with the goal of creating a cohesive, consistent and integrated character education program.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education will be provided in all grade levels. An emphasis will be placed on developing an awareness and appreciation of lifelong healthful activities and health education will be a part of the program.

### **Art and Music**

Art and music instruction will be required for all students in grades K-6. In grades 7 and 8, art and music will be an elective area of focus. Art classes will include production of art with a variety of media as well as social and historical perspectives with the goal of developing an appreciation of a variety of art. Likewise, music classes will explore music using grade level appropriate activities and instruments with the goal of developing an appreciation and understanding of a variety of music.

***GRADING POLICIES***

**Grading Scale**

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59-below

**Grade Weights**

Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Kindergarten and First Grade will be using “The Tens Conversion Chart” recommended by the Core Knowledge Language Arts program. Details of the chart will be sent home with information packets at the beginning of the year.

2nd Grade

Assignment Type	Weight
Tests/Projects/Quizzes	35%
Classwork	40%
Homework	25%

3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

Assignment Type	Weight
Tests	40%
Projects/Quizzes/Classwork/Homework	60%

Middle Grades (6-8)

Assignment Type	Weight
Tests/Projects/Quizzes	60%
Classwork/Homework	40%

High School

In recognition of the different learning activities involved with High School coursework, grading weights will be set by content departments at the high school level and will be communicated in course syllabi.

Recording Grades

- Teachers will maintain a record of student’s grades and enter grades into PowerSchool on a weekly basis.
- Teachers will grade and assign a score, based on the CCA grading scale, for all student assignments in grades K-8, including classwork, homework, tests/projects, quizzes.
- In classes that meet 4-5 times per week, the classroom teacher must record in Powerschool a minimum of two classwork grades per week in each subject for each student. If a class meets once a week then only one classwork grade will need to be recorded weekly.
- **ALL** homework assignments are to be graded and recorded in Powerschool weekly.
- Teachers will return graded papers and assignments in a timely manner in order to provide on-going, timely feedback to students and parents.

Parent Portal

PowerSchool Parent Portal gives parents and students access to real-time information including attendance, grades and detailed assignment descriptions, school bulletins and even personal messages from the teacher. PowerSchool’s Parent Portal provides single sign-on access. With single sign-on access parents create and maintain their account using the appropriate access credentials. Once parents have created their account, they will be able to manage their account information, link any and all students to your account (for whom you have parental or legal rights), and set email and notifications preferences for each student linked to your account. If account sign-in information has been forgotten, please contact the office. The website URL is <https://cornerstoneacademy.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

Late work Policy

Classwork, homework, projects, and tests must be completed by all students. Any classwork or homework not turned in on the due date is to be completed. However, late work will be assigned grades based on the following chart (class projects will be assigned a different scoring rubric and late work policy):

K-2	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	High School
1 day late = -10 2 days late = -20	1 day late = -25 2 days late = -50	1 day late = -50 More than 1 day = 0	*Determined by class syllabi



3 days late = -30 4 days late = -40 5 days late = 0	3 days late = -75 4 days late = 0		
<p>*Parents will be notified of missing assignments. *A homework assignment is considered late the day after a parent is notified</p>		<p>*Middle school teachers will offer a block of time at the end of the week to make up assignments for a grade of up to 50%</p>	<p>*Teachers set their own late-work policy, and it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements regarding any late work with the individual teacher. The student should approach the teacher at an appropriate time and discuss the time limit for turning in the late work. Information concerning late work will be published in each teacher's syllabus.</p>

**Grading Excused Absences & Make Up work**

It is the responsibility of the student, with help from the parent, to obtain all missed assignments from the appropriate teacher. Classwork and homework that is missed due to an excused absence must be made up within two days upon his return to school, or within the same number of days that the student was absent. If a student doesn't complete the assignment, the Late Work Policy applies. Teachers are not required to give assignments in advance of absences, but may do so at their discretion.

**Grading Work Unexcused Absences**

Class work and homework that is missed due to an unexcused absence may be made up at the teacher's discretion following the above late work policy.

**Authorization of Grade Change or Grade Change**

Due to the Power School system, teachers are unable to successfully change a student's report card grade after the grading period. It will change on the teacher's end; however the grade will not change on the administration's end. Before an official grade change can be made on the report card, the teacher will need to fill out a Grade Change Form, which can be found on the

Share Drive. Please fill out the form and submit a hard copy of the form to the Director. A follow-up meeting with administration will be scheduled to discuss the reason for changing the grade. At that time, a decision will be decided to change or not to change the grade. Then the form will be submitted to the Operations Manager for changes to be made within the electronic gradebook.

## ***ACADEMIC HONORS/AWARDS***

### **Honor Roll**

The purpose of the honor roll program is to recognize and honor students who have attained outstanding academic success. Students in grade 2-10 can qualify for A or A/B Honor Roll. The following criteria will be used to identify students at each grade level:

#### A Honor Roll

Students with all A's with no grade below an "A" in all subjects and special/electives.

#### A/B Honor Roll

Students with all A's and/or B's with no grade lower than a "B" in all subjects and special/electives.

### **Presidential Awards -**

Annual awards for 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grades include:

#### Silver Awards:

- At least 1 year of growth on NWEA in one area
- Character Virtues
- A, A-B Honor Roll
- Behavior/Discipline Issues
- Work Ethic
- Team Decision with Specials & Administration

#### Gold Awards

- All A's All Year
- Meet or exceed expected growth on 2/3 NWEA tests
- Behavior/Discipline Issues
- Character Virtues
- Work Ethic
- Team Decision with Specials & Administration.

## ***ACADEMIC CONCERNS***

Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss any academic concerns with their child's teacher as soon as concerns arise. Teachers at CCA-CFA are committed to using a variety of teaching strategies and differentiation in order to meet the academic needs of all students and to appeal to a variety of learning styles. A School Support Team and Special Education Team are available to support teachers and parents and to address the needs of students who continue to have academic difficulties.

### **School Support Team**

A School Support Team (SST), has been created at CCA-CFA, in order to support students who are struggling in their educational environment and their teachers. This team consists of a variety of school professionals, including administrator(s), regular education teacher(s), special education teachers(s), and specials teacher(s). When a student is struggling academically and regular classroom interventions and differentiation have not made a significant impact, the student may be referred to the SST. Before the Team can meet and discuss the student, written parent consent must be obtained. Once a parent has given consent, the student's teacher will present information about the student to the SST. The teacher and SST will review the documented interventions, discuss concerns, collaborate, and make decisions regarding the next step of action, which may include implementing new research-based interventions for a designated period of time or making a referral for a comprehensive evaluation. The SST will continue to meet to discuss and monitor the student until acceptable progress has been made or the student is referred to the Special Education Team. Parents are encouraged to remain a part of this process.

### **Special Education**

CCA-CFA strives to meet the educational needs of all students enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. As a public charter school, Cornerstone complies with the policies adopted by the State Board of Education for charter schools regarding the education of children with disabilities.

If the school or parent(s) suspect that a student may have a disability, either one may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if the child has a disability and whether or not the child requires special education services. This request should be in the form of a written referral to the Special Education department, and it should include the specific concerns, as well as the student's current strengths and needs. If the student has not yet been referred to the School Support Team, that process may be recommended before beginning the special education process. If the special education process is initiated, an IEP (Individualized Education Program) Team will be assembled, which includes the parent(s), a professional to represent the LEA (Local Educational Agency), the student's Regular Education Teacher, a Special Education

Teacher, and any applicable Related Services providers. The initial special education process includes gathering information, an Invitation to Conference to the parents, Formal Referral, and Consent for Evaluation(s). Once the required evaluations have been conducted and reports written and reviewed, the IEP Team will meet again to determine if the student qualifies for Special Education, as defined by North Carolina State Regulations. If the team determines that the child is eligible for special education, then an IEP will be developed and implemented. If it is determined that the student is a child with a disability but special education services are not required, the student may be eligible for a Section 504 Plan and a referral to that team can be made.

CCA-CFA provides the full continuum of services and related services to a student as determined necessary for that student and outlined in his/her IEP. These services include, but are not limited to, inclusion services, pull-out services, speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

### **Remediation Plan**

The remediation plan must have three levels: Each grade level creates intervention strategies within their team.

- Tier 1: Whole group instruction with differentiation built into the lesson.
- Tier 2: Targeted Assistance with specific plans for remediation over a set predetermined amount of time which is determined by student ability and teacher intervention plan. (No more than two weeks)
- Tier 3: Intensive Critical Response: (Critical Response) Long term extensive remediation efforts may include weekly tutorial plan, referrals to SST (School Support Team), parent conferences, evaluations, etc. This could lead to academic probationary status.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

Student expectations will be communicated clearly at the beginning of each year, and periodically throughout the year. Through our Character Education program, behavior expectations will also be addressed.

Students are expected to follow the CCA-CFA Code of Conduct and three basic tenets from which all other expectations will follow: respect yourself, respect others, and respect the school.

Many behavior corrections may be taken care of in the classroom by the classroom teacher. Each teacher will establish a system to reward desirable student behavior and discourage undesirable student behavior. Teachers will communicate with parents when students exhibit undesirable behavior that results in a disciplinary action being taken.

When students demonstrate behavior that is extremely disruptive to the class or goes beyond what the teacher's system can handle in scope or frequency, the student will be referred to the office for administrative discipline. Administration will address the issue based on the guidance of the CCA-CFA Code of Conduct

Administrative consequences will always include notification of and consultation with the parent and may include the following:

- Detention
- In school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Long term suspension

When considering administrative disciplines for special needs students, the school Director, or his designee, will review and consider any accommodations made as a result of the student's IEP or 504 status and if the behaviors are a manifestation of the student's disability. If a student with an IEP or 504 plan exhibits continuous or egregious disruptive behavior, a functional behavioral assessment and/or a behavior intervention plan may be put in place.

A parent may appeal any administrative discipline by submitting a written request for review to the Director within 7 days of the written notification of the administrative discipline. The Director will either reconsider the discipline or forward the request for review to the Board of Directors within 3 days. The Board will hold a hearing where the parents and a representative, if desired, will be given a chance to speak on why the administrative discipline should be changed. The Board of Directors' decision on the request for review will be final.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Purpose: To provide the procedures parents and students will follow when they have a problem at the School that constitutes a grievance.**

### **Guiding Principles**

The School acknowledges that the application of policy and procedure to school practice is inherently difficult and can manifest itself in circumstances where there are disagreements among members of the school community. It is the hope of the Board of Directors that community members will do their best to find resolutions to these disagreements at the level at which they occur. However, the Board acknowledges that it is not always possible, and, as such, all efforts to achieve a positive resolution may be unsuccessful. At its core, this policy is designed to be a positive, solution-focused practice that promotes an agreeable resolution for all parties involved.

### **Relationship to Mission**

Parental involvement is a pillar of the School. The School wants to ensure that parents have an avenue to explore should they feel their voice is not being heard appropriately or correctly. Additionally, character education drives us to ensure we see and hear all possible solutions to an issue. This policy promotes meaningful parent involvement and character education.

### **Policy**

This policy is in place to respond to parent/student grievances. It is expected that any parent/student with a problem should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is the student's teacher.

If the student/parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the grade-level Principal. At that meeting, the teacher, student, grade-level principal and parent must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed.

If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Director. Similarly, if a parent/student disagrees or has a problem with a policy or procedure at the School, the parent/student should set a meeting with the Director.

If the parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Director and if the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many problems that a parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or School will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or grade-level principal.

1. **Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a parent/student stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, or law/regulation. A complaint under Title IX is not a grievance and this policy does not apply to such complaints.
2. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within seven days of the meeting with the Director. The seven-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Director.
3. **The grievance process is as follows:**

**Step 1:** If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Director, and if the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated, including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision-making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Director of the School and to the President of the Board of Directors. If the Director of the School is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the President or Vice President of the Board of Directors.

**Step 2:** The Board will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email is acceptable) if further action is necessary. If the Board believes the matter should be heard, the parties will be called to meet with the Board. After the hearing, the decision of the Board will be communicated to the Director and to the parent/student who filed the grievance within five school days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final.