



Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation

Waco Charter School

Carl Ritter, Principal

615 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street

Waco, Tx. 76707

Phone: 254-754-8169

# WACO CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

## 2021-2022



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July 19, 2021

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another great year at Waco Charter School. We hope that you have enjoyed a relaxing summer and are ready to start the new school year of 2021-22. After the long weeks of uncertainty, we are extremely excited about what the school year holds for your students and sharing in your high expectations for their continuing academic success and bright future. Please let me know how the Waco Charter School staff can be of any assistance to help your child along this journey! By continuing to work together, our school-home partnership will help each student reach their fullest potential for academic achievement and create a super year of learning and growing.

Parents, please read this handbook in full, review it with your student(s), and guide them to understand the importance of cooperative behavior. I welcome your questions and am available to clarify the information.

Professionally yours,

Carl Ritter  
Principal

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

## EOAC Mission Statement

To serve people in need with compassion and dignity, to help those who can to achieve economic independence and to ease the pain of poverty barriers.

## Campus Mission Statement

At Waco Charter School, we will promote a safe and vibrant learning community that nurtures the values of citizenship, responsibility and academic achievement. Staff and students will model good character, hope and joy of living life to its highest potential.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Waco Charter School (WCS) does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex or handicap in providing education services. No student is to be discriminated against or given preference because of age, sex, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, handicapping condition, political affiliation or belief.

The Executive Director is designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

## POLICY

- Failure to abide by policies and procedures of the school may be grounds for dismissal.
- **School begins promptly at 7:45 a.m.** with morning assembly and dismisses at **3:15 p.m.**
- Students are required to arrive to school within dress code guidelines daily.
- Late arrivals will not be tolerated and will disqualify a student from attendance incentives.
- Early pick-ups are discouraged unless it is for a documented medical or other required appointment. They also disqualify a student from attendance incentives.
- **ATTENDANCE** is required by Waco Charter School (WCS) policy and by state law. The parents of children who do not meet compulsory attendance requirements will be referred to the courts as required by law. Parents may have charges filed against them and fined by a court if children are absent excessively.
- Excessive absences, tardies and early pick-ups will be considered in continued enrollment decisions.
- Parents must provide written authorization for WCS staff to release a child any person other than the parent or guardian. If the person picking up the child is not listed on the authorized pick-up list, the child will **NOT** be released.
- Individuals must show valid identification each time a child is picked up from school.
- Parents and guardians must inform the school of any and all health concerns, including food allergies.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is defined as cheating, copying the work of another individual, plagiarism, and/or unauthorized communication between students during examination. Documented instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the principal.

## Accountability

The accountability goals of WCS are clearly outlined in the Charter application:

- 90% passage on all sections of the State mandated test in all grades.
- Academic growth at least one year on Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS); and
- 95% campus student attendance.

Teachers will:

- Administer the state mandated test in accordance with the state assessment calendar.
- Conference with parents/guardians following the receipt of test score(s).
- Be available by appointment to offer suggestions, ideas or share materials with parents/guardians to support student success.

In preparation for the state test, parents will have the opportunity to utilize test study guides to support student's development as readers. Scores from this standardized test are shared with parents and guardians. These scores are used to set individual goals and to measure progress to move to the next grade level.

### **What is STAAR?**

State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is the testing program for students in Texas public schools. The assessments are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum which outlines the content and skills students need to learn to be successful in the current grade as well as make academic progress from year to year. Currently, students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are required to pass the STAAR assessment in reading and math as one condition for promotion to the next grade. If they do not pass, they may be retained.

### **Admissions Policy**

As stated in the original charter application, "Admission to the Wasco Charter School will be determined by community boundaries. Students seeking admission to Waco Charter School and return it to the school by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of admission. The application form will be used to gather socio-economic information and to assess family needs. Students residing within the community boundaries (as amended in August 28, 2002 to include Connally, La Vega, Midway, Robinson and Waco Independent Scholl Districts) will receive admission preference. The Waco Charter School will define policies governing transfers as allowed by law, provided there is an opening available in the school's enrollment. No student will be denied admission to the Waco Charter School based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, or gender. The open-enrollment Charter will provide for the exclusion of a student who has a document history of criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication or discipline problems as defined under TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter A. Falsifying records and enrollment information will be grounds for dismissal from WCS.

### **After-School Program**

The WCS After-School Program is available for enrolled students whose parents have full-time employment or are enrolled in nine (9) college hours. The cost is \$10 per week per child. Tuition fees must be paid two weeks in advance. Late payments **WILL** result in immediate termination of participation. The After-School Program hours are from 3:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. on school days unless otherwise posted. During the first hour, students receive a meal, tutoring *and homework assistance*. Tutoring supports the state's curriculum, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). During the remainder of the time, children have the opportunity to engage in clubs and enrichment activities. Students will not be charged for any required tutoring. Parents must pick up their children from the After-School Program by 5:30 p.m. each day. Failure to do so will result in additional fees and or removal from the program.

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the campus administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the Principal/Assistant Superintendent, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 254-754-8169

## **Assembly Programs**

**Students are to arrive by 7:45 a.m.** for the morning assembly in the classroom. Morning assembly includes pledges, moment of silence, birthday announcements, behavior modeling and discussion of school morals and life skills applications. Parents will be notified of other assemblies as they are scheduled.

## **Arrival/Dismissal**

**Classes will begin at 7:45 a.m.** Students may not arrive at school no earlier than 7:05 a.m. when adult supervision will begin. Students will be dismissed at 3:15 p.m. Pick-up time will start at 3:15 p.m. Please schedule health appointments after dismissal.

## **Attendance**

In Texas, a child who is at least six years of age – or who is younger than six years of age but previously enrolled in first grade – is required to attend school until reaching his/her eighteenth birthday or achieving graduation.

WCS requires that a student must be in attendance at least ninety-five percent (95%) of the instructional days during the year. When a student has accumulated at least three absences, a warning letter will be mailed to the parent or guardian. After six and nine absences respectively, another letter will be sent to the parent or guardian. After nine absences, the student is in the 95% attendance policy. The parent or guardian will receive legal notification by certified letter when a “Failure to Attend” and “Thwarting Compulsory Attendance” complaint has been filed with Justice of the Peace against the parent and/or the student.

Please remember that state law requires the school to notify parents of student absence without regard for excused or unexcused situations. All assignments missed during an absence must be turned in to the teacher or no grade will be given.

Students are required to be in school and will receive an unexcused absence except in cases of emergency or for reasons listed below:

1. Written documentation of personal illness, illness or a death in immediate family, quarantine, severe weather or road conditions making travel dangerous or any other reason acceptable to the administration;
2. Medical and dental appointments;
3. Participation in court proceedings;
4. Observance of a religious holiday;
5. Migrant student’s late enrollment or early withdrawal; and/or
6. Late enrollment of a student under the Texas Youth Commission.

If a student is absent three or more consecutive days, a doctor’s note or verification is needed for an excused absence. Special circumstances must be addressed with the principal.

State law does not penalize a student who has a medical or dental appointment when the following steps are taken:

1. If a student reports to school and has a morning medical/dental appointment (before lunch period) and brings documentation from the provider to the office upon his /her return to school the next day, no absence or tardy is recorded on the student’s attendance record.
2. If a student attends school all morning, signs out for a medical/dental appointment after lunch period and brings documentation from the provider to the office upon his/her return the next day, no absence or tardy is recorded on the student’s attendance record.
3. These appointments will not disqualify a student from attendance incentives.

## **Absences**

Within three (3) days following each absence, parents **MUST** provide a written excuse from a health care professional or a written note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence

to be an excused absence. The notes will be maintained in the office for audit purposes. The State Average Daily Attendance (ADA) mandate states that a student who is absent after 9:30 a.m. is considered absent for the entire day unless the student returns to the school following a medical appointment that day. The same mandate applies when the student is present until 9:30 a.m. Students must attend 90% of the school days in each grading period to stay in compliance with the 90% required by compulsory attendance laws. Therefore, students have only four (4) days available for illness or emergency during each grading period. Compliance with the 95% attendance statement in the school's charter limits absences to two (2) days per grading period.

### **Tardy**

**Students will be counted tardy if they arrive after 7:50 a.m. Parents are required to walk their child/children in and sign-in their students when they are late.** Parents of children with excessive tardies and/or absences will be referred to the principal and may forfeit any priority enrollment status.

**Excessive tardiness and cumulative absences will be documented for a parent's information who may be referred to the court system for student truancy.**

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school, from any class, from required special programs, such as, additional special instructions, termed "accelerated instruction" by the state or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both parents and the student if a school-age student (age 12 to 17) is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school **ten or more days or parts of days** within a six-month period, in the same school year, or
- Is absent **five (5) or more days or parts of days** within a grading period.

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with an offense based on the parent contributing to non-attendance. If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and the student could be charged with an offense based on the student's failure to attend school.

### **Truancy Prevention Measures**

Additionally, school district's truancy prevention measures must now include at least one of the following:

- Referral to counseling, meditation, mentoring, community-based services or other services to address the student's truancy; or
- meeting with the principal.

### **Attendance Appeals Committee**

An administrator will make the initial decision on attendance issues. If agreement is not reached, the parent/guardian has the right to utilize the appeal process as stated below:

1. An Attendance Appeals Committee shall be comprised of the EOAC Executive Director, two Board members and two parents. The Committee shall convene as necessary to determine if promotion should be granted to students who have not met the 90% attendance requirement.
2. A student and the student's parent or guardian shall be given notice prior to and upon a student's attendance dropping below 95% in any class, and a parent conference shall be scheduled. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, a certified letter shall be sent.

The Attendance Committee shall hear cases when a student's attendance at mid-term falls below the requirement, and the parent or legal guardian **has filed a petition, in writing, within three days in of receipt of notice** from WCS.

The committee shall review absences due to personal illness that is

- verified by a dated physician's statement; and/or
- a written explanation from the parent;
- and a statement from the teacher confirming that the student has completed all missed work and has maintained a passing average of 70 or above.

It shall be the parent's responsibility to contact teachers so make up work is completed. One day for each day absent can be allowed to complete make-up work.

### **Building and Room Care**

Each person shares the responsibility for the upkeep to the school. Students are expected to help maintain the beauty of the campus, both inside and outside the classrooms. This participation will help the students accept responsibility and develop a sense of pride in their school.

### **WELLNESS GOALS: NUTRITION EDUCATION**

Waco Charter School (WCS) is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, the Board of Directors has adopted the following policy for Waco Charter School:

- Waco Charter School will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PK-5 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Waco Charter School shall implement, in accordance with the law, a coordinated health program with both a nutrition education component and physical activity and shall use health course curriculum that emphasizes the importance of proper nutrition.
- Food and beverages sold or served at WCS will meet the nutrition recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the healthy and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, WCS will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program and Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) for the after-school evening meal instead of snack and the Summer Food Service Program.
- WCS will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs and with related community services.
- Accommodations are available for any child requiring a special diet prescribed by a licensed medical physician. Parents should contact the school nurse on campus as soon as possible at 254-754-8169.

## **STUDENT WELFARE: WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES POLICY**

- **SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES** – WCS has established the following goals to “create an environment that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity”. These goals are also established to express a consistent wellness message through other school-based functions.
- **WELLNESS** – WCS shall follow nutrition guidelines that advance student health, reduce childhood obesity, and promote the general wellness of all students through nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities.
- **DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES AND GOALS** – WCS has developed nutritional guidelines and wellness goals in consultation with the local school health advisory council with involvement from representatives of the student body, school food service, administration, school board, parents and the public.
- **NUTRITION GUIDELINES** – WCS shall ensure that nutritional guidelines for reimbursable school meals are compliant with state-federal regulations and guidance and include all foods available in accordance with the National School Lunch Program.
- **WELLNESS GOALS** – WCS shall implement, in accordance with the law, a coordinated health program with a nutrition education component and shall use health course curriculum that emphasizes the importance of proper nutrition.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** – WCS shall put into place, in accordance with current law, a health program with physical education and physical activity components. We will offer at *least* the state-required minimum amount of physical activity for all grade levels.
- **STUDENT WELFARE: WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES** – WCS will encourage parents to support children's participation, to include physical activities in family events, and to be active role models in the fight against childhood obesity. Physical Education (P.E.) classes will continuously emphasize moderate to vigorous activity. P.E. classes also include activities that further student awareness of healthy food choices and wellness. Annually, guest speakers from the McLennan County Public Health District will be invited to P.E. classes for instruction. These speakers will cover topics such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. EOAC WCS will always provide an environment that ensures safe and enjoyable fitness activities for all students.

### **I. School Health Advisory Committee**

- The School Nurse will be named as the overseer of implementation of this policy and shall develop procedures for periodic measures of the implementation of the wellness policy, in collaboration with the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).
- WCS will create, strengthen or work within the existing SHAC to implement, monitor, review and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.

### **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

#### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Breakfast, Lunch Programs and CACFP will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;<sup>1</sup>
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA; and
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.<sup>2, 3</sup>



The school should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards or other point of purchase materials.

## **Cafeteria**

WCS participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program and CACFP and is operating under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). WCS provides breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students at no charge, made possible by Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The school cafeteria provides a healthy breakfast and lunch each day and hopes that families will take advantage of this valuable opportunity. WCS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.<sup>4</sup>

## **MEALS**

**Breakfast.** To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- WCS will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program;
- WCS will, to the extent possible, utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation;
- WCS will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program; and
- WCS will encourage parents through memos, take-home materials or other means to provide a healthy breakfast for their children

The breakfast meal includes choices from the following daily components:

- Grain,
- Grain or meat,
- Fruit and/or juice,
- Milk

Students must select at least three items from the four components for breakfast and one item must be one-half cup of fruit or juice.

**Lunch.** The lunch meal includes choices from the following components each day:

- Meat/Meat Alternate,
- Vegetable,
- Fruit,
- Grain,
- Milk

Students must select at least three items from the five components for lunch and at least one item must be one-half cup of fruit or one-half cup of vegetable. The required number of items must be selected for breakfast and lunch OR students will be charged a la carte prices for each individual item.

**After-School Evening Meal.** Students participating in the WCS After-School Program will be offered a full meal matching the lunch meal choices and requirements. This meal is provided at no additional cost to the family.

**Snacks.** In addition to healthy meals, students may purchase a variety of snacks which comply with the "Smart Snacks Sold in School" regulation. Please note that snack items and extra items which are part of the meal must be purchased a la carte and **no charges are allowed**. Students pay for snacks

as they come *through* the serving line or by using credits from depositing money into a student account. Snack money will not be collected in the classrooms. Parents or students may give the snack money to the cafeteria cashier or pay in line daily. All students are issued a 3-digit PIN and will be required to enter this number when they receive a meal or purchase snacks.

All outside snacks must comply with the healthy snack regulation above - low in sugar, salt and fat. Candy is not allowed nor are hot, spicy snacks including Takis, hot fries, hot Cheetos, etc.

**Lunch Guests.** Once the campus may be reopened to visitors, if you plan to join your student for the meal from the cafeteria, please notify the classroom teacher in advance so you can be added to the daily lunch count.

Outside food is not allowed in the student dining area during lunch time. A special family area must be used if parents bring outside food when joining their student(s) during breakfast or lunch.

**NOTE:** *During the fall semester of SY 2021-22, the campus will not be open for family members to join students for meals. The evolving pandemic status will determine if a change is possible for the annual Thanksgiving meal and the spring semester*

The cost of the meal is as follows:

<b>Students meals</b>	
Breakfast	FREE
Lunch	FREE
<b>Adult Meals</b>	
Breakfast	\$3.00
Lunch	\$4.00

**\*Prices are subject to change\***

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Trained staff will administer the school meal programs. As part of the responsibility to operate a food service program, WCS will provide continuing staff development through ESC Region 12 for nutrition service personnel in the school. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.<sup>5</sup>

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (i.e. foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)**

**Elementary Schools.** Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits and non-fried vegetables.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations.

**Rewards.** WCS will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic, performance or good behavior,<sup>6</sup> and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school means) as a punishment or consequence.

**Celebrations.** WCS limits celebrations that involve food during the school day to the hour before dismissal and encourage limiting celebrations to one per month per class. Food and beverages that do not meet nutrition standards for items sold individually should be limited to one per party.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** WCS aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise); and includes training opportunities through ESC Region 12 staff development for teachers and other staff.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting.** For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students fully to embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Towards that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons.

**Communications with Parents.** The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district will provide nutrient analyses of school menus upon request. The school should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The school will provide an opportunity for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through special events or physical education homework.

**Food Marketing in Schools.** School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).<sup>7</sup> School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages<sup>8</sup> is discouraged. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

**Staff Wellness.** WCS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and encourages activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school may establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of staff members.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) PK-5.** Students in PK-5, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs will receive 45 minutes daily physical education for the entire school year. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily recess.** All elementary school students will have supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which WCS staff should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

The school should discourage extended periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity as Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel may use physical activity (e.g., *running laps, pushups*) and may withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

#### **IV. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The principal or designee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal will ensure compliance with those policies in school and will report on the school's compliance to the EOAC Executive Director or designee.

**Policy Review.** The Superintendent will review the policy with the WCS Board of Directors annually and submit recommended changes to the Board for revisions and approval. As part of that review, WCS will review our nutrition and physical activity policies, provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity, and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. WCS will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies.

#### **Dress Codes for Students**

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to ensure that their children are dressed and groomed according to the WCS policy. All students will adopt a standard mode of dress which consists of the following:

- Boys and girls must wear slacks or shorts in **black, dark blue (navy) or khaki (tan)** Girls also have the options of skorts, skirts, or jumpers in **black, dark blue (navy) or khaki (tan)**. Jeans

are not appropriate except on Spirit Fridays or as allowed by the principal for special events or with the use of a jean ticket.

- Shirts or blouses should be solid colors with no stripes, logos or designs. Shirts or blouses may be knit fabric with collar and button placket (polo-style) or woven fabric, button-front style Spirit t-shirts are permitted on Friday. WCS shirts, as well as college and professional athletic teams are included as spirit t-shirts.
- Neck openings of any dress, shirts, or blouse may not exceed the equivalent of the second button on the collar or the neckline.
- All shirts are preferred to be tucked in. **Slacks or shorts are to be worn at the waist with a belt if the item has loops.**
- It is recommended shoes be closed toe and heel for safety and health purposes. FLIP FLOPS are not permitted.
- Unless instructed otherwise due to the weather, coats will not be permitted to be worn during class time inside the building. Coats should be stored before the start of class.
- Caps and/or bandanas, handkerchiefs or unnaturally colored hair are not permitted.
- On Fridays, students are permitted to wear jeans (no baggy, holes or ripped jeans) along with a school (including WCS), team or college spirit shirt. Jeans with neatly patched holes are acceptable.
- No low-cut or revealing clothing is allowed.
- Closed shoes for PE and outdoor activities/no flip flops, sandals or high heels.
- Girls may wear tights in **basic solid colors** only.

Students are expected to be appropriately dressed and groomed at school as well as school functions. **The school principal has the final decision on questionable student dress.** The school will contact the parent of a student out of dress code to bring a change of clothing.

### Due Process/ Appeal Process

#### Suspension

Before a student is suspended, the parent or guardian of that student may request a hearing before the principal or designee. At this hearing, the parent or guardian will be presented with the accusation against the student and be given an opportunity to present his/her version of the incident. Evidence that the school has compiled will be presented to the child and parent or guardian. No suspension may exceed three consecutive school days.

A student who is recommended for formal disciplinary actions is entitled to a second level appeal with the Executive Director. The decision of the Executive Director is final and may not be appealed. The following information will be considered by the Executive Director:

- Was the student afforded due process?
- Is there evidence in the record to support the principal's or hearing officer's decision?
- Is the punishment in accordance with Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct?

#### Expulsion

Before a student is expelled, the student is afforded the due process as outlined for a suspension with a written notice to the parent/guardian explaining the time, date, and place of the expulsion hearing. At the hearing, the student is afforded formal due process at which the student's parent or guardian may speak for and/or provide guidance to the student. If the decision to expel is upheld by the by the school principal and Executive Director, an additional appeal may be made to the EOAC Board of Directors. The decision of the EOAC Executive Board of Directors is final and is not open to further appeals. Students who are expelled are referred to their home campus in the school district in which they reside. WCS does not operate or contract with an Alternate Education Placement (AEP) facility.

## **English as a Second Language (ESL) Program**

ESL is a support program designed to encourage English language development of children with limited English proficiency. Teaching will support the regular classroom instruction and provide children with vital skills to understand the structure of the English language and develop language fluency. As with all students, those who participate in the ESL program are expected to master the state curriculum, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the basic learner outcomes set by the Texas Education Agency for each grade level.

## **Grading Periods**

WCS follows nine-week reporting periods. The school teaches the state required curriculum of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and is assessed formally for academic progress using the State of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (STAAR) exam.

Progress reports will be sent at three (3) week intervals. Parent conferences will be scheduled for any student upon the parent's request. Mandatory conferences will be scheduled for any student with a 70 or below on their report card grade. Teachers are required to notify the parent/guardian if they do not receive report cards signed by the parent/guardian.

## **Contagious Diseases / Conditions**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or an administrator so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. When a student is treated by a physician for a contagious disease, the school needs a written diagnosis and information on when the student may return to school.

Anytime the nurse determines that your child is too ill to remain at school or is possibly contagious, the parent/guardian will be required to make arrangements to pick up the child. **Please keep a current telephone number on file so that you can be reached.** The WCS staff will refer to the Communicable Disease Chart and Notes for Schools and Child Care Centers (from the Texas Department of State Health Services) in determining when a child will be excluded from school and when they may return. The school nurse or other staff can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

Common examples include:

- **Fever**: If your child has a temperature of 100.0 or more (99.0 under the arm), you will be notified and expected to pick up your child. A student must be free of fever for at least 24 hours (without the aide of medication) or have physician's release to return to school.
- **Pinkeye** is highly contagious. If your child is suspected of having pink eye you will be contacted to pick up your child. If your child has an extremely red eye(s) that are itching hurting, or a stuck together when he/she gets up, do not send your child to school Your child may return to school after treatment has begun or with a physician's release.
- **Rash**: If your child has a suspicious rash, you will be contacted to take the child to the doctor.
- **Lice**: Because of the contagious nature of head lice, no child will be allowed to stay in school with live lice. Before the child may return to school, he/she must be treated with a head lice shampoo and the nits (eggs) combed out. The parent/guardian is required to **bring** the child to the office and allow staff to perform a head check **before** the student is allowed to return to school. After completing the assessment, the school nurse will determine if the student will be allowed to stay and attend school.
- **Vomiting and/or Diarrhea**: The parent/guardian will be required to pick up the child.
- **Injury**: WCS personnel will determine the severity of the injury. You will be contacted if you need to obtain medical help for your child.

- **Anaphylaxis:** WCS has a plan in place to limit the risk posed to students with food allergies., including procedures regarding the care of students with diagnosed food allergies who are at risk for anaphylaxis. Parents must provide physician documentation of food allergies, a treatment plan and provide a prescription for anaphylaxis medication.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

Parents must complete an emergency care form each year which giving parental consent for school officials to request medical treatment for the student as provided by law. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to supply current contact information needed in case of an emergency and to update this information as often as necessary.

### **Medicine at School**

WCS staff will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request from the parent or guardian.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a qualified WCS employee from the original, properly labeled container along with a written request from the parent or guardian.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container when prescribed by a physician and requested in writing by the parent or guardian.
- Should a question arise regarding medication, the school administrator may call the parent or guardian for clarification.
- Only medications prescribed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in the USA will be given. The school will not administer medication from other countries.
- All medications must be stored and dispensed in the office. Proper school authorities must approve exceptions in advance.

The Charter School does not purchase or provide any medication for students. When medication is brought to the school from home, the parent/guardian shall give the medication to designated WCS staff. A written request for daily administration of medications must contain the following information:

- student's name,
- name of medication,
- amount of medication to be given,
- schedule or time medication is to be given,
- date and signature of parent or guardian.

**Parents, not students, should bring prescription medication to the office and complete the required forms for administering medication, including inhalers.**

### **Parent Involvement, Responsibilities and Rights**

Education is most successful when there is a strong partnership between home and school which thrives on communication and includes parents, teachers and administrators. Every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and to commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides. Parents should also review information in the Handbook, especially the Code of Conduct, with his or her child, and sign the requested acknowledgment form. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions with an administrator.

- Become familiar with all the child’s activities and with the academic programs offered in the school. Discuss concerns about placement, assignment, or options available for his/her child with the child’s teacher and/or an administrator;
- Review attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary record, psychological records, applications, health and immunizations information, reports of behavior patterns, and state assessment results that have been administered to his or her child;
- Participate in school activities. If an instructional activity in which the child is scheduled to participate conflicts with parent’s religious or moral beliefs, the parent may remove the child from the classroom. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, the child must satisfy grade level requirements as determined by WCS and the Texas Education Agency (TEA);
- Become a school volunteer and dress appropriately when working on a school event. When visiting on campus, please dress in a way that sets a good example for your student. Sleepwear, low cut, transparent or form fitting garments are not appropriate to wear on campus at any time, including when signing in tardy students.
- Participate in campus parent activities: Parent Academy and PTO;
- **NOT** use a cell phone while in the building. Students are not allowed to have cell phones;
- Visit the child’s teacher only during teacher conference times. Conferences must be scheduled in advance;
- Sign-in and sign-out using the entrance area and not wander throughout the school building. After signing in, a parent or other visitor must go immediately to the location they are expected;
- Keep all food in the designated family eating area; and
- Parents are NOT allowed to eat from their student’s plate.

**Pledges of Allegiance, Moment of Silence**

In accordance, with 4 U.S.C Section 4 and Subchapter C, Chapter 3100, Government Code, students enrolled in WCS are required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, Pledge to the Texas Flag, and observe a moment of silence.

**Promotion and Retention of Students**

Report Cards are issued after each nine-week grading period to inform students and their parents of the student’s progress in each subject for times a year. If the student receives a nine-week grade of less than a 70 on a scale of 100 in any class or subject, the parent must schedule a conference with the teacher.

The report card should be signed and returned within three days. At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be notified if the student’s grade average is 75 or lower. According to Texas Education Code (Sec. 28. 021 (a), a student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level.

**To be promoted from one grade to the next a student must:**

Kindergarten:

1. Write his/her first and last name;
2. Know the alphabet and associated letter sounds; and
3. Count from 1 to 100 in sequence.

Grades 1-4:

1. Maintain a yearly average of 70 in Reading /Language Arts;
2. Maintain a yearly average of 70 in Mathematics; and
3. Maintain a combined yearly average of 70 in Science and Social Studies.



#### Grade 5:

1. Maintain a yearly average of 70 in Reading /Language Arts;
2. Maintain a yearly average of 70 in Mathematics; and
3. Maintain a combined yearly average of 70 in Science and Social Studies.
4. Meet state standards on State Reading Test and
5. Meet state standards on State Math test. **(State mandated TEA Student Success Initiative in years designated by the TEA.)**

Grades 1-5: All students must attend at least 90% of total class days throughout the year to be promoted the next grade. Students who do not meet attendance, grade level requirements and applicable test score requirements may be retained.

Promotion standards for special education students are established by the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee shall determine grade-level classifications of students eligible for special education. The Grade Placement Committee will determine grade-level classifications of students *not* eligible for special education.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

#### Texas Family Code - FAM § 261.101. Persons Required to Report; Time to Report

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(a) A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as provided by this subchapter.

(b) If a professional has cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or may be abused or neglected, or that a child is a victim of an offense under [Section 21.11, Penal Code](#) , and the professional has cause to believe that the child has been abused as defined by [Section 261.001](#) , the professional shall make a report not later than the 48th hour after the hour the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected or is a victim of an offense under [Section 21.11, Penal Code](#) . A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. In this subsection, "professional" means an individual who is licensed or certified by the state or who is an employee of a facility licensed, certified, or operated by the state and who, in the normal course of official duties or duties for which a license or certification is required, has direct contact with children. The term includes teachers, nurses, doctors, day-care employees, employees of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services, juvenile probation officers, and juvenile detention or correctional officers.

#### Texas Health and Safety Code - HEALTH & SAFETY § 260A.003. Contents of Report

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A report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation is non-accusatory and reflects the reporting person's belief that a student has been or will be abused, neglected, or exploited or has died of abuse or neglect.

The reports shall be directed to any of the following:

1. Any local or state law enforcement agency.
2. The Child Protective Services Division of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

This report shall contain the name and address of the child, the name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, and any other pertinent information.

Professionals must make a report no later than the 48th hour after first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected or is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report (Texas Family Code, Section 261.101). Professionals are not required to follow up their oral reports with a written report as they were in the past. Professionals include teachers, nurses, doctors, day-care employees and others who are either licensed by the state or work in a facility licensed or operated by the state and who have direct contact with children in the course of their job (Texas Family Code, Section 261.101).

### **School Facilities Use**

The principal must approve the use of the school building and/or equipment for activities scheduled after school hours, on weekends, or during holidays. If the event is approved, it will be placed on the school calendar. The EOAC Executive Director and Governing Board maintain ultimate and regulation of building usage.

### **Solicitations**

Solicitation of food or other goods or services is not allowed on campus during school hours by parents to EOAC staff and or employees.

### **Student Records**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18, or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school possesses a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is the custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the school. The principal is also the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or transferred. The principal is the custodian of special education records for students with disabilities under IDEA legislation. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours **upon completion of the written request form**. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. If the circumstances prevent a parent from inspecting the records, the school will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent to review the requested record.

Parents of a minor or a student who is dependent for tax purposes and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. School officials with legitimate educational interests include employees, agents, trustees, or individuals whom the school contracts for services for students who are:

- Working with the student;
- Considering statistical data; and/or
- Investigating or evaluating programs.

The Parent's rights of access to and copies of student records does not extend to all records. Materials not considered educational records that do not have to be made available to the parents may include:

- Teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher;
- Records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students at the school;

- Records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline.

Copies of student records are free for the first two copies. Thereafter, they are available at a cost of twenty cents per page, paid in advance.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The school forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intending to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court orders or lawfully issued subpoena orders. Where content, existence, or the information should not be disclosed, the school will make a reasonable effort to notify the parents in advance of compliance. Parental consent is required to release records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, the student has the right to consent to a release of records;

- After the student reaches the age of 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes;
- When the student is attending an institution of post – secondary education;
- If the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; and/or
- When the school is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights.

General information about the school's students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedure for requesting it unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The release of this information is in accordance with Open Records Act and is required by law. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form collected at registration and signed by the parent. Other forms collected at registration acknowledged receipt of the handbook as well as the parent preferences regarding student photographs. Should circumstances change, the parent can contact the principal to indicate his or her desire to change the original request. Directory information includes: a student's name, address, telephone number, date, participation in officially recognized activities and awards received in school.

**Parents have the right to request information concerning the qualification of a classroom teacher. The request must be requested in writing.**

### **Special Education Records**

Parents of a student with disabilities who has been provided special education services by the school will be notified when any information that specifically identifies the student is no longer needed. If the parent requests destruction of the information and the time established by law for retention has expired, the records will be destroyed. However, if the retention period established by law has not expired, the materials will be deleted from the records, but the records will be maintained until the time has expired.

*Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.*

### **Student Safety**

Students and staff will participate in periodic drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers and others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. Students' safety on campus or at school-related events is a "high priority" of the WCS. The school has implemented a safety plan that students should follow:

Report any behavior, such as students having a knife or gun, which jeopardizes school safety;

- Report to school employees any threats made by other students;
- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk;
- Follow the Code of Conduct and any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the school and the EOAC Board;
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus;
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals;
- Follow immediately the instructions of teacher and staff overseeing the welfare of students.

### **Technology Devices**

WCS has invested in technology and devices to enhance classroom instruction by making a laptop device available for every student to use during daily instruction. These devices may be loaned/checked out for students to use at home under special circumstances (such as closure due to a disaster declaration). These devices remain the property of WCS and parents will have the option to accept or refuse the device(s) for home use. The loan agreement will contain specific information about the replacement cost parents/guardians may be charged when the devices are damaged, lost and/or not returned. Report cards and /or enrollment privileges may be withheld until such payments are satisfied.

### **Textbooks**

The State of Texas loans textbooks to the students. State law requires students to keep the books covered, to record his/her name in ink on the front label, and to return the book in reasonable condition.

If a book is lost during the semester, the book must be paid for before another book is issued. Contract prices will be charged for all books lost or for which proper accounting has not been made regardless of the length of time the books have been in use in the charter school system. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school loses the right to free textbooks until the book is returned or payment for the lost book is received.

### **Visitors**

**NOTE: In view of the current pandemic situation, the administration of WCS is suspending visitor access to the campus until local health officials determine that the risk of the spread of COVID-19 has been abated.**

To protect the classroom instructional environment and for the safety of all children, all parents and visitors are required to sign-in at the office and receive a visitor's pass. Visitor passes **MUST** be worn while on the campus. Visitors must sign-in and sign-out at the entrance area of the school and go directly to the location in the building for their visit. Parents may not linger in hallways during school hours. At times, under certain conditions, visitors may not be allowed entrance into the school.

**Parents will be required to give a 24-hour notice prior to visiting their child's classroom for observation.**

### **Campus and Classroom Rules**

WCS may implement campus and classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be listed in the handbook, posted in the classroom, or established as school-wide norms of behavior and of conduct. A student who violates campus or classroom rules that are not a Student Code of Conduct violation may be disciplined by one or more of the following discipline management techniques for these violations, the teacher is not required to provide a written referral to the office.

The following techniques may be used alone or in combination with actions in accordance with Student Code of Conduct. These strategies may be used in any order as determined by classroom teacher or the principal.

- a. Warning;
- b. Conference with Student;
- c. Oral Correction;
- d. Cooling off or “Time Out”;
- e. Seating changes;
- f. Student reflection and problem solving;
- g. Counseling by teachers or administrator;
- h. Parent – teacher conferences;
- i. Confiscation of items that disrupt the learning process;
- j. Rewards;
- k. Detention, morning lunch or after-school;
- l. Extra assignment;
- m. Assigned school service duties;
- n. Withdrawal of Privileges such as participation in activities or school trips;
- o. Referral to outside agencies;
- p. Behavior Intervention Contract (SAT) Student Assistant Team;
- q. Referred to outside counseling;
- r. Phone call to parent; or
- s. Sent home.

Documentation by staff will be required as part of a referral.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

The Student Code of Conduct (provided in a separate document) is the specific response of WCS to the requirements of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code (TEC). The Charter School defines misconduct that may or must result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences.

A quality education at WCS is a commitment to the families we serve. The range of benefits to our students and their families depends in a large part to the student’s attitude toward learning and an adherence to high behavioral and academic expectations. Our school’s rules of conduct and discipline are established to maintain order and promote a safe learning environment for all children. The student Code of Conduct is a comprehensive effort to foster a climate of mutual respect built on the three principles.

1. Our community sets high standards for all stakeholders: children, parents and staff.
2. The community holds its citizens accountable for the results of their actions.
3. The school community will be a partner with the parents in the efforts to promote the growth and development of each child.

### **Legal Intervention**

A school administrator will report crimes as required by law. A school administrator who suspects that a crime has been committed on campus will call law enforcement.

Documentation by staff will be required prior to such a report.

### **Behaviors that Require a Student Code of Conduct Referral**

Students are prohibited from engaging in the following behavior at school and at all school functions. The following list does not constitute all possible offenses to the Student Code of Conduct. Any violations not listed herein shall be at the discretion of the campus director.

Severe and Repeated Classroom Misconduct

Cheating  
Assault  
Fighting

Theft and Vandalism  
Threatening Behavior  
Possession of Weapon

Insubordination  
Gang Involvement  
Sexual Misconduct

Bullying  
Profanity (verbal, written and/or gestures)  
Use or Possession of Drugs or alcohol

Other inappropriate behaviors designated by the principal.

## **Behaviors and Related Consequences**

The school administrators may exercise discretion and professional judgment in matters of discipline. Disciplinary action will be taken with consideration to the seriousness of the offense, the frequency of the misbehavior, the effect of the misbehavior on the learning environment, the attitude of the student, school policy and legal requirements. Administrators may take into consideration any external factors in response to discipline issues. The priority will be given to the needs of the child, the safety of others and the integrity of the overall learning environment.

### **1. Severe Repeated Classroom Misconduct**

Classroom misconduct is an unwillingness to follow classroom rules and includes any behavior that may disrupt learning for others. It may include but is not limited to the use of inappropriate written or verbal language, making noise(s), cheating, scuffling/horseplay and/or off-task behavior.

#### **Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted classroom consequences at teacher's discretion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action and or up to one (1) day suspension.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action and/or up to three (3) days' suspension and/or possible expulsion.

Depending on the severity of the infraction, the administrator may skip to consequences for a third offense.

### **2. Insubordination**

Insubordination involves showing disrespect to teachers or staff or using inappropriate language and behavior such as rolling eyes, sucking air through their teeth, not answering when asked a question, talking back, and refusing to comply.

#### **Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted classroom consequences at teacher's discretion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action, and or up to one (1) day suspension.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action and or up to (3) three days' suspension and/or possible expulsion.

Depending on the severity of the infraction, the administrator may skip to consequences of a third offense.

### **3. Frequent Dress Code Violations**

Students are expected to be appropriately dressed and groomed as described in this handbook at school and during school functions. New families who enroll during the school year may have up to ten (10) days to comply with the dress code.

The school director has the final decision on questionable dress and grooming.

#### **Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent notification letter will be sent home by the teacher.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Student will be sent to the office to correct the violation.

3<sup>rd</sup>. Offense: Repeated uniform violation may result in the student's loss of priority for continued enrollment.

Proper attire will be provided for the day if available. Parent/guardian will be notified by office staff.

#### 4. Fighting

Fighting is an instance of **physical contact in anger**, regardless of whether fist or weapons are used. Any instance in which a deliberate exchange of contact occurs will be determined a fight and will result in disciplinary action of each student involved. Any student involved in a fight may be sent home for the remainder of the day. The investigating administrator will follow WCS Student Code of Conduct to gather and analyze facts.

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parents/Guardian conferences by phone or in person,

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Up to three (3) days suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: possible expulsion.

#### 5. Use or Possession of Tobacco, Drugs or Alcohol

Use means knowingly to possess, consume, use, handle, store, conceal, offer to sell, etc. any tobacco product or supplies such as a lighter, or matches; controlled substances, prescription and/or non-prescription drug, narcotic, marijuana, or alcohol is a violation of school rules with possible notification of police. Refer to use of proper medication procedures for prescription and over the counter drugs.

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- Parent/guardian contacted,
- Possible suspension,
- Possible expulsion.

Violation of law will result in police notification.

#### 6. Bullying and Cyber Bullying (SB 179)

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying means any gesture, written or verbal, and or physical act that a reasonable person should know will harm another student, damage another student's property, place another student in reasonable fear of harm to the student or damage to the student's property, or insult or demean any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. "Harassment, intimidation, and bullying" include, but are not limited to gesture, written, verbal or physical act(s).

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted, principal, conference with the student.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action, three (3) day suspension recommended, **or possible expulsion.**

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, written referral for administrative action, possible expulsion.

#### 7. Threatening Behavior

Threatening behavior includes verbal threats, both face-to-face or over electronic media (phone and/or computers), hand written notes and/or notes, and/or non-verbal threats, including “hard stares,” gestures, etc., that cause or attempt to cause any student, teacher, administrator, or staff member to feel frightened or intimidated.

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Conduct referral; parent/guardian and an administrator’s conference with the student.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference; written referral for administrative action; out-of-school suspension (up to three days).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference; written referral for administrative action; or possible expulsion.

**8. Theft and/or Vandalism**

To cause or attempt to cause damage to private property and or to steal or attempt to steal private property either on school grounds or at sponsored function. Students and their parents or guardians may be held responsible for any restitution for damages. The school may file a police report in cases of theft and vandalism. Either offense can carry legal penalties.

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted; written referral for administrative action restitution if required; out-of-school suspension (up to three days); or possible expulsion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference, administrative discretion, restitution if required; out-of-school suspension (up to three days); or possible expulsion.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian conference; written referral for administrative action; or possible expulsion.

Violation of law will result in police notification.

**9. Possession of Any Kind of Weapon at School**

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, conventional objects like guns, pellet guns, knives, smoke bombs, stink bombs, fireworks, or club type implements as well as mace, tear gas, or other chemicals. **This definition includes any toy that is presented as a real weapon.** It also includes objects converted from their original use to an object used to threaten or injure another.

- The administration reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding the definition of what is a weapon.
- Police may be called in for certain circumstances determined by the principal.
- School personnel will seek parent approval to search book bags, coats, and/or any other containers if they suspect the presence of a weapon.

**Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense and public law:

- Parent/Guardian contacted; and
- possible expulsion.

Violation of law will result in police notification.

**10. Gang Signs or Gang Involvement**

Disruption and/or intimidation caused by the wearing of any type of clothing/jewelry or by writing of any signs identified as or associated with gangs.

**Consequences:**



May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted, written referral for administrative action, up to a two-day suspension or ISS.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted, written referral for administrative action, up to a three day suspension or ISS.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent/Guardian contacted, written referral for administrative action up to a three day suspension, ISS or possible expulsion.

#### 11. **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct is defined as sexual contact or patterns of behavior that includes verbal or physical conduct or lewd exposure. This includes sexual harassment whether the conduct is by sexually offensive language or gesture, or requests for sexual favors directed toward another student or school employee. Pornography is also considered sexual misconduct, whether on school computers or other paraphernalia. There shall be no misuse of the school computers.

##### **Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- Parent/guardian conference, written referral from administrative action up to 3-day suspension;
- possible expulsion.

Police notification may be necessary to determine if any violation of law occurred.

#### 12. **Student Conduct Assaults**

##### **ASSAULT PROHIBITED:**

Students are prohibited from assaulting anyone on school property or at any school-related event. Texas Education Code 37.006; Penal Code 22.01

Definitions: Simple Assault is defined; as

- Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another. Texas Education Code 37.006(a)(2)(B); Penal Code 22.01
- Intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury. Penal Code 22.01(a) (2)
- Intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when the person knows or should reasonably believe that the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative. Penal Code 22.01(a) (3)

##### **Consequences:**

May include any combination of the following depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent/guardian contact, stay away agreement; up to three days of suspension;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Possible law enforcement; possible expulsion; or
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Possible expulsion administration discretion.

Violation of the law will result in police notification.

#### **Electronic Devices of Any Type Are Not Permitted.**

These items include but are not limited to:

- Cell phones;
- I-Pods;
- game devices; and/or
- pagers, etc.

These items will be confiscated and returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the day or returned to a parent during a conference with the principal.

***ALL cell phones and other personal electronic devices are prohibited during testing according to the guidelines provided by the state.***

**Options and Requirements for Aid or Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who May Need Special Services.**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact WCS Special Education Coordinator to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system provides that students having difficulty in the regular classroom may be referred for a special education evaluation. Initially, students having difficulty in the regular classroom have an opportunity to be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students.

\*At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services.

*Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.*

Within a reasonable amount of time, the school must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The school must complete the evaluation within 60 days from the date the school receives the written consent. The school must give a copy of the report to the parent.

\*If the school or parent determines that the evaluation is not needed, the school will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent/guardian of their rights if they disagree with the school.

Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards Rights of Parents of Student with Disabilities.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is:

**Amber Crocker, Special Education Coordinator, WCS, 254-754-8169.**

**WACO CHARTER SCHOOL**

**PARENT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM**

**2021 – 2022**

Parents, guardians, and family members are a valuable part of our student’s education. To achieve a successful school experience, we ask adults to volunteer their time and become involved in the lives of our children.

If you would like to volunteer, please complete this form and return to the school office. All volunteers must have a background check before allowed to participate at the school.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

List any physical limitations/restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dates / Hours Available: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible Interest: Please check one or more.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| _____ After-School Activities                                 | _____ Field day                        |
| _____ Story Time (Reading aloud to a small group of students) |  |
| _____ School Clean-up and Improvement Projects                |  |
| _____ Tutoring in Academic Areas                              | _____ PTO Events                       |
| _____ Morning Patrol  | _____ Teachers Appreciation            |
| _____ Playground  | _____ Fall Festival                    |
| _____ Photography   | _____ Cinco de Mayo                    |
| _____ Office Help   | _____ Black History Month              |
| _____ Library Helper  | _____ Art Class                        |
| _____ EOAC Volunteer  | _____ Breakfast and /or Lunch Monitors |
| _____ Room Mother   | _____ Classroom Activities (Parties)   |

**Required Acknowledgement of Handbook Receipt**

I acknowledge receipt of the 2021-2022 Waco Charter School Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. I understand that my child and I are governed by the rules and regulations in the handbook.

I have read and understood the Waco Charter School Handbook, the Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy and have discussed it with my child,

Child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Directory Information**

Please mark the information, if any, that you will allow to be released on your child in a Waco Charter School Student Directory.

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Attendance

\_\_\_\_\_ School Activities

\_\_\_\_\_ Awards

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM / RELEASE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (print name)

hereby grant the following permissions for Waco Charter School to take and use photographs, videos and/or digital images of my child, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name)

for use in school publications, classroom materials and educational materials. These materials are likely to include:

My child in photographs while participating in group activities / programs. YES NO

Individual and group pictures to be included in the yearbook; YES NO

Web sites or other electronic media (School website, Facebook, Instagram); YES NO

My child’s name may be included in descriptive text or commentary in connection with the image(s).

I approve using my child’s full name YES NO

I approve using ONLY my child’s first name YES NO

I authorize the use of these images without compensation to me. All negatives, prints, digital reproductions shall be the property of Waco Charter School. I may request copies of these images.

Please contact me prior to using any images of my child for any other purpose. YES NO

This permission extends from August 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_