



# **Student & Family Handbook**

## **2021-2022**

**2830 N. American Street**

**Philadelphia, PA 19133**

**Telephone: (215) 425-1212**

**Fax: (215) 423-0871**

## **A Message from our Chief Executive Officer**

It is with great joy that we welcome you to a new year at Pan American Academy Charter School. As always, this school year promises to be an exciting one for us all.

We are pleased to present our Student and Family Handbook. We hope this will be a useful guide as we begin a year of working and learning together. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with helpful information about day-to-day procedures at our school as well as important school policies. As you will see our school is committed to providing a learning environment founded on research and exemplary teaching methods.

This handbook contains important information for you about our operational policies, procedures and school expectations. Please take some time to read and review the handbook with your child and sign the Family Handbook Receipt Form (found at the end of this booklet). Once you sign the form, please return to your child's teacher. In this unique school year, changes may be made to this Handbook from time to time. We will advise you of those changes.

Parents play an important role in making this school great. We cannot achieve our goals without you. Therefore, we greatly encourage parent participation in all programs and activities. Please refer to this handbook during the school year. Please feel free to call, email or visit with any questions or concerns.

We share the highest expectations for the upcoming year. We look forward to serving our students and families.

Dr. Darcy Russotto  
Chief Executive Officer

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A Message from our Chief Executive Officer</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Vision Statement</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Values And Belief</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About Pan American Academy Charter School</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>6</b>
Policies	6
Enrollment	6
Homeless Supports	6
Student Confidentiality	7
Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect	7
Immunization Requirements	7
Visitors to the Building	7
Parent Code of Conduct	8
Local Wellness	9
Lunches and Snacks from Home	9
School Health Services	10
Acceptable Internet Use	11
Grievance Procedure	12
Withdrawal from School	13
Parent Access to Student Records	13
<b>DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS</b>	<b>13</b>
School Hours	13
Office Hours	14
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures	14
Late to School	14
Late Pickup	15
Attendance and Truancy	15
Makeup Work	17
Consequences and Interventions for Truancy	17
Transportation	18
Bus Riding Expectations	18
Emergency Contact Information	19
Breakfast, Lunch and Recess	19
School Trips, Special Events and Presentations	20
Fire Drills/Emergency Evacuation	20

Communication to Home	20
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING</b>	<b>21</b>
Student Achievement	21
Dual Language Program	21
International Baccalaureate	21
Achievement Grade Scale	21
Homework	22
Academic Honesty	22
Special Education	22
504 Plan	24
English Language Learners	24
Technology	24
PowerSchool Parent Portal	25
<b>STUDENT SERVICES</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT</b>	<b>26</b>
Student Uniform and Dress Code	26
Dress Down Days	28
Use of Social Media	29
Locker Use	30
Behavioral Expectations & Responsibilities	30
Expectations for Parents	31
School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (SWPBIS)	32
Classroom Management Strategies	32
Dealing with Problem Behavior	32
Level I Violations	33
Level II Violations	33
Level III Violations	33
Disciplinary Guidelines for Students with Disabilities	35
Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.	36
Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, Games and Toys	36
Damage to School Property	36
Disciplinary Guidelines for Students with Disabilities	37
Suspension	37
Weapons	39
Due Process	39
Legal Recourse for School-related Offenses	40
<b>LEGAL NOTICES/RIGHT TO KNOW</b>	<b>40</b>

## Mission Statement

At Pan American Academy, we prepare bilingual, internationally minded inquirers.

## Vision Statement

At Pan American Academy, our vision is to be a supportive community where everyone can learn and contribute through service and action.

## Values And Belief

At Pan American Academy we believe in achieving our goals through CARE: by being Compassionate, Accountable, Respectful and Engaged.

Our students will strive to be:

⌘ Inquirers	⌘ Principled	⌘ Balanced
⌘ Knowledgeable	⌘ Open-minded	⌘ Reflective
⌘ Thinkers	⌘ Caring	
⌘ Communicators	⌘ Risk-takers	

It is vital that there is also focus on the development of personal attitudes towards people, towards the environment and towards learning. These positive attitudes contribute to the well-being of the individual and of the group. At Pan American Academy students should demonstrate appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance.

## About Us

Pan American Academy Charter School is an independent, free, public K-8 charter school serving a little over 750 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

We have the highest academic expectations for students. All Pan American teachers are dedicated, caring, skilled professionals. They help all students achieve by bringing culture and hands-on learning into the classroom every day. Through our focus on inquiry-based learning, Pan American is creating the next generation of strong, internationally-minded, bilingual leaders in our community.

A unique feature of Pan American Academy is our implementation of a dual language program. All students in kindergarten through eighth grade participate in the dual language program. Our students will learn to speak, read and write in English and Spanish. Our mission is to provide a biliterate, bicultural, academically enriched program in English and Spanish that enables students to make the most of their individual talents.

As an authorized IB World School, we have been authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) to implement the Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum in grades K through 5 and the Middle Years Programme (MYP) in grades 6 through 8. This curriculum aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Parents at Pan American Academy Charter School are encouraged and expected to be a part of their children's schooling. We want you to feel comfortable at the school, and help us to help your child learn, grow, and gain a global perspective that teaches them to interact and learn effectively throughout their lives.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Pandemic Statement

As we continue to respond to the global Coronavirus Pandemic, Pan American Academy Charter School will cooperate with local and state health department officials and medical experts in developing procedures for mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus in our school. All students and staff at Pan American Academy are required to adhere to rules, procedures and behavior expectations set forth in this Handbook. Should additional guidelines be developed, modifications will be communicated to all stakeholders.

## Policies

The Board of Trustees of the Pan American Academy Charter School (Pan American) is responsible for establishing policies under which the school operates. This Parent and Student Handbook includes the school's Code of Conduct adopted to apprise students, parents, and school personnel of the conduct and behavior required of all students to ensure a safe learning environment. These rules are intended to promote self-respect, respect for others and respect for property. It is therefore expected that all students enrolled herein abide by all school policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct and accept responsibility for their actions and behavior.

## Enrollment

Pan American Academy Charter School will be open to all resident children in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Students will be selected on a random basis (a lottery) from a pool of applicants who have submitted an application by the deadline.

Preference will be given in enrollment to the following applicants:

- A child of a parent who has actively participated in the development of the charter school.
- To siblings of students presently enrolled in the charter school.
- To students living in the 19133 or 19134 zip code area.

Pan American Academy Charter School will not discriminate in its admissions policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis. Also, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, ethnic origin, immigration status, religious beliefs, or political affiliation.

## Homeless Supports

PAACS ensures that any child of a homeless individual has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001. Please see more information at [panames.org](http://panames.org).

Due to loss of housing, an economic hardship, or the lack of an adequate accommodation, if your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter
- In a car, park, abandoned building, or bus or train station
- In a hotel or motel
- Doubled up with other people

School-age children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. For more information, please contact the school's Social Workers.

## Student Confidentiality

We believe that it is important to protect the privacy rights of our students. We are diligent in observing all laws regarding student confidentiality, including those related to student demographic information and records (FERPA), student health and medical information (HIPAA), Child Mandated Reporting and information pertaining to special education (IDEA), and other student and staff protections (504 and OCR). If you have any questions or concerns regarding confidentiality issues, please contact our Office Manager.

## Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

Legally, certain professionals are deemed to be "mandated reporters." Teachers and other childcare professionals are considered to be mandated reporters. As such, they are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Pursuant to the law, our employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behaviors, or conditions prior to making a report. The identity of any person who does make a report is kept confidential by law.

Mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Pan American Academy Charter School take this responsibility very seriously. As mandated reporters, our staff cannot be held liable for reports made to any agency, in accordance with Pennsylvania law, which was determined to be unfounded, provided the report, and was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

1. Unusual bruising, marks or cuts on the child's body
2. Severe verbal reprimands
3. Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
4. Transporting a child without the proper child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
5. Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
6. Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
7. Leaving a child unattended in a car
8. Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
9. Sending a sick child to school overmedicated to hide symptoms, which typically would require the child be kept at home until symptoms subside
10. Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

## Immunization Requirements

Parents/guardians must provide documentation of immunizations and/or a written plan from their child's doctor before the start of the current school year. Under the law, if documentation is not provided prior to the start of school, then the child may be excluded from school. We do not want to exclude any student, so we are committed to work with families to support them in ensuring requirements are met. Please work with your medical provider or the PA Department of Health (PaDOH) immunization clinic to ensure all immunizations have been given. Please call the school nurse if you need help. Exemptions for medical, philosophical or religious reasons remain in place under the new regulations.

## Visitors to the Building

Our staff and students deserve a safe learning and work environment. In order to lower the amount of exposure to COVID-19 and to create a safe environment, we are continuing COVID-19 visitor protocols until further notice. These protocols may change as more data is received regarding COVID-19, variants of the virus, and its effects on the PAACS community.

**Note:** All students, parents, visitors, and employees will be required to follow PAACS's COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan. The Health and Safety Plan is available on the school's website, and may change from time to time as the school year progresses.

Visitors and guests MUST:

1. Wear a mask covering the nose and mouth
2. Enter the building through the front entrance on American St.
3. Sign in and sign out at the front security desk and obtain a visitor badge.
4. Only proceed to their destination accompanied by an escort.
5. All visitors must schedule appointments in advance to speak in-person with school staff. Whenever possible, virtual and teleconference meetings are encouraged.

Emergencies requiring in-person communication should be directed to the Administrative Assistant.

## School Security

In order to ensure a safe environment for our students, the school installed a visitor security system with automatic door locks and intercoms. Parents/guardians and visitors will gain access at the main entrance by pushing the intercom button, which will signal the front desk attendant to allow entry. Appropriate identification is required to enter the school offices.

## Non-Smoking Campus

For the health of all Pan American Academy employees, students and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on our property.

## Parent Code of Conduct

Pan American Academy requires the parents/guardians of enrolled children to behave at all times in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of our goals is to provide the most appropriate learning environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. **Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.**

Parents/guardians of enrolled children at Pan American Academy Charter School may not threaten an employee, child, other parent or adult associated with Pan American Academy at any time. Interactions between program staff and other families should always remain professional. In the event of a conflict or differences in opinion the Principal will schedule a conference with the parent and discuss situation and conflict resolution options. Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While Pan American Academy Charter School does not support or condone the use of corporal punishment by a parent/guardian, such acts are not permitted on the school campus. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.



Parents are strictly prohibited from correcting or disciplining a child that is not their own. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher or the Principal.

Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought directly to our attention. At that point we will address the issue with the other person should it be deemed necessary. Although you may be curious about the outcome of such a conversation, we are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you, and you may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the School.

## Local Wellness

The Local Wellness Policy refers to the physical activity and nutrition of students at Pan American Academy Charter School. The school is committed to promoting and protecting children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by promoting healthy eating habits, hygiene, and physical activity.

To the extent of practicability, all meals served at our school will meet or exceed the minimum nutrition requirements established by the local, state and federal laws. Also, these meals will, to the extent possible, meet the appropriate dietary guidelines. Nutrition education will be integrated into different areas of the curriculum.

## Lunches and Snacks from Home

- We are a nut-free school. Foods containing peanuts or tree nuts are NOT permitted in the building.
- Parents are required to inform the school nurse and the classroom teacher of any food allergies and dietary recommendations for their children.
- All lunches and snacks sent from home need to include healthy foods only.
- No candy, chips, or sugary beverages are allowed in the school.
- Lunch brought from home must be ready to eat. There are no facilities in the school kitchen to prepare individual meals for students.
- A snack of healthy fruits and vegetables will be provided to your child several days per week.
- Students will be discouraged from sharing food and/or beverages with others.
- Breakfast (including drinks) or lunches from fast food restaurants will not be accepted.

*Please note glass containers and sodas are not permitted on school grounds.*

## Physical Activity

Physical activity will be offered to all students in Physical Education class and integrated across the curriculum with activities that are safe, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate for all students. In addition, when available, the school will offer the opportunity to join sports clubs or other activities through the after school program. These activities will be available to students who demonstrate interest, are team players, and follow the Pan American behavioral expectations.

## Hygiene

Parents are expected to send their children well groomed everyday. Taking showers, wearing clean uniforms, and brushing teeth should not be optional. Coming to school not properly groomed may result in a child being sent home to clean up. As every minute of the school day is important, please assist your child in their proper grooming for school.

## School Health Services

The Wellness Center is open Monday through Friday when school is in session. A registered nurse and or a health paraprofessional staff the suite. Health records are maintained in the health suite for each student. It is important that regular updates to student records be received from parents or guardians regarding the following:

- Change in health status
- Medications a child may currently be taking
- Long-term medication therapy
- Medication that has been discontinued
- Any recent hospitalizations for medical treatment or surgery
- Routine immunizations or booster information.

### Medications

Pan American Academy Charter School complies with all regulations concerning the dispensation of medicines and requires that all parents do the same. Students may not possess any prescription or non- prescription medication. Students found with prescription or non-prescription medication in their possession will face immediate disciplinary action. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be turned over to the Wellness Center staff with appropriate paperwork for dissemination.

Medications should be dispensed at home as prescribed by your healthcare provider. We realize that sometimes this is not possible. If your child needs medication at school, a Medical & Parental Consent Form must be completed. The form is available in the office and must be signed by the parent and by the student's physician. Medication must be provided in the original container with accurate content and dosage information on the label. All medication must be checked into the office. (Those students with inhalers must also leave the inhaler in the Wellness Center)

### Physical and Dental Examinations

Parents must provide periodic student health examinations as required by law. Routine medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours.

### Student Injuries

Every effort is made to keep our students safe while on our campuses. However, a student can still be injured during school activities. All student injuries must be reported to school staff as soon as possible for first aid and documentation purposes. Please talk to your children about the importance of reporting all injuries to the school staff. In the event of a medical emergency at school, staff will call 911. Every effort will be made to contact the student's parent/ guardian and emergency contacts provided to the school. Please ensure that all parent/ guardian and emergency contact information is current by providing updates through the school website or calling the main office.

### Student Illness

Ill children will be separated from the rest of the children until the parent arrives. For their own health, and to reduce the spread of communicable illness, children will be sent home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100.0 F
- Have vomited and have other symptoms or Have vomited more than once in a day
- Have diarrhea (more than one incident)
- Severe coughing – getting red or blue in the face or makes a high pitched croup-like or whooping sound after coughing

- Difficult or rapid breathing (especially in infants under 6 months)
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Exhibit symptoms of pinkeye
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark, tea colored urine
- Grey or white stool
- Headache or stiff neck
- Severe itching of the body or scalp (may be a symptom of lice or scabies)

When your child must be sent home due to illness, **please pick them up within 45 minutes of receiving our call.** Allowing the child to remain at the School for an extended period of time exposes all the children and the staff to the illness.

### **Returning to School**

Students may not return to the School until:

- They have been fever free without medication for 24 hours
- The symptoms for which they were sent home are gone
- They can participate in all aspects of our School, including outside recess time, or They have a doctor's note stating that they have been examined, medication has been prescribed, and any period of contagion has passed.

Parents of children diagnosed with a contagious condition (ex's strep, chicken pox, ringworm, lice, etc.) are required to report back the diagnosis to the School prior to the child returning to school. Parents will be notified via phone call, written letter and/or email when a communicable disease has been reported in their child's classroom, or elsewhere in the School (depending on the severity of the illness.)

If your child has other symptoms that do not require them to be isolated, or if they simply "do not feel well," parents will be called to keep them informed. The parent may decide to take the child home but will not be required to do so.

If you have a question about your child's ability to attend school, please contact a member of the Nursing staff or School Administrator prior to dropping them off at school.

### **Acceptable Internet Use**

Pan American Academy Charter School provides access to various computer resources and the internet. These resources are available to enhance the learning process in a supportive school environment and to achieve quality learning outcomes for our students. The school employs technological protections that filter or block all internet traffic that contains certain visual depictions deemed obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) passed by Congress in October of 2000. The school expects students to become familiar with these guidelines for use of the computers. For the benefit of all users, students are expected to observe the following:

Students may not:

- Use the computer and internet for anything other than educational purposes.
- Enter a computer room unless a teacher is present.
- Play games, use the internet for entertainment, personal email, or engage in activities other than those which are school related.
- Tamper with the computer system. It is forbidden to seek access to restricted areas of the computer network.
- Swap computer equipment around unless expressly directed by a teacher (i.e. no changing of keyboards, mice or other equipment from one computer to another).
- Attempt to change or tamper with the computer in any way; this includes changing screen savers, desktop pictures, internet home pages, etc.
- Attempt to view blocked internet pages or bypass security in any way.
- Reveal any private information such as one's own or another person's address, phone number, etc.
- Attempt to retrieve, view or distribute any obscene, offensive, pornographic or illegal material.
- Threaten, abuse or harass any other user.
- Bring the school into disrespect in any way whatsoever.
- Download or print information without permission from the teacher.
- Access personal email accounts.

NOTE: Failure to comply with the policy will result in loss of computer privileges.

## Grievance Procedure

The grievance procedure is available to parents/guardians or students who are dissatisfied with an action of a PAACS employee or a PAACS school policy:

- Address the issue directly with the party concerned.
- If the matter is not resolved, address the concern to that employee's direct supervisor. For academic or disciplinary concerns, please contact the Principal or the Assistant Principals. For specialized services concerns, including special education and counseling services, please contact the Director of Specialized Services.
- If the matter is still not resolved, the concern can be addressed to the CEO. The CEO will respond within five (5) school days.
- Unresolved matters can also be addressed directly to the PAACS Board of Trustees by registering for public comment at a public board meeting.

The Board of Trustees recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. In order to permit fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board will provide a period for public participation at every public meeting of the Board. Public comment will be limited to a topic related to the operation of the Pan American Academy Charter School. Written requests to address the Board must be submitted to the Board Liaison 24 hours prior to the Board meeting. The request is to be submitted to the Board Liaison at [dwallace@panamcs.org](mailto:dwallace@panamcs.org) or by U.S. mail or hand delivery to:

Darius Wallace  
Pan American Academy Charter School  
2830 North American Street Philadelphia, PA 19133  
ATTN: Board of Trustees Public Comment Request

The request must include the topic which will be addressed, identify the person addressing the Board and a copy of the comment. The following rules govern the public participation process:

- Time allotted for public comment at any meeting shall be limited to a total of thirty minutes. .

- Time allotted to an individual or party/representative of a group to address the Board of Trustees is limited to three minutes. However, written comments may be presented and considered by the board. Written comments shall be read into the record at the board meeting, but such reading shall be limited to three (3) minutes.
- An individual or party/representative of a group may address the Board one time per meeting on a particular topic. The individual or party/representative of a group may, at the discretion of a simple majority of the Board, address the Board a second time only after all individuals or parties/representatives have been heard and sufficient meeting time remains.
- Individuals making comments must state their name, place of residence and identify the topic they wish to address.
- All comments are to be directed to the Chair. Board members and administrators will not respond to public comment during the comment period.

## Withdrawal from School

The Parent/Guardian must complete a withdrawal form which can be obtained from the Main Office. The request shall include the reason for leaving and the student's new address and/or name of the new school or school district.

## Parent Access to Student Records

In the normal course of the school year, many parents stop into the school office and request their child's school records. In the majority of cases this is no problem, and the release of records is done with ease. Generally the only delay is if the person responsible for school records, such as the Principal, is out of the building.

In the case of separated or divorced parents, the Custody and Grandparent Visitation Act must be applied. This law states that in cases where parents are separated or divorced, the school must provide access to their child's records...unless the custodial parent can provide a court order denying such access to the non-custodial parent. In order to comply with the law and provide services to parents, the school will use the following procedure for parental access to student records:

1. Parents should come into the office and request to see their child's records. The records will be reviewed in the presence of the school principal or his/her designee. The purpose of this is not to delay the review, but to help the parent understand the information contained in the records, to answer questions or to correct errors, if any, found in the records.
2. In cases where the parents are separated or divorced, the parent who has custody should provide the school with legal proof of that custody.
3. When the non-custodial parent requests access to a student's records, the school will first contact the custodial parent and apprise that parent of the request. The custodial parent will have five days to get a court order denying access to the child's records by the non-custodial parent. If after five days no court order is provided to the school, the non-custodial parent will be granted access to the child's records as outlined in number one above.
4. In cases where the parents are separated, and custody has not been determined by the courts, the school has no choice but to provide access of student records to both parents. Procedures outlined in number one above will be used.

# DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

## School Hours

The official school day begins at 8:15 am and ends at 3:45 pm Monday through Friday. Breakfast will be offered from 7:50 am to 8:10 am.

**Note:** All students, parents, visitors, and employees will be required to follow PAACS’s COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan. The Health and Safety Plan is available on the school’s website, and may change from time to time as the school year progresses.

## Office Hours

The main office will be open from 8:45 am until 2:45 pm Monday through Friday. Parents are encouraged to make appointments for the purpose of COVID19 mitigation and to reduce wait time.

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Students are expected to attend school every day and to arrive on time. It is also expected that students will be picked up on time at dismissal.

### Morning Arrival

- Kindergarten Entrance will be the gate on Third Street. (*Only kindergarten students and their siblings will be permitted to enter this gate*)
- Grades 1-8 will enter the gate on American Street and remain in the schoolyard. (*NO kindergarten students will be permitted to enter this gate*)
- Both gates will open at 7:50 for students wishing to eat breakfast. Parents may not enter the gate during arrival.
- Students arriving before 7:50 am must remain under the direct supervision of their parent(s), outside of the gates. Parents and escorts may not leave their child before 7:50 am.

Parents who are dropping students off by car must use the designated drop off area that is marked by orange cones on American Street. Please enter the drop-off line to ensure that your child is dropped off safely. Attempting to bypass this line will block traffic and will not be a safe drop-off point for your child. As another safety precaution, please have your child prepared to exit the vehicle on the passenger side, directly onto the sidewalk.

Please follow the “Kiss and Go” procedure - Kiss your child, drop him or her off and keep going. Be sure that your child has everything they need in hand before entering the drop-off line to ensure that the line moves quickly. The driver may not park and leave the car in the drop-off lane.

### Late to School

The Gates will remain open until 8:15 am. Students will be considered late after this time. They may enter the school building using the Main Entrance on American Street. They will be checked in by our staff upon their arrival, receive a late pass and go to their classroom. Excessive lateness may result in disciplinary action.

### End of Day Dismissal

Students will be dismissed at 3:45 pm. All students will exit the building using the same gate that was used for admission:

<b>Kindergarten</b>	Third Street Gate
<b>Grades 1-8</b>	American Street Gate

At dismissal, parents must come into the schoolyard to pick their child up from their line (Grades 1 – 4). Students in 5th through 8th grades will be dismissed at 3:50pm through the main doors on American Street. Teachers may not release a student (Grades K-4) unless the designated adult or sibling of the current student has come to the line. Students will not

be sent out from the schoolyard to parents waiting in cars. Once you approach your student's class line, your student must touch elbows with the teacher and indicate who is there to pick them up.

Contact information regarding the person or persons permitted to pick up your child on a daily basis must be provided to the school office. Only persons that have been identified on the contact information sheet will be permitted to pick up students. No student will be released to a person not listed on the Emergency Contact sheet. Photo identification of the person picking up your child is mandated and must be presented before the school releases the child to that person. Any changes must be updated on the Emergency Contact form. Parents must indicate in writing if a child is permitted to walk home or to travel home on their own via public transportation.

## Late Pickup

Students who are not picked up on time will remain in the cafeteria with a staff member. Parents will enter through the main entrance and proceed to the cafeteria. Parents will be required to sign the late pickup register when they pick up their child. Excessive lateness in dismissal pick up may result in counseling referral.

## Inclement Weather

Arrangements should be made so that your child is aware of your expectations when school is required to close early or cancel activities. Students in grades 1-5 will be picked up at the Annex and students in Kindergarten will be picked up in their classrooms.

## Attendance and Truancy

Students enrolled at Pan American Academy Charter School are required to attend school daily in accordance with the compulsory attendance laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Under this law, parents and guardians are required to make sure that their children attend school every day that school is in session and arrive at school on time.

### Absences

An absence is the non-attendance of a student on those days and half days when school is in session. Attendance need not always be within school facilities. A student will be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session; the student is receiving approved instruction, or health or therapeutic services; or the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.

### What is an excused absence?

The school understands that there are some days when a student is prevented from attending school for medical or other urgent reasons. An absence will be considered excused if the absence was due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Illness and injury (if longer than two days, a note from a doctor is required)
- Death of a family member
- Medical or dental appointments that could not be scheduled outside of school hours
- Religious holidays observed by the student's immediate family – prior written notice to the school is required
- Religious instruction, not to exceed 36 hours per school year
- Required court attendance
- Other urgent reasons approved by CEO or Principal

### What is an unexcused absence?

All absences are considered unexcused until the school receives the required information documenting a valid reason for the absence, as detailed above. Some examples of unexcused absences are:

- Absence due to parental neglect
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Parent personal appointments
- Inclement weather when the school is open
- Family vacation trips: *Family vacations during the school year will be coded as unexcused absences. Please schedule family vacations to occur outside of our regularly scheduled school year. Please do not schedule doctor's appointments during standardized testing periods. Excessive absences and tardies negatively impact your child's ability to get accepted to a special admission high school.*

### **Tardiness**

Punctuality is directly linked to a student's success in school. Please be mindful that students must arrive on time to maximize their learning and avoid class disruptions. School officially begins at 8:15am. Students arriving after 8:15am will be marked late. Lateness may be excused with a note from a doctor if medical appointments or emergencies have occurred. Excessive lateness patterns will be treated the same as excessive absences.

### **Early Dismissal**

Whenever possible, doctor, dentist, and other appointments should be made outside of school hours. However, if it is necessary to be excused during the school day, the student is asked to bring a note from a parent/ guardian stating the exact time for leaving and the reason. This is for the safety of all students. If you plan to remove your child from school during the day, we ask that you pick the child up in the office. **Early dismissals begin at 11:30am and end at 2:45pm.** **No student will be dismissed as a result of a phone call.** All students must be checked out at the office by a parent/guardian or emergency contact, and identification must be verified. There are no early dismissals on half days. There are no early dismissals during state testing.

### **If the student is going to be absent...**

Please contact the school before the morning start time of the day your student will be absent from school. Voicemail will be available to leave a message as to the reason for your student's absence. The parent will receive an automated call informing them of their child's absence. This is to ensure that every student is accounted for and for his/her safety. The parent/guardian must provide a note of explanation as to the reason for the absence upon the student's return to school.

If a parent or guardian fails to provide a note to the school within three (3) school days of an absence, the absence will be permanently counted as unexcused. After three (3) school days, only a note from a doctor or other official will be accepted. A maximum of ten (10) absences per year can be excused based on a parental note. Any absences beyond three (3) cumulative days requires a physician's note.

### **Makeup Work**

If a student is absent for any reason, the student is required to make up all missed course work. Upon returning to class, the student must obtain assignments from his or her teachers. The teacher will work with the student to make up any tests, homework, or other work that was missed due to absence.

### **Truancy**

In Pennsylvania, truancy is defined as when a child of compulsory age has three (3) or more unexcused absences in the current school year.

Pan American Academy Charter School will notify the parent/guardian within ten (10) school days of the child's third unexcused absence that the child has been "truant". The notice may include the offer of a school attendance improvement conference, and shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the parent/guardian.



## Habitual Truancy

Habitual truancy is defined as a child subject to compulsory school laws “having six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.” Therefore, a child is habitually truant once he or she accumulates six unexcused absences during the course of the school year. These absences do not need to run consecutively. If a child is habitually truant, the school must either:

- (1) refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, or the Philadelphia Department of Human Services for services or possible disposition as a dependent child, or
- (2) file a citation against the parent in a magisterial district court.

## Consequences and Interventions for Truancy

Excessive unexcused absences constitute misconduct and will be handled in the following ways:

# of total unexcused absences	# of total lateness and/or early dismissals	<b>Consequences &amp; Interventions</b> [Suspension from school is not a permissible consequence for truancy]
<b>0-2</b>	<b>X</b>	Automated phone call home. This will be repeated for each additional absence.
<b>3-5</b>	<b>10</b>	School support will consist of the following: ▷ An A-31 letter will be sent home to notify the parent/guardian of the truancy detailing the unexcused days, ▷ Generating an attendance contract, ▷ The school will schedule a school-family attendance conference where the attendance concerns can be discussed with next steps/actions.
<b>6 +</b>	<b>X</b>	The student is considered 'habitually truant' by the state. The following will occur: ▷ Student Attendance Improvement Plan* is created detailing supports and strategies to support the family, ▷ 1st District Attorney Referral for Project Go ▷ 2nd District Attorney Referral for a Project Go-Family Conference Meeting  Not applicable for lateness or early dismissal. The school may also file a citation against the parent in magisterial district court.

*\*A Student Attendance Improvement Plan conference is where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are reviewed with the intent to improve attendance. There is no legal requirement that the child or parent/guardian attend the conference, and the conference shall occur even if the parent/guardian declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference after advance written notice and attempts to communicate by telephone.*

Students who are truant cannot be disciplined for exhibiting truant behavior. However, if a student is considered absent-unexcused for ten (10) consecutive school days, the student will be dropped from the rolls at the school and the matter will be referred to the School District of Philadelphia. (Note: in the event of a student with an IEP or Section 504 Service Plan who is absent-unexcused for ten (10) consecutive school days, the School will comply with all applicable procedures required by IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, such as conducting a Manifestation Determination meeting to determine whether the student’s absences are a manifestation of the student’s disability.)

## Transportation

Pan American Academy Charter School in collaboration with The School District of Philadelphia offer students in 1st through 8th grade transportation services if they qualify based on their address (<https://www.philasd.org/transportation/for-parents/>). Students in 6th through 8th grade receive transportation passes from SEPTA.

Any parent requesting transportation for their child must notify the main office immediately. The school will notify parents of eligibility. In order to receive transportation services students must meet the following criteria for eligibility:

- Reside in the City of Philadelphia.
- Be designated by the Division of Special Education as a student in a Special Education class, who requires transport to get to and from school.
- Live more than one and a half miles from his/her school and is a participant in the voluntary School Desegregation Program of the School District of Philadelphia.
- Enrolled in grade one and above, and live one and a half miles, or further from the assigned school.
- Possess an exceptionality or severity of physical disability.

In the case of an emergency, an adult must come or call the school before 12:00 pm to provide an explanation of the emergency. These emergency requests for changes in busing will be limited to 4 per year. Without this notification, your child will be placed on the bus. If a bus student is inconsistent with bus usage, or exhibiting difficulties in behaving appropriately, the student may be excluded from the privilege of using the school bus.

## Bus Riding Expectations

As a general rule, students that are on the bus in the morning, will be placed on the bus in the afternoon. Students are expected to follow the same behavior expectations as they do while inside the school, and must follow any rules established by the busdriver or School District. Students will be required to wear a mask at all times while on the school bus.

If a student fails to display appropriate behavior after several warnings, the student will be removed from the bus line. A parent will be contacted and required to come to school to pick the student up. Because our students' safety is of utmost importance to us, we ask that you review with your child the expected behaviors of all students while riding the school bus. These expectations and the accompanying consequences will be strictly enforced.

Students are to expected to:

- remain seated and facing the front of the bus at all times
- to be respectful of one another and the bus driver at all times
- keep their hands and all belongings inside the bus
- refrain from arguing, cursing and using physical aggression
- not eat or drink on the bus

Please be advised that failure to adhere to the above expectations will result in consequences. These consequences are 1 to 3-day suspensions from riding the bus as well serving after school detentions. ***Repeated occurrences of not meeting expectations on the bus will result in expulsion from the bus.***

## Emergency Contact and Parental Permission

In the event of an emergency or inclement weather, when students may have to be dismissed early from school, it is imperative the school office has the most current Emergency Contact Information for every student. This information must be kept up-to-date. Whenever there is a change of address or telephone number, the Parent or Guardian must notify the school office when the change occurs.

Parents must give permission for students to walk home or take public transportation. Students without written permission to travel home on either of these methods will remain at school until they are picked up by an authorized adult.

In the event of an early dismissal due to inclement weather, the parent and/or designated emergency contact person will be notified (through the use of an automated message-the school messenger) and is expected to come and pick-up the student immediately upon notification. Please listen to the detailed message. Only students listed as walkers on the Emergency Contact Form will be permitted to go home alone.

**Students will not be released to any individual that is not listed on the emergency contact list.** As a way to protect the health and safety of our school community, we are only allowing parents and emergency contacts into the school. We are also limiting the number of emergency contacts to 2 persons outside of the parents/guardians.

## Student Meals and Recess

Students receive complimentary breakfast, snacks and lunch through the Federal Breakfast and Lunch program. A student, who participates in the breakfast and lunch program, must choose a minimum of three components to a maximum of five. All students must take a fruit or vegetable as part of the meal. All meals and snacks meet nutritional standards. Breakfast and lunch are served in the student cafeteria. Breakfast is served from 7:50 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. daily. Lunch is scheduled according to the student schedule. Students may bring their own lunches, but lunches must meet nutritional standards. The lunch schedule is as follows:

GRADES	Monday-Friday
K & 3	10:45 am – 11:30 am
1 & 4	11:45 am – 12:30 pm
6-8	12:45 pm – 1:30 pm
2 & 5	1:45 pm – 2:30 pm

Safety Monitors will instruct students as to the proper lunch and recess procedures. They will ensure that they are following the cafeteria lunch procedures. At the end of the lunch period, teachers will pick up their classes at the designated area on time.

### Lunchtime Rules

- Students will enter the lunchroom quietly and form a single line at the lunch counter and await their lunch and utensils.
- Students will stay in their seats and eat lunch quietly.

- Students are not permitted to leave the cafeteria without permission.
- Lunch monitors will assign student helpers.
- Students will listen and follow directions.
- Students will stand and wait quietly in line for their teacher to pick them up.
- Any student who does not follow the lunchtime rules will receive a disciplinary report from the lunchroom monitor.
- Students are not allowed to accept a lunch brought in from a restaurant.
- Parents bringing lunch may not bring lunch from fast food restaurants.

## School Trips, Special Events and Presentations

School trips are decided upon based on current content lessons, the academic program and performance standards. Buses will be scheduled by the school or public transportation will be used when possible. Private vehicles may not be used to transport students. According to Pennsylvania law, all parents attending a class trip as a chaperone or working in the school as a volunteer must have both PA criminal and child abuse clearances (FBI clearance if parent has resided in PA for less than 10 years). Please see main office staff for information about obtaining these clearances. No student will be permitted to attend any designated class trip unless an authorized parental permission form is on file with the classroom teacher and/or office. Information will be provided to parents regarding: the date of trip, location, exact cost per student, departure and arrival times, and signatures required to attend the trip. Parents will be given sufficient notification for all trips in order to make any arrangements for payment. No student shall be excluded from a trip due to his or her inability to pay.

If any student exhibits behavior that would deem it unsafe to take her/him, a parent will be requested to accompany the student. If a parent or responsible adult cannot attend, the teacher will make alternative class arrangements for the student(s).

## Birthdays/Classroom Celebrations

Due to food allergies, parents may send in non-food items only (i.e.: pencils, stickers, etc.) for birthdays, provided they are coordinated with the classroom teacher. For other classroom celebrations, please strictly adhere to the information sent home by your child's teacher to protect the safety of all students. **Balloons are also prohibited.**

## Fire Drills/Emergency Evacuation

Fire or emergency evacuation drills are conducted periodically during the school year. Fire safety procedures and drills are practiced during the first days of school. When the alarm is sounded, students and teachers move quickly and quietly to their designated exit, and remain at a safe distance from the school building until the all clear signal is given.

## Communication to Home

Every effort should be made to keep open lines of communication. Oftentimes, the school sends communications and information that are important for families to read. Communication and information is provided via:

1. School Messenger (phone/texts/emails)
2. Class Dojo (communication app)
3. School Website (panamcs.org)
4. Social Media - Facebook and Instagram @panamcs2008

Please first read and/or listen to any text, email or voicemail messages before calling the school. Please check the school website and the ClassDojo App frequently for updates and information.

Additionally, teachers will provide parents their school-issued cell phone numbers to assist with communication. Calls or texts before or after business hours or during instructional time, may not be answered. Calls will be returned the next business day. In the event of an emergency, please call the main office at 215-425-1212. .

## INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING

### Student Achievement

At Pan American Academy we believe in achieving our goals through a rigorous curriculum and a strong school community. Pan American Academy educates internationally minded students who strive to create a more harmonious world. As an IB World School, Pan American Academy inspires excellence by expanding students' perspectives and building strong character. The Student Services department is the hub that connects students, families, teachers and the community with the necessary resources and supports to assure the academic, social, behavioral and emotional well-being and success of all students.

### Dual Language Program

Pan American Academy Charter School prides itself in its Dual Language Program. The intended outcome of the dual language program is to graduate bilingual students who can read, write and speak proficiently in English and Spanish. Parents enrolling their children at our school must accept the dual language curriculum and the responsibilities that come with this unique school environment.

Proficiency in two languages is deemed the most important mission of the Pan American Academy Charter School, as this would provide our students with a decided advantage in today's highly competitive global workplace. More importantly, becoming multicultural allows our students to learn about and honor Latino cultural and historical roots and take pride in the contributions and traditions of Latino/Caribbean ancestry.

The dual language program is currently being implemented schoolwide. At present, the program consists of a 50/50 model. Children spend 50% of their day learning in Spanish and English equally. Students will receive additional Spanish instruction from a language support teacher. Teachers integrate Spanish and culture into everyday classroom activities.

### International Baccalaureate

Pan American Academy Charter School is a recognized International Baccalaureate World school offering both the Primary and Middle Years programmes. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are a community of learners participating in the IB Primary Years Programme, which focuses on the development of the whole child. Students in grades 6 to 8 are a part of the IB Middle Years Programme, developing life skills and critical thinking abilities through interrelated academic courses. All students participate in an inquiry based curriculum in two languages; English and Spanish. The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

### Grading Practices and Scale

Common grading practices provide specific, clear learning goals for students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers and administrators regarding what a student must know and be able to do to master the content of a course. They allow teachers to be consistent with common best practices from grading based on educational research. Most importantly, standard grading practices provide tremendous clarity for students and families as to what the grading criteria and expectations are between and amongst teachers and courses. .The chart below reflects the letter grade assigned to each numerical percentage and is applied to all subject areas.

<b>Advanced (A)</b>	<b>Proficient (P)</b>	<b>Basic (B)</b>	<b>Below Basic (BB)</b>
<b>93-100</b>	<b>80-92</b>	<b>66-79</b>	<b>0-65</b>

## Homework

Homework is an essential part of a student’s learning experience. Homework is intended to expand and reinforce learning skills presented in class. Generally, homework is assigned Monday through Thursday. However, students may be assigned homework on a Friday to be completed over the weekend. Included in homework every night is a period of quiet reading, we want to help children learn to love books.

Each time students do not complete a homework assignment, their overall grade suffers. Parents are able to check homework and other grades via the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

### Accountability

If students do not meet their responsibilities for completing homework as directed by the teacher, the consequences will be immediate and meaningful. For example:

- Parents will be informed about missed assignments.
- Students may be required to stay after school.
- Students may receive a grade of Incomplete until the work is completed because failure is not an option.
- Students will work with teachers to establish a plan for work completion.

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is the academic standard for all IB students. Each student must develop and turn in his /her own original work for all assignments. Many times, it is necessary to mention—or reference—the work of someone else. In these cases, credit must always be given to the original source or author, as that information is their “intellectual property.” This includes all forms of student work including handwritten, typed, and other digitally created work. All students should take accurate notes, and keep drafts of papers, projects, assignments, etc., to ensure that one’s submitted work is academically honest. Acceptable forms of official documentation of sources include but are not limited to MLA style citations.

Each student is expected to participate and give credit to the source referenced within their work. We believe that in order to achieve this, it is important that we focus on educating our students to be principled, to recognize and celebrate authentic student work, and to take pride in promoting student learning through inquiry that includes responsible use of information and communication of original work.

### Works Cited

In an effort to educate our school community and promote the proper ways to cite work, students will use MLA style. MLA (Modern Language Association) style is commonly used to write papers and cite sources. With the support of all teachers the ELA/SLA teacher will introduce and continue to support students in using the appropriate format.

## Special Education

Children with disabilities who need special education are entitled to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Under Pennsylvania and federal law, eligible children have a right to special education and related services provided at

public expense. Pan American Academy Charter School complies with all laws governing students with disabilities and offers a wide range of support to eligible students.

You are permitted, at any time and up to once per academic year, to request that your student be evaluated to determine whether he/she has a disability and requires specialized services.

PAACS believes that all students can learn and should be supported to reach their potential. We take the necessary measures to meet the needs of individual students and to ensure that they receive a rigorous education regardless of disability. To this end, we have certified special education teachers who provide on-going support to students who have been identified as needing special education services. Our special education program complies with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), and other federal and state laws that impact student education.

### **Step 1: Identification**

PAACS identifies and refers students who might be eligible for special education services for evaluation using a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). MTSS is a framework that uses data to help match academic, social-emotional, and behavioral assessment and instructional resources to each and every student's needs. In this tiered, data-informed framework, educators work to ensure that the majority of students respond to core instruction. Students who need additional support for enrichment or remediation are identified by data and provided that support with the right focus and intensity. Whenever a student is referred by the MTSS Team for a multi-disciplinary evaluation, PAACS must obtain written consent from a parent/guardian before the evaluation can be conducted. Please note that, if a parent/guardian consents to the evaluation of their student, they are agreeing to an evaluation of their student's eligibility for services, not to the implementation of special education services.

If parents/guardians think that their child might be eligible for special education services, they should contact the Principal/ When they make a request for an evaluation, the school will provide them with an evaluation request form to complete within ten (10) calendar days. Upon receiving the evaluation request form, the school will either issue a formal Permission to Evaluate or recommend a tiered support plan. If a formal Permission to Evaluate is recommended, the evaluation will occur within sixty (60) calendar days of the School's receipt of the signed Permission to Evaluate form. Following the completion of the evaluation, the psychologist and team will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the findings.

In order to qualify as a "student with a disability" under the IDEA, a Student must be found to: (1) have one or more of the following physical and/or mental disabilities: autism; deaf-blindness; deafness; emotional disturbance; a hearing impairment; an intellectual disability; multiple disabilities; an orthopedic impairment, other health impairments (e.g. ADD or ADHD); a speech or language impairment; a traumatic brain injury; a visual impairment; and/or a specific learning disability in the following areas: basic reading skills, reading comprehension, math calculations, math reasoning, listening comprehension, written expression, and/or oral expression; and (2) require specially designed instruction and/or related services as a result of his/her disability(ies).

### **Step 2: Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process**

If a child is identified as having a disability and in need of special education services, the next step in the process is to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This document describes the child's needs and explains the specific services that PAACS will provide to assist them in achieving academic and/or social-emotional progress in school. The IEP details the special education, related services, specially designed instruction, accommodations/modifications, and other supports the child needs to maintain steady and ongoing progress. The IEP can be amended at any time in order to reflect the needs of the child, which may change from time to time. Either a parent/guardian or the school can initiate the process for reconvening the IEP team to amend the plan.

The IEP is written by a team of qualified professionals, and parents/guardians are critical members of the team. Parents/guardians are invited to attend all IEP meetings. Parent input is valued as it allows the team to devise an IEP that

will meet the student's individual academic and/or social-emotional needs. When the student turns fourteen (14) years of age within an IEP term, they will be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss post-secondary goals and transition needs.

After the IEP is written, parents/guardians are asked to sign a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP). By signing this document, the parent/guardian indicates his/her approval of the proposed program and services included in the IEP. Services will start once the NOREP is signed by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are not required to sign the NOREP at the IEP meeting. PAACS encourages families to think deeply about the proposed services before signing the NOREP. We request that families indicate their approval of services or present clarifying questions and/or changes to the IEP/NOREP within 48 hours of the IEP meeting.

### **Step 3: Start Services and Progress Monitoring**

After the NOREP is signed, indicating approval of proposed services, the student will begin receiving the services outlined in the IEP. PAACS uses data to monitor the academic and social-emotional/behavioral growth of all students in order to determine progress towards meeting the goals outlined in their IEP. Progress monitoring reports are sent home quarterly, along with the report cards.

### **Step 4: Transition Services**

PAACS wants to ensure that all students are able to transition to secondary and post-secondary opportunities. Consideration of transition needs is required annually for all students once they reach fourteen (14) years of age.

## **504 Plan**

School age children who have a disability but do not meet the eligibility criteria for an IEP may be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 is an Act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. It assures that persons with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students. The act defines a person with a disability as anyone who: (1) has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working); (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, PAACS recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices at PAACS.

PAACS has specific responsibilities under Section 504, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational accommodations. Children who are eligible may receive a Section 504 Education Plan that details these accommodations.

## **English Language Learners**

PAACS is committed to provide equal educational opportunities to every student. The PAACS English Language Learners ("ELL") program accelerates English language acquisition whose first language is not English and further assists them in becoming successful learners in the regular classroom. For more information about PAACS's ELL program, please contact the Dean of Language Services.



## Technology

Students are provided with a school issued iPad in order to grow 21st Century skills and reinforce concepts learned in the grades and across the curriculum. Teachers also use school approved programs and Apps to enhance their lesson plan preparation and teaching. All students will be assigned an iPad for use throughout the school day. Students will be responsible for the care and proper use of their iPad. Students are expected to bring their iPads to school daily fully charged.

All school devices are for use in school and at home to complete school-based assignments. Families should have access to reliable internet for all students. Reliable internet is defined as: 1) not a mobile phone, 2) unlimited in the household without having to pay more each month, 3) a speed that allows 2-3 people to watch videos at the same time on more than one computer, 4) accessible to students five days a week even if they attend school from different locations. If families do not have reliable internet, parents should contact the school.

## PowerSchool Parent Portal

PAACS' Parent Portal allows parents to access their child's classroom progress, homework, assignments, and teacher comments. A notification letter containing a school generated login credential will be sent to parents. Please keep this information in a secure place. [Visit the PowerSchool Parent Portal here.](#)

## Promotion Requirements

The Board recognizes that the emotional, social, physical and educational growth of students will vary and that students should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at various stages of their growth.

A student shall be promoted when s/he has successfully:

- Completed the course requirements at the presently assigned grade.
- Achieved the academic standards established for the present level, based on the professional judgment of his/her teachers and the results of assessment.
- Demonstrated proficiency to move ahead to the educational program of the next level.
- Demonstrated the degree of social, emotional and physical maturation necessary for successful learning experience at the next learning level.

The recommendation of the classroom teacher shall be weighted heavily in determining promotion or retention of a student.

Parents shall be informed well in advance of the possibility of retention of a student.

The building principal shall be assigned the final responsibility for determining the promotion or retention of each student.

## STUDENT SERVICES

Student Services are programs that support the overall mission of the School by ensuring that students have or attain competencies necessary to benefit from the instructional program. Student Services staff can identify and remove barriers in order for a student to benefit from instruction. Examples of student services staff are school psychologists, behavior analysts, school counselors, social workers, school nurses, and behavior support assistants.

We assist in providing developmental services through counseling, psychological, and health that support students in addressing academic, behavioral, health, personal, and social developmental issues. We provide diagnostic, intervention, and referral services to identify barriers that limit a student's success in school, engage in activities to limit/eliminate those barriers, refer to school-based professionals or community-based assistance. We also consult and coordinate services in partnerships with parents, families, staff, community resources to address barriers to educational objectives.

**Group & Individual Counseling:** Group and Individual counseling is provided to students who need more extensive support than cannot be provided in a classroom setting. School social workers and counselors will not become involved in extended therapy sessions. They will, however, work to assist the students and the parents to secure the needed assistance in the community.

**Agency and Community Referrals:** Many obstacles to a child's learning are not school oriented and they require specialized treatment. Counselors work with parents in seeking appropriate services in the community. They are also available to coordinate the services of the agency/private practitioner with that of the school.

**Confidentiality:** Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents, the principal or other appropriate authority where the health, safety, or welfare of the student or other person is clearly in jeopardy.

**Universal Supports:** Universal supports are interventions that are given to students who display the school-wide expectations and are provided to each student throughout the day. The three main forms of universal support are Classroom Contingencies rewards, PAACS School Store and Super Cheetah Rewards, which are driven by ClassDojo Points. ClassDojo is an online resource that helps track when students follow the school-wide expectations and IB learner profiles. Teachers use ClassDojo to give students points to acknowledge when they have met the C.A.R.E. behavior expectations.

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### Purpose of the Student Code of Conduct

Pan American Academy Charter School (PAACS) has high expectations for all students. In order for students to reach their potential, school should be a safe and orderly place where everyone is responsible for their conduct at all times. PAACS will not tolerate any actions from students that in any way interfere with the delivery of instruction or jeopardize the health, safety and well-being of any member of our school community. Our Student Code of Conduct applies to the educational program, school activities and functions, extra-curricular programs, travel to and from school (including our transportation) and any event in which the school participates or is represented. School is a place where students are expected to learn.

### The Student Code of Conduct will explain:

- The expectations of students, parents, the school, and school staff
- Managing classroom behaviors to support a safe learning environment
- Possible interventions that address student's disruptive behaviors

### These rules shall apply to any misconduct that occurs:

- On school grounds during the school day or immediately before or after school hours;
- On school grounds at any other time when a school group is using the school;
- Off school grounds and the immediate perimeter of the school building, including any school activity function or event;
- During travel to and from school, including actions on any school bus, van or any other public conveyance.

- Off school grounds where the misconduct may reasonably be expected to undermine the proper disciplinary authority of the school, the safety of students or staff, or cause disruption within the school.

## Student Uniform and Dress Code

It is expected that all students will be dressed in full uniform at all times, starting on the first day of school, until the last day of classes. Full uniform must be worn for all school events unless otherwise indicated. No outside jackets, hoodies, accessories are permitted to be worn in school as part of the uniform. In an effort to prevent loss or theft of sweaters, it is recommended that each student write their name on the inside using a permanent marker.

Students who fail to dress for school as required by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include a disciplinary write-up, parent notification and a detention. It is expected the parent will make every effort to resolve the matter to the best of their ability. The following is a list of uniform items that must be worn on a daily basis:

ITEM	BOYS	GIRLS
<b>Cardigan Sweater 5-8</b>	A solid navy with white piping pocket cardigan with school logo affixed on the left side. <b><i>This is NOT an optional uniform item for boys.</i></b>	A solid navy pocket cardigan with the school logo affixed on the left side. This is an optional item for girls.
<b>Pants</b>	Navy blue pants - school pants must be worn to full length with a plain black belt.	Navy blue pants - school pants must be worn to full length with a plain black belt.
<b>Shirts</b>	Oxford style short or long sleeve button down shirt (tucked in at all times). Polo shirts may be worn during the months of September, October, March, April, May, and June.	A short or long sleeve white shirt with a round collar will be required. Polo shirts may be worn during the months of September, October, March, April, May, and June.
<b>Shoes</b>	Plain black school shoes are to be worn every day. <b><i>Sneakers, boots, or athletic shoes are NOT permissible shoes.</i></b> All-black sneakers are only permitted on days the students have physical education. No colorful sneakers or sneakers with designs or other colors are permitted.	Plain black school shoes are to be worn each day. <b><i>Sneakers, boots, heels or athletic shoes are NOT permissible shoes.</i></b> All-black sneakers are only permitted on days the students have physical education. No colorful sneakers or sneakers with designs or other colors are permitted.
<b>Skirt 5-8</b>		Girls may wear a specific, green and navy plaid skirt. The skirt should not be shorter than one inch above the knee. No jeans, sweat pants, leggings or pants may be worn under the skirts.
<b>Skirt/Jumper per K-4</b>		Girls may wear a specific, green and navy plaid skirt jumper. The jumper should not be shorter than one inch above the knee. No jeans, sweat pants, leggings or pants may be worn under the jumper.

<b>Socks</b>	Plain navy blue socks are to be worn at all times, even with the physical education uniform.	Plain navy blue knee socks are to be worn. No designs, ruffles, or balls should be visible. Navy blue pantyhose or tights may be worn. Students may not wear pantyhose or tights with any visible designs or seams.
<b>Sweater Vest</b>	K-4 grades: A solid navy blue sweater vest with the Pan American emblem affixed on the left side must be worn over the oxford style shirt	Grades 5-8: A solid navy blue sweater vest with the Pan American emblem affixed on the left side must be worn over the oxford style shirt. <b><i>This is NOT an optional uniform item for girls.</i></b>
<b>Tie</b>	Grades K-4: A solid navy blue tie must be worn along with the oxford style shirt every day.  Grades 5-8: A navy blue and green tie/bowtie striped must be worn along with the oxford style shirt every day.	K-8 grades optional: A blue and green plaid cross tie can be worn with shirts.

The following standards will help ensure that each student meets the personal appearance guidelines:

**Clothing**

Pants must be worn at waist level. No sheer, tight fitting or excessively loose clothing, tank tops or off-the-shoulder tops – including on dress down days.

**Jewelry**

Excessive jewelry, inappropriate, oversized and/or distracting jewelry is not permitted. Visible gold or silver chains are not permitted. Visible body piercing is not permitted.

**Hats, Scarves, Coats & Hoodies**

Hats are not allowed to be worn in the building. Hats or other head covering apparel worn for cultural, ethnic, religious, health or other meritorious reasons shall be considered exempt from this rule. It is kindly requested that parents/guardians and or students share the purpose for head covering so that the staff may be appropriately sensitive and supportive of all students within the larger school environment. Scarves may not be worn during the school day and can be put away in student bookbags/lockers during the day. No coats, jackets, or non-uniform sweaters are allowed to be worn in the school building. All students will be required to remove coats, jackets, or hoodies upon entering the classroom. All coats and jackets must be kept on student hooks in classrooms or in lockers.

**Hair**

Hair must be well-groomed, clean and not covering the eyes. Unnatural hair color is not permitted (blue, green, pink, etc.).

**Tattoos & Makeup**

No visible permanent or temporary tattoos are permitted. Students in K-6 are not allowed to wear makeup. Excessive make-up is NOT permitted.

**Sneakers**

Students may only wear sneakers to school on gym day or approved school activity. Students will not be permitted to change shoes for lunch and recess.

## Uniform Donations

Pan American Academy collects clean and gently used school uniforms. If you wish to donate your child's uniforms, please send your donation to the school with your child's name and homeroom. For more information, feel free to email [information@panamcs.org](mailto:information@panamcs.org).

## Dress Down Days

These days are designed to give students a day when they can be out of uniform and to celebrate school spirit by wearing their team color. These days will be announced in advance. Casual clothing such as jeans, sweatshirts and t-shirts are permitted as long as they meet the criteria of the dress code policy. Cutoffs, excessively loose or tight fitting pants or shorts, any clothing with holes, sleeveless or off-the-shoulder tops are all violations of this policy. Advertising, logos, symbols, pictures, or wording may not be disruptive to the school program and not be related to alcoholic beverages, drugs – including nicotine, or depict any lewd or inappropriate references or innuendos. Students who prefer to dress-up (i.e. skirts, dresses, holiday attire, etc.) are welcome to do so. Hats, sunglasses or other accessories are not permitted unless approved by the principal. **In keeping with the personal appearance and dress code, the administration reserves the right to enforce style, color and length.** Shoes, even on Dress Down Days, must be safe. That is, they need to have a front and back that keep the shoe attached to the foot.

**Special Note to Parents:** You have the final decision in allowing your child to participate in Dress Down Days. If you prefer that your child not participate we will support your decision and ask that your child follow the regular school uniform dress code.

TEAM COLORS FOR EACH GRADE								
K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Red	Yellow	Blue	Green	Black	Orange	Grey	Purple	White

## Social Media Practices

The use of social media, text messaging, and gaming unless for teacher-instructed, educational use are not allowed during class time. Cell phone use is limited to passing periods and lunch time, exclusively. Most social media platforms require children to be at least 13 years old to use. Social media use should be monitored by a parent/guardian as it is discouraged for educators and students to connect through these platforms with the exception of school-sanctioned accounts. It is important to remember that any events that occur off school property, or outside of school hours, but captured through use of social media can have school-based consequences if their implications disrupt the learning environment.

## Locker Use

1. Students with assigned lockers should be patient and careful in trying to open lockers with combination locks. Overloading and kicking of lockers, as evidenced by black marks and dents, will not be tolerated. Students will be charged for damages.
2. Students are responsible for remembering the combination to their locker. Students should not tell other students their locker combination. Students should not share a locker. Locker doors should be closed gently without slamming. Garments and books should be kept clear.

3. Students may go to their lockers without special passes at these times:
  - Immediately upon arriving before morning homeroom period.
  - Each team will designate specific locker stops.
  - Before leaving school.
4. Students should make locker visits as orderly and quietly as possible, taking care not to block the corridors.
5. If a locker is damaged or will not work properly, please report it before/after school or during your lunch period.
6. Lockers are the property of the school and may be searched by an administrator at any time.
7. All outerwear (hats, jackets, sunglasses, etc.) must be placed in the locker.
8. Theft of personal property is the student's responsibility if the locker is not being used properly.

## Behavioral Expectations & Responsibilities

**At Pan American Academy, we C.A.R.E.** As an IB World School, we have adopted a school wide essential agreement built on the foundation of the IB learner profile. Our essential agreement defines the expectations for positive social interaction in our school. The elements of our essential agreement are as follows:

### *Compassionate*

At Pan American we are compassionate by...

- Caring for others through our positive acts that make a difference in the lives of others
- Communicating with each other using appropriate language
- Being open minded and accepting the values and traditions of others
- Balancing different aspects of our lives to achieve well-being for ourselves and others

### *Accountable*

At Pan American we are accountable by...

- Showing our knowledge of conceptual understandings through a range of disciplines
- Developing skills for inquiry independently and with others
- Communicating effectively with individuals and groups
- Reflecting on strengths and weaknesses to support learning and personal development
- Balancing our interdependence with other people and the world we live in
- Being principled and taking responsibility for our actions and their consequences

### *Respectful*

At Pan American we are respectful by...

- Caring about others through service and positive acts that help to make a difference
- Communicating effectively and listening carefully to others perspectives
- Being principled in our approach to the dignity and rights of people everywhere
- Being open-minded as we critically appreciate our own cultures and the traditions of others
- Balancing the different aspects of our lives to achieve well-being for ourselves and others

### *Engaged*

At Pan American we are engaged by...

- Displaying our knowledge of conceptual understandings and exploring a range of disciplines
- Thinking critically and creatively to analyze and take responsible action
- Nurturing curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research
- Communicating with others confidently and creatively in more than one language
- Being risk-takers that work to explore new ideas and innovative strategies

The school-wide expectations are behaviors that every member of the school community is expected to display.

### **Expectations for Students**

- Be principled by acting with integrity and honesty.
- Approach problems with reason, use ethical decision making strategies
- Care about others by showing empathy, compassion, and respect
- Reflect on choices and decisions
- Communicate with parents and staff in a respectful manner
- Comply with the Student Code of Conduct

### **Expectations for Parents**

- Treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect. All school personnel have been carefully selected and directed to act in the best interest of all of our students at all times.
- Understand and uphold all policies and procedures at Pan American Academy, setting a good example for your child
- Use respectful and appropriate language when attending school meetings or events and communicating with Pan American staff
- Approach school staff in a positive manner if you are in need of assistance or have a concern.

## **Bullying/Cyber-Bullying**

The Pan American Academy School Board and community is committed to making our school a safe and caring environment for all students and staff. It is expected that we will treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence.

### **Definition**

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting or where the behavior directly impacts the school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive, and has the effect of doing any of the following: Substantial interference with a student's education. Creation of a threatening environment. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school. Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

### **Reporting & Discipline**

Students who have been bullied should promptly report such incidents to the building principal or his/her designee. Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties will be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations. Reprisal or retaliation that occurs as a result of good faith reports of bullying will not be tolerated. A student who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include, but not be limited to:

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.

9. Referral to law enforcement officials.

## School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (SWPBIS)

### What is PBIS?

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS IS NOT a packaged curriculum, scripted intervention, or manualized strategy. PBIS IS a prevention-oriented way for school personnel to;

- (a) organize evidence-based practices
- (b) improve their implementation of those practices
- (c) maximize academic and social behavior outcomes for students. PBIS supports the success of ALL students.

To help motivate our students, Pan American's PBIS team created a system of acknowledgements to support our four key areas of behavior: Compassionate, Accountable, Respectful and Engaged. Teachers use Classroom Dojo points to acknowledge students' demonstration of the learner profile and demonstration of C.A.R.E. Students are then able to "purchase" items from our school stores based on their weekly Dojo point total.

### What does PBIS have to do with school discipline and classroom management?

Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline are essential for supporting teaching and learning. PBIS goes further by emphasizing that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and working together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize success for all students. For more information, visit <https://www.pbis.org> or <http://www.papbs.org>

## Classroom Management Strategies

### Dealing with Problem Behavior

The staff at Pan American Academy Charter School (PAACS) is dedicated to making interactions with students, regardless of setting, a positive one that acknowledges when students are engaged in desired behaviors. Despite the many opportunities for staff to reinforce expected behaviors and the many acknowledgements to which students will have access, staff must always be prepared to address problem behavior. The most efficient way for staff to address problem behavior is to anticipate and plan for the behavior, stay calm, implement the intervention strategies, and evaluate the impact at a later time.

#### Corrective consequences for behavior are effective when:

1. *They are immediate.* Consequences are most meaningful when they occur as soon as possible after the behavior takes place.
2. *They are fair.* The consequence is fair and appropriate based on the information available and the misbehavior.
3. *They are consistent.* Consequences should be administered consistently the same way, regardless of student or location.

### Level I Violations

Level I school violations can often be remediated with simple redirection to avoid the behavior becoming a level two offense and/or teacher submitting an office disciplinary referral.



It is expected that students respond to the remediation efforts of the adult and cease the inappropriate behavior. Disregarding these directions or becoming disrespectful will result in the escalation of the behavior to a higher level with more severe consequences.

**Possible consequences: teacher conference with student, teacher directed consequence, parent contacted by teacher, office discipline referral (ODR), after-school detention, lunch detention, and/or time outside of the classroom with administration.**

## Level II Violations

Level two school violations are behaviors whose frequency or seriousness disrupts the learning climate or safety of the school. Students engaging in level two behaviors are typically beyond redirection from teachers and/or staff and require an office disciplinary referral for possible investigation by the Safety team. Repeated **level II school violations will be escalated to a level three offense.**

**Possible consequences: Consequences listed under Level I, reinstatement parent meeting, in-school suspension, and/or out-of-school suspension.**

## Level III Violations

Level three school violations are behaviors that may threaten the health, safety, or welfare of a member of the school community. Students engaging in level three behaviors are beyond re-direction from teachers and staff and require an office disciplinary referral and investigation by the Safety team. Repeated level three school violations **will trigger an expulsion committee review.**

## Possible Consequences

Consequences listed under Level I and/or Level II and/or expulsion hearing with the Board of Trustees or designated hearing examiner.

School Violations	Level of Offense	Possible Consequence		
		In-school interventions	Out-of-School Suspension	*Possible Expulsion Hearing
Defiance	1	X		
Disrespect	1	X		
Disruption	1	X		
Dress Code Violation	1	X		
Inappropriate Language or Gesture	1	X		
Truancy	1	X		
Tardy	1	X		

Property Misuse	1	X	X	
Repeated Violations	2	X	X	
Abusive and/or Threatening Language	2	X	X	
Physical Aggression – Property	2	X	X	
Physical Aggression-Person	2	X	X	
Plagiarism	2	X	X	
Forgery	2	X	X	
Inappropriate Displays of Affection	2	X	X	
Other Behavior	2	X	X	
Skip Class	2	X	X	
Technology Violation	2	X	X	
Arson	3	X	X	X
Assault	3	X	X	X
Bomb Threat/False Alarm	3	X	X	X
Bullying/Harassment	3	X	X	X
Gang Affiliation Display	3	X	X	X
Fighting	3	X	X	X
Other Behavior	3	X	X	X
Property Damage/Vandalism	3	X	X	X
Theft	3	X	X	X
Use/Possession of Alcohol	3	X	X	X
Use/Possession of Combustible	3	X	X	X
Use/Possession of Drug	3	X	X	X

Use/Possession of Tobacco	3	X	X	X
Use/Possession of Weapon	3	X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The possible consequences above are suggestions and school administration, at their discretion, has the right to escalate or deescalate the level of an offense based on circumstance.</li> <li>Repeated school violations will result in an escalation to the next consequence level</li> </ul> <p><i>*Consequence Levels are not mutually exclusive. If a student is referred for a possible expulsion hearing/review, that student may also be suspended out of school for some period between 1-10 days.</i></p> <p><i>*Repeated level three School Violations will result in an Expulsion Committee Review</i></p>				

## Disciplinary Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

As detailed above, PAACS does not as a first resort seek to exclude from school students who have violated the Code of Conduct, especially students with disabilities. In the rare event that a student receiving specialized services pursuant to an IEP or Section 504 Service Plan is to be excluded from school for a duration that constitutes a change of placement, a Manifestation Determination meeting will be held.

A change of placement occurs when a student who is receiving special education services is excluded from school:

- For more than 10 school days in a row; OR
- For more than 15 school days in any one school year; OR
- When days 11-15 constitute a “pattern” of exclusion; OR
- For even one school day, for a student with an intellectual disability.

PAACS complies with applicable laws governing students with disabilities and does not discipline students with disabilities for behaviors that are substantially related to or manifestations of their disabilities. During a Manifestation Determination meeting, a child’s IEP team must answer the following questions:

1. Was the student’s behavior in question caused by, or directly and substantially related to, his/her disability?
2. Was the behavior a direct result of the LEA’s failure to implement the IEP?

If the IEP team answers “yes” to either question, the IEP team has determined that the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability, and the proposed disciplinary action is voided and the team must immediately take steps to remedy any deficiencies in the IEP, if any. The LEA will conduct a functional behavioral assessment (“FBA”) and develop and implement a positive behavior support plan (“PBSP”). In the event an FBA and PBSP have already been developed, the IEP team will review and modify them as necessary.

If the IEP team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the disciplinary action may be applied.

In addition to the above, PAACS personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child’s disability if the child:

- Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; or
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or

Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

## Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, Games and Toys

Use of cell phones or other personal electronic devices are not permitted at Pan American Academy Charter School. If a student must bring a cell phone or personal electronic device to school, they are required to turn it off PRIOR TO ENTERING SCHOOL GROUNDS and keep their cell phone or personal electronic device in their school bag.

6-8 grade students will have lockers for storage. All bookbags should be stored in lockers during the school day. If a cell phone/personal device is used, visible or heard at any time in the school building, the phone/personal device will be confiscated from the student.

Students are not allowed to bring toys or games to school. This includes dolls or stuffed animals. If such items are to be brought for show-and-tell, arrangements must be made between the parent and teacher as to the appropriate time to bring the game or toy. Fidget Spinners, Rubix Cubes or any other gadgets may not be brought into the school. The following protocols will take place in the event cell phones/devices, games or toys, etc. are confiscated:

**First offense:** Item(s) will be released ONLY to the parent. Parents must call the school to speak with an administrator or designee to arrange pickup.

**Second offense:** Item(s) will be held for ONE MONTH. Parents must schedule a meeting with an administrator or designee to retrieve the confiscated item.

**Third offense:** Item(s) will be returned at the end of the school year. Parents must schedule a meeting with an administrator or Dean of School Culture to retrieve the confiscated item. The student may also face disciplinary action for continued violation.

Pan American Academy Charter School will take all the necessary precautions to secure all confiscated items, however, it is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## Damage to School Property

1. **Books** - School books are owned by the school and loaned to students. If a student loses a book or damages it, he/she will be required to pay a prorated amount. Identify your books (place your full name in the space provided inside the front cover).
2. **Equipment and Facilities** - Students found damaging school property of any kind will be required to make restitution.
3. **Damage to Computers** - The use of the computer/Internet is a privilege. Any damage to the device, chargers, cases, or other components or loss of any property will incur a fine.
4. **Personal Well-being** - Students may be held financially responsible for any physical injury inflicted, or damage to, another's personal property

## Disciplinary Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

As detailed above, PAACS does not as a first resort seek to exclude from school students who have violated the Code of Conduct, especially students with disabilities. In the rare event that a student receiving specialized services pursuant to an IEP or Section 504 Service Plan is to be excluded from school for a duration that constitutes a change of placement, a Manifestation Determination meeting will be held.

A change of placement occurs when a student who is receiving special education services is excluded from school:

- For more than 10 school days in a row; OR
- For more than 15 school days in any one school year; OR
- When days 11-15 constitute a “pattern” of exclusion; OR
- For even one school day, for a student with an intellectual disability.

PAACS complies with applicable laws governing students with disabilities and does not discipline students with disabilities for behaviors that are substantially related to or manifestations of their disabilities. During a Manifestation Determination meeting, a child’s IEP team must answer the following questions:

1. Was the student’s behavior in question caused by, or directly and substantially related to, his/her disability?
2. Was the behavior a direct result of the LEA’s failure to implement the IEP?

If the IEP team answers “yes” to either question, the IEP team has determined that the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability, and the proposed disciplinary action is voided and the team must immediately take steps to remedy any deficiencies in the IEP, if any. The LEA will conduct a functional behavioral assessment (“FBA”) and develop and implement a positive behavior support plan (“PBSP”). In the event an FBA and PBSP have already been developed, the IEP team will review and modify them as necessary.

If the IEP team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the disciplinary action may be applied.

In addition to the above, PAACS personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child’s disability if the child:

- Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; or
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

## Suspension

Suspension is an exclusion from school for one (1) to ten (10) consecutive days. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.

The following constitutes PAACS’s proposed policies for the out-of- school suspension of students:

- Once it has been determined that a student has violated the Code of Conduct, an investigation will occur. At the time of the investigation, it is the responsibility of any student who has been contacted to provide an accurate and truthful account, to the best of their ability, of what occurred. After the investigation, PAACS will notify parents of the consequence and schedule a reinstatement meeting.
- Suspensions may be issued by the Principal, Assistant Principal, or other person in charge of the public school. PAACS will notify of a suspension and provide the student an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.

### Suspensions for 1 to 3 days

A student may be suspended for a maximum of three days without a hearing. After an incident occurs, the student will be given an opportunity to discuss the incident with School Administration. A written notice of suspension will be prepared for the parents and given to the student. The notice will contain reasons for the suspension. A conference with the parent will be scheduled before the student's return to school.

### **Suspensions for 4 to 10 days**

For suspensions of 4 to 10 days, the student and parent will have the right to an informal hearing with the School Administration. The following requirements will govern the informal hearing:

- The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardian to meet with school administration to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.
- The steps below will be followed to ensure due process:
  1. The student and the parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the reasons for the suspension.
  2. They will be provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing.
  3. A student will have the right to question any witnesses present at the informal hearing, and has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
  4. An informal hearing will be held within the first 5 days of the suspension.

For all suspensions, students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the Code of Conduct.

### **Reinstatement Meeting**

The reinstatement will serve as a warning that the student has seriously violated PAACS's Code of Conduct. It is our hope that the student and family will realize the impact his/her behavior has had on their learning and our school community and, therefore, make all necessary changes in his/her behavior while in school. A reinstatement meeting must occur after each incident of suspension. Date and time of meeting will be detailed in the suspension letter.

### **Expulsion**

The following constitutes PAACS's proposed policies for the expulsion of students:

1. Only the Board of Trustees has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than 10 days. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing in conformity with 22 Pa. Code § 12.8.
2. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless serving a suspension, shall be placed in his normal class unless it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others.

The hearing process and Board decision will be governed by the requirements of 22 Pa. Code § 12.8, including the following:

- Notification of the charges will be sent to the student's parents/guardian by certified mail.
- Parents will be provided with three days' notice of the time/place of the hearing. The hearing shall be held within fifteen (15) days of the incident giving rise to the hearing unless otherwise agreed to by the parties.
- The hearing notice shall advise the Parent/guardian of the following:
  - The hearing will be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
  - The student will have the right to be represented by counsel.
  - The student will have the right to be notified of the names of the witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits, if any, of those witnesses.
  - The student will have the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
  - The student will have the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.

- A record will be kept of the hearing, either by stenographer or by tape recorder.
- In the event the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, an appeal may be filed in accordance with the Local Agency Law to the Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days of receipt of that Adjudication. Students and their parents/guardians will be apprised of these rights.

## Weapons

In accordance with Act 26 of 1995 and Article XIII-A of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, the school prohibits the possession of weapons and may be required to expel, for a minimum of one year, any student who is determined to have brought onto or is in possession of a weapon on any school property as required under Act 26. The school will also report all incidents involving the possession of a weapon to local law enforcement officials and to the Pennsylvania Department of Education all incidents relating to expulsions for possession of a weapon on school grounds, etc.

## Due Process

Education is a statutory right and the Board of Trustees shall establish fair and reasonable rules – including this Code of Conduct – regarding the conduct of all students at the charter school, and those offenses which may lead to exclusion from school (suspension and expulsion). The jurisdiction of these rules will extend to students at any time the students are on school property, while the students are present at school-sponsored activities, and while the students are traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities. Students will be required to adhere to the Code of Conduct during these times.

If a student violates the Code of Conduct and such violation requires a disciplinary response that involves exclusion from school (i.e. in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion), PAACS will comply with the due process requirements set forth in Chapter 12 of the State Board of Education regulations.

Additional protections and due process measures, including Manifestation Determination Meetings, will be implemented for students who are eligible or thought to be eligible for specialized services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act. Discipline measures for such students will comply with the IDEA and its implementing regulations, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations, and Chapter 711 of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education regulations.

## Legal Recourse for School-related Offenses

If you believe that you or your child were victims of a crime by a school student, school staff member, or school visitor, you have the right to pursue criminal charges by contacting the Criminal Justice, or Juvenile Court systems. The principal, her designee or the parent, may contact the Philadelphia Police to respond to any type of allegation.

In cases where the offense is against a particular person, the Police will determine if they will bring criminal charges if the victim expresses a desire to prosecute. Such include assault, threats, sexual abuse and theft of personal property. Where it is agreed that criminal conduct has occurred, the principal or her designee will initiate an Internal School Investigation to determine appropriate disciplinary action, and notify the Philadelphia Police Department. The assistant principal or designee will provide information related to the investigation with the Philadelphia Police Department as necessary.

If there is disagreement between you and the school staff as to whether a crime has been committed, you may contact the Philadelphia Police directly through the 911 system. Depending upon the nature of the alleged criminal act, you may be referred to the private criminal complaint process.

If the alleged offender is an adult, a private criminal complaint is issued by the District Attorney's Office. The telephone numbers of that unit are 215-686-9863/9864/9865.

Where the accused is a juvenile (under 18 years of age), a private criminal complaint is issued by the Juvenile Court. The telephone number for the Juvenile Unit is 215-686-7430. Where you have been the victim of an assault and are not satisfied with the school's response, or if you wish assistance in dealing with the school, contact the Office of Safe Schools Advocate from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The Safe Schools Advocate telephone number is 215-644-1277.

Note: Internal school disciplinary action shall not in any way deprive the school or an individual victim from pursuing any legal remedies available in the Criminal, Civil or Juvenile Courts of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or the United States.

## **LEGAL NOTICES/RIGHT TO KNOW**

Please visit [panamcs.org/public](http://panamcs.org/public) notices to see additional Annual Notice information for child find procedures, laws regarding child abuse and mandatory abuse reporting, provision of services to homeless students, student privacy and confidentiality, and other laws.

***Annual Notices for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title I, Title IX, and Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, and Other Legal Notices***

Please find and review these notices at [panamcs.org](http://panamcs.org). If you have any questions, please contact the Principal.