



A+ Children's Academy
"Soaring to New Heights"

2023-2024 Student Handbook

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Welcome to A+ Children’s Academy! A+ Children’s Academy (sometimes referred to as “A+CA” or as the “School”) has a deep commitment to our students and families. Our primary goal is to offer experiences which will help the children develop a positive sense of self-worth and value while giving them a quality education based on the core curriculum standards set by the Ohio Department of Education. This handbook (the “Handbook”) was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year. The term “parent” when used herein means an official caregiver of a minor child, including but not limited to mother, father, stepparent, grandparent, foster parent or court-appointed guardian, foster caregiver, or caretaker. If you have any questions about this Handbook, please contact the Principal. The Principal has similar authority and responsibilities as the superintendent of schools for a local district.

The rules, policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. However, from time to time, there may be situations that require immediate or nonstandard responses. This Handbook does not limit the authority of the School to deviate from the normal rules and procedures set forth in this Handbook, and to deal with individual circumstances as they arise in the manner deemed most appropriate by the School taking into consideration the best interests of the School, its faculty, employees, students or overall school community. The policies may also be revised or updated periodically, even during the school year in the sole discretion of the Board of Directors (the “Board”). If at any point this Handbook conflicts with a policy adopted by the Board, the policy shall supersede and control.

Vision and Mission of A+ Children’s Academy

The A+ Children’s Academy vision is for all students to be excited about learning and empowered to control their own educational pathway.

Our mission is for all A+ Children’s Academy students to strive toward their full potential through an engaging, standards-based, arts-integrated curriculum that acknowledges each student’s individuality.

Respectful, Responsible, Ready

Our goal is to teach all students how to advocate for themselves. Self- Advocacy is the ability to speak up for what you need. Self- Advocacy helps children learn by creating solutions to challenges in school and in life. Children who exercise self- advocacy can:

- Find solutions to challenges that parents may not be aware of
- Build self confidence in the ability to learn and take life’s challenges

- Create a sense of ownership over learning by setting academic goals
- Develop independence and self-empowerment in school and in life

Students will learn to use the skills of Respect, Responsibility and Ready (The Three R's) to navigate their growth as a self-advocate. The A+ Children's Academy Team (teachers and staff) will focus on teaching students to be **respectful** to themselves and others, to make **responsible** choices, and be **ready** for learning.

SCHOOL DAY

School Hours

The school day starts at 8:00 AM sharp. Students are to be in their classrooms by 8:00 AM or they will be counted as tardy. School ends at 3:00 PM and students are to be picked up promptly.

Arrival/Dismissal

Students may enter the building at 7:45 AM. The School is not responsible for the supervision of students before 7:45 AM.

Students in K-3 are to report to their classroom first and then go to breakfast. They may enter through the K-3 building.

Students in grades 4-6 are to report to breakfast first through the front door of the K-3 building and then go to their classroom.

A call to the office for children arriving late needs to be made by 8:15 AM so a lunch order can be placed. If you do not call in and let us know that your child will be late then you will need to pack your child a lunch.

Students are not allowed to be picked up between 2:15 PM - 3:00 PM.

Students in grades K-3 are to be picked up on the back porch of the School.

Students in grades 4-6 are to be picked up in the back parking lot. Teachers will stand by their classrooms and release students to parents/guardians.

The School needs to know if there is a change in before- or after-school arrangements. We need to be notified of any changes by 2:30 PM. If it is after that time, we will do our best to make the change but we can't guarantee it.

Cancellations or Delays

Weather

When it becomes necessary to close or delay School due to weather conditions, the closing or delay will be announced through means such as the A+CA Facebook page, website, Class Dojo, and the following TV stations beginning in the morning – WCMH TV-4, WSYX TV-6 and WBNS TV-10. A+ Children’s Academy typically follows Columbus City Schools closing recommendations for winter weather closings but parents are asked to confirm closure of the School through the means listed above.

Do not call the School or School personnel at home as the telephones are necessary in completing closing arrangements.

Should the School implement a delayed opening it will be a 2 hour delay with School starting at 10:00 AM. There will be no extension of the school day if the opening of School is delayed.

Parents are reminded to NOT drop off students early on a delayed opening as supervision will not be available.

In the event of an early dismissal due to inclement weather, the School will notify parents via social media and the aforementioned TV stations.

Crisis Management

A School wide emergency response plan has been developed and provided to School personnel for assisting and responding to various crisis/emergency situations. In the event of a manmade or natural crisis, your cooperation is needed. Staff is trained to move students to a designated evacuation site. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL DIRECTLY. Calling the School may limit the availability of telephone lines needed to access emergency and rescue services. Initial notification to parents will be through local media outlets. Once students are secure and safe, the School will contact parents with sign out procedures. Students will only be released to parents or individuals listed on their emergency contact forms.

Illness

In the event of a large population of students or teachers being ill, the same closing procedures will be followed.

Attendance – Every Minute Counts

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to be on time to develop habits of

punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. Students must be in regular attendance if they are to benefit from our educationally sound activities.

Schools are required to keep records of every excused or unexcused absence for each student. Parents/guardians should call the School to report a student's absence before 8:00 AM for each day a student is absent. Lacking parental notification of an absence, the attendance officer, their assistant or designee, will make at least one reasonable attempt to notify the parent to obtain an explanation for the student's absence within 120 minutes from start of the school day. This notification requirement shall not apply to instances where a student was not expected to be in attendance at the School building due to the student's participation in off-campus activities.

An absence may be "excused" if the student/parent provides the Principal with verification, if any, in the manner and timeframe determined to be satisfactory in the sole discretion of the Principal. If verification is deemed necessary and the student/parent fails to provide such verification in the timeframe and manner as deemed satisfactory by the Principal, the absence will be considered unexcused. A+ Children's Academy has the right to request additional information to excuse any absence. It's critical that students check in with the Attendance Office in the Arts Building when they arrive after the start of school. A parent will need to sign the child in.

A+ Children's Academy is required by law to send notification to parents/guardians when a student meets the definition of "habitual truant" or "excessive absences", as further described below. Additionally, if a student misses 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in a month or 72 hours in a school year we are required to notify you in writing and have a meeting with the school to develop an Absence Intervention Plan (AIP) for your child.

Definition of Truancy and Excessive Absences

1. 'Chronic truant' is removed from the law;
2. Definition of '**habitual truant**' changes from **days to hours**. The new definition is;
 - Absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse;
 - Absent 42 or more hours in one school month without a legitimate excuse or;
 - Absent 72 or more hours in one school year without a legitimate excuse.
3. Habitual truant includes '**excessive absences;**'
 - Absent 38 or more hours in one school month **with or without** a legitimate excuse;
or
 - Absent 65 or more hours in one school year **with or without** a legitimate excuse.

The following reasons may be excused :

- Personal illness of the student
- Quarantine of the home. The absence under this condition is limited to the length of quarantine as determined by the proper health officials
- Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the student
- Death of a relative
- Religious observance consistent with the student's truly held religious beliefs
- Medical or dental appointment

- Absences due to a student being homeless

- Court appearance or other appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours

- Absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status

- Emergencies or any other occurrences or situations which, in judgment of the Principal, may necessitate absence from school for good and sufficient cause

Excessive absenteeism may lead to a home visit by School administration. It will also lead to a referral being made to Franklin County Juvenile Mediation Program and possibly Children's Service.

Tardy/Early Dismissal

- A student is considered tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:10 AM.
- If a student arrives late they are to first report to the Attendance Office located in the front of the Arts Building. A parent/guardian must accompany the student and sign him/her in.
- If a student is to be picked up early, please notify the teacher and Attendance Office via note or phone call.
- When a student is picked up early, the parent/guardian must sign them out in the Attendance Office located in the Arts Building. The student will then be called and brought up to the parent/guardian.

- Every minute your child is tardy counts toward excessive absences.

Dress Code

As a general rule, all clothes and proper undergarments should be worn as designed and fit appropriately. Student dress should not expose midriff, shoulders, back or undergarments.

A+ Children's Academy School Uniform

- Solid color polo shirt
- Black/blue/khaki pants, shorts, skirts, or dresses
- A jacket or sweater is acceptable for layers
- No hoods allowed to be worn at School

Examples of inappropriate clothing and accessories that are NOT permitted in School are as follows:

- Hats, coats/outerwear, head coverings (except that of religious customs), scarves, gloves and bandanas are not to be worn in the building and are to be kept in assigned spaces. Bandanas are not permitted. Hoodies are not permitted.
- Any articles which may be potentially harmful and/or destructive.
- Shorts and skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh (should be finger-length).
- Cut-offs, spandex and droopy pants.
- Slippers and any nightwear are not permitted.
- Shirts not covering shoulders and stomach.
- Bare midriff is defined as the showing of skin between the bottom of the shirt and the top of the pants. Shirts should be long enough to be tucked in.
- Showing of skin/and or underwear (male or female) whether standing or sitting. Showing of navels, cleavage, hip bones, upper thigh or underclothing should never be visible.
- Shoes must be closed toe.
- Shirts must be free of inappropriate pictures or words.
- Students are not permitted to carry book bags, duffle bags, or purses to school.

School-Wide Behavior Plan

In order to achieve the School's educational goals, the School requires all students to conform to the policies (see website). Failure to comply with these requirements will result in the student's discipline.

Discipline is to be administered in a reasonable manner and is designed to help the student take responsibility for his or her actions.

Transportation

The School is required to enforce and follow the policy of the student's home district that provided the transportation. Accordingly, the School must follow the school district's policy in imposing the period of suspension. A student may be subject to additional discipline under the School's Code of Conduct.

Due Process Rights

Before a student's privileges are suspended, the student shall be provided notice and shall be given an opportunity to be heard before the principal. A student may be immediately removed, without hearing, if that student poses a danger to other persons or property or threatens the bus's safe operation.

If a student with a disability is suspended or immediately removed, the School shall follow the laws governing suspension and expulsion of disabled students.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The Board understands the severity of excluding a student from the School. The Board, however, will not tolerate violence, dangerous, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior by students that substantially impedes the School from accomplishing its educational mission. The complete policy can be found on our website and it outlines when a student may be excluded from school, the procedure to follow, and the due process rights available to students.

Before a student is suspended, the student has the right to receive written notice of the reason for the intended suspension and an opportunity for an informal hearing.

Before a student is expelled, the student and the parent have the right to receive written notice of the reason for the proposed expulsion and an opportunity for a formal hearing.

In both instances, parents will be given the opportunity to challenge the disciplinary action.

Code of Conduct

The rules of the Student Code of Conduct apply to any conduct:

- On School grounds during the school day or immediately before or after school hours.
- On School grounds at any other time when the School is being used by a School group.
- On or off School grounds at any School activity, function, or event.

- Traveling to and from School, including actions on any school bus, van, or public conveyance.
- At activities occurring off School grounds if, in the sole discretion of the Principal, the conduct may affect the learning environment.
- Regardless of where the conduct occurs, if the conduct is directed at a School official or employee, or the property of such School official or employee.

Violation of the Code of Conduct may subject the student to discipline including but not limited to detentions and in-school suspensions and up to and including suspension, expulsion, or permanent exclusion. Each offense or series of offenses will be evaluated based on the particular circumstances of the offense(s). The following are examples of, but are not limited to, behavior which is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct:

- Tardiness – Arriving later than scheduled *
- Truancy – Absent without permission*
- Dress Code Violation – Not adhering to School dress code regulation
- Disobedient/Disruptive Behavior – Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request or any act that disrupts the orderly conduct of a School function; behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment (i.e., dress code violation, inappropriate language, cursing, inappropriate gestures)
- Cheating – To act dishonestly; copying of someone else’s work; to deceive, take credit for work not done by the student himself/herself
- Profane/Obscene Language or Gestures Between/Toward Students or Staff – Use of unacceptable words, terms, or gestures to embarrass or insult another student or staff member
- Theft – To take the property of an individual or the School without right or permission
- Fighting/Violence – To participate in physical contact with one or more students with the intent to hurt or injure
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Tobacco Products and look-alike substances, including vaporizers and electronic cigarettes
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages
- Vandalism/Damage to School or Personal Property – Purposeful destruction, misuse or defacing of School or other’s personal property
- Intimidation/Interference/Hazing of Student or Staff – Threatening to physically or verbally harm, interfere, or degrade another student or staff
- False Alarms/Bomb Threat – Purposefully engaging in a false alarm
- Use/Possession/Sale/Transmission/Concealment of any Drug or look-alike drug or other illegal or Controlled Substance
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of a Firearm including counterfeit and look-alikes – Firearm has the same meaning as provided pursuant to the “Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.”
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of any Explosive, Incendiary or Poison Gas – Any destructive device, including a bomb, a grenade, or a rocket

- Unwelcome Sexual Conduct – Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment, i.e., pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures, jokes, or pressure to engage in sexual activity
- Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying behavior (including by an electronic act) as defined in the school’s Policy on Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (Appendix 2)
- Gang involvement – Participation in gang-related actions, dress or activities
- Weapons – No student at any time, for any reason, shall possess, handle, transmit, or use any object, which can be reasonably considered a weapon in or on the property of the School, or any School-sponsored activity held away from the School property. For purposes of illustration, but without limitation, this rule shall include firearms, explosives, fireworks, and knives, including counterfeit, look-alikes, penknives, chemicals, and other dangerous objects, which are of no reasonable value to a student other than as a weapon. Possession of a “weapon” may result in immediate expulsion.
- Serious Bodily Injury – An incident that results in serious bodily injury to one’s self or others. Serious bodily injury is defined as “a bodily injury that involves substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member or organ.”
- Health and Safety- Actions that, in the sole discretion of the Principal, endanger the health and/or safety of fellow students, staff, or guests in the School
- Wrongful Conduct – Actions not in the listing above that, in the sole discretion of the Principal, impede, obstruct, interfere, or violate the mission, philosophy, and regulations of the School or classroom

*A student may not be suspended or expelled for tardiness or truancy.

Acceptable Use of Computers and Internet/Network Usage

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of providing internet and network access in schools is to support the school’s mission: “The A+ Children’s Academy is for all students to strive toward their full potential through an engaging, standards-based, arts integrated curriculum that acknowledges each student’s individuality.”

Terms of Agreement

In order for students to be allowed access to a school computer system, the Internet/Network Usage Form must be signed by the parent and student and returned to the School.

Internet Safety Policy

The School is providing access to its School computer systems, computer networks and the internet for educational and work related purposes only to foster 21st Century thinking skills and encourage responsible digital citizenship. A+ Children's Academy utilizes safety measures regarding access to the internet through School computers. These safety measures include the use of a software filtering program which restricts students' and district employees' access to material harmful to minors, as defined in 47 C.F.R.54.520(a)(4).

As more fully outlined in the School's Internet Safety Policy attached as **Appendix 1** to this Handbook, the use of technology is a privilege and an important part of the School's overall curriculum. The School will, from time to time, make determinations on whether specific uses of technology are consistent with School policies for students and employees of the School but does not warrant that the technology resources will meet any specific requirements of the student or other users, or that it will be error-free or uninterrupted. The School always reserves the right to monitor and log technology use, to monitor file server space utilization by users, and examine specific network usage (as may be deemed necessary) for maintenance, safety or security of the technology resources or the safety of the user.

Use of Mobile Electronic Devices

In an effort to provide an environment that fosters learning and in recognition of the increasing use of mobile electronic devices, the school has developed a mobile electronic device use policy. Mobile electronic devices are defined to include, but not limited to, cell phones, smart phones, iPOD/MPS3/DVD/CD players, video recorders, video games, radios and other similar electronic devices.

During the school day, mobile devices must remain turned off, but may be kept in the teacher's lockbox. To read the full policy please see website.

Title VI, IX and 504

Complaint Procedures

In accordance with the federal and state laws and regulations and Board Policies, any student or parent of a student who believes that the student has been discriminated against based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, religious expression, national origin, age, gender identity or expression, ancestry, familial status, military status or disability may bring forward an informal or formal complaint to the building administrator. Whenever possible and practical, an informal solution to the alleged complaint is encouraged and should be attempted. If an acceptable informal solution cannot be attained, formal complaint procedures shall be followed as set forth in Board Policy, beginning with filing a complaint.

The following has been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints and can advise parents on the specific civil rights grievance procedure:

Title IX Coordinator: Heather Wenger – Hwenger@apccad.org , (614) 491-8502

Section 504 Coordinator:

Homeless Students

The School shall provide an educational environment that treats all students equally. Every homeless student shall have access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless or unaccompanied students applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

Homeless students will be provided services comparable to other students in the School including:

- Transportation
- Educational services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State and local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency
- Programs in vocational and technical education
- Programs for gifts and talented students
- School nutrition programs

The Principal is to be the school liaison for homeless students (“School Liaison”). The School shall display the contact information for the School Liaison in the building. Awareness training shall be provided to all staff members. All questions and concerns of the staff members should be referred to the School Liaison.

A student may be considered eligible for services as a “Homeless Child” under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act if he or she is presently living:

- With other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- In a shelter, temporary shared housing, or transitional living program
- In a hotel/motel, campground, or similar situation due to lack of alternatives
- At a bus station, park, car, or abandoned building

- In a temporary or transitional foster care placement

The School Liaison for homeless students shall ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless student and any unaccompanied youth is:

- Assisted in accessing transportation to the selected school.
- Provided assistance in exercising the right to attend the school of his/her choice.
- Serviced without being labeled as homeless by school personnel.
- Provided the above information in a manner and form understandable to the parent or guardian, and if necessary, in the native language of the parent or guardian.

Rights

In public schools, parents and students have certain rights given by federal and state laws. The Board adopts guidelines and policies based upon these federal and state laws. Accordingly, the individual rights of students will be weighed against the safety and welfare of the majority of students in the School.

Student and Parent Rights

In accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) parents have the right to:

- Request the licensure and certification information of teachers and whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which Ohio qualification or licensing criteria has been waived;
- Request information as to whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
- Qualifications of instructional aides (if applicable).

As an A+ Children's Academy student, you have the right to expect:

- A free education in a positive learning environment;
- That the School you attend will be a safe place;
- That you will not be subjected to discrimination and
- That you will be informed about all the School rules and regulations.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notification

Description of Intent

The School follows a philosophy of continuous improvement and honest, objective data analysis. This philosophy requires well-planned and sometimes independent research efforts to determine the effectiveness of the School's programs and strategies. From time to time, the School will collect and analyze student performance data and various measures of effectiveness. Families may also be asked to participate in surveys or focus groups. Such research shall always be undertaken ensuring student privacy is protected and in compliance with the PPRA. For example, the names of the student, parent, and family members will not be revealed, and results will only be reported in the aggregate or by sub-groupings of sufficient size so that anonymity of the participants is safeguarded.

Rights Afforded by the PPRA

The PPRA affords parents of minors' certain rights regarding the School's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and conduct of certain physical exams. These rights include the following:

- The right to provide consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more protected areas ("Protected Information Survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education. Protected areas include the following:
 1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
 2. mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
 3. sexual behavior or attitudes
 4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
 5. critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
 6. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or clergy
 7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent/
 8. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility

- The right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
 1. any other Protected Information Survey, regardless of funding
 2. any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the School or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law
 3. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others

- The right to inspection, upon request and before administration or use, of the following:
 1. Protected Information Surveys of students
 2. instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
 3. instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

Notification Procedures

The School will work to develop and adopt policies regarding these rights in consultation with parent. The School will also work to make arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of Protected Information Surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

The School will directly notify the parent of these policies annually in this PPRA Notice or after any substantive changes. The School will also directly notify by U.S. mail, e-mail, or other reasonably available method, the parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys described in this PPRA Notice and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt students out of participation in the specific activity or survey. The School will make this notification to parents near the beginning of the school year if it has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, the parent will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys covered by the PPRA and will be provided an opportunity to opt their students out of such activities and surveys. The parent will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. The following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution
- administration of any Protected Information Survey funded in whole or in part by U.S. Department of Education
- any nonemergency, invasive physical examination, or screening as described above in the Rights Afforded by the PPRA

Where a student is scheduled to participate in these activities, the student will be notified as described above.

Reporting a Violation

The parent/or student who believes his/her rights have been violated may file a complaint to the following:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Parental Notification Regarding Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Curriculum

The law requires the School to include in the curriculum for students in grades K-6 developmentally appropriate instruction in child sexual abuse prevention, including information on available counseling and resources for children who are sexually abused. A parent may request a student be excused from such instruction upon a written request submitted to the Principal or their designee.

Lunch

Students are required to eat either a lunch from our cafeteria or bring a packed lunch from home. The packed lunch must include 4 out of the 5 food groups. Lunches MUST NOT contain any peanut butter or nut products. If your child's lunch contains nut products the food item will be taken. As mentioned before, we call in lunch at 9:00 AM each day. If your child is going to be late, let the School know so a lunch can be ordered. If you do not, then you will need to provide lunch for your child that day.

Recess

Weather permitting, students are given outside recess each day. Decisions to have outside recess during cold weather depend upon the temperature and the wind chill factor (below 25 degrees Fahrenheit). Students should always dress for outside recess. Students will have supervised free time indoors on days when the weather prevents outside activities.

Parent Information

Admission

It is the policy of the Board that each child who will be five years of age on or before September 30 will be eligible to enroll in kindergarten. Each child who will be six years of age on or before September 30 and has successfully completed kindergarten will be eligible to enroll in the first grade. Please contact the Principal for information regarding early entrance for kindergarten.

The Board requires that each child who registers for entrance to School provide the following:

- Birth certificate or other certificate as permitted by state law
- Immunization records
-
- Proof of residency
- Proof of custody as appropriate

The School will not charge tuition. Admission to A+ Children's Academy is open to any student who resides in any district in the State of Ohio. Applications are accepted at any time of the year. Enrollment will not be denied to any eligible applicant on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or any other

basis prohibited by law. The School will not discriminate in its pupil admission policies or practices on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, sex, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or any other basis.

Withdrawing

If you withdraw your student anytime during the school year please notify us and complete the necessary paperwork.

A+ Children's Academy will comply with ORC 3314.03 (A)(1)(b)(b), which requires that a student must be withdrawn from school if the student fails to participate without a legitimate excuse in 72 consecutive hours of learning opportunities offered to the student. In addition, A+ will fulfill the duties outlined in ORC 3321.13 upon withdrawal or habitual absence of a child from school.

Students could be withdrawn from A+ Children's Academy for behavior, academic or attendance issues.

Yearly Re-enrollment

Each school year, parents/ guardians must complete the re-enrollment form and provide a new proof of residency to be enrolled for the next school year.

Custody

Parents have an obligation to inform the School anytime the custody of a child changes. The School will need a complete copy of court orders pertaining to a child's custody.

Change of Contact Information

It is essential that every parent maintain an up to date address and telephone number on record for their student in the office. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Attendance Office of any change in phone number or address.

Emergency Information

Parents are responsible for completing an *Emergency Medical Form* on an annual basis. It is also the parent's responsibility to keep all information current. This form is sent home with each student during the first week of school and needs to be returned the next day. In case of emergency each student is required to have on file at the school office the following information:

- Parent/Guardian Name(s)

- Complete and up to date address(es)
- Parent/Guardian's home phone, work phone and/or cell phone
- Emergency phone numbers and addresses of 2 friends or relatives – YOUR CHILD WILL BE RELEASED ONLY TO PERSONS LISTED
- Physician and dentist's name and phone
- Custody papers (if applicable)

If your child is being picked up by someone on the emergency card he/she will have to show a picture id.

Field Trips

Student learning and the School's educational mission are supplemented by field trips and school-related trips. To ensure these trips support the School's mission and are consistent with the School's policies and are academically enriching, this policy regulates the various aspects of school-sponsored trips.

A "field trip" is defined as a School supervised learning experience that takes students off the School's property to learn about an area related to the School's mission.

The School does not endorse, support or assume liability for unauthorized field trips or School-related trips even if they are conducted by the School's staff, volunteers, or parents.

Field trips may include a fee. No student shall be prohibited from attending the trip because he/she is unable to afford the fee. All students attending the field trip must turn in a completed field trip permission form. Students that attend the field trip are not considered absent from School. Students that do not participate in the field trip shall not be punished academically. If an assignment is given in conjunction with the field trip, non-attending students shall be given an alternate assignment.

While on a field trip or School-related trip students remain subject to the School's rules and policies; a copy of each attending student's Emergency Medical Authorization Form shall be maintained and the staff shall not change the trip's itinerary, except where the student's health or safety is in danger or circumstances beyond the control of the staff have occurred. Should the staff member change the trip's itinerary, the administration shall be notified immediately.

Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit our School for special programs and if a special occasion is arranged. If coming in, parents should contact the School office AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE, as well as inform the teacher in order to provide the least amount of class disruption.

All visitors must pre-arrange, through the office, any meetings or visits with the teacher or classroom. The length and repetition of visits shall be determined by the Principal considering the student's and the School's best interest.

Visitors that cause a disruption of the educational environment or present a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the School's students and/or staff may be excluded from the School facility at the discretion of the Principal. The School reserves the right to contact local law enforcement to assist with visitors that violate School rules or requests to leave School property.

The School reserves the right to deny access to anyone, including parents, to the School facility and grounds at any time in the Principal's sole discretion.

Safer Ohio Tip Line

In order to provide parents, students or members of the public a means to anonymously report instances that might alter the overall safety of the School, the School has partnered with SaferOH. This tipline is available 24-hours a day, and anyone who has reason to believe that the safety of the School is compromised in any way may anonymously call or text to report any pertinent information to 844-SaferOH (844-723-3764).

Things to report to the tip line include (but are not limited to):

- Bullying incidents;
- Withdrawn student behavior;
- Verbal or written threats observed toward students, faculty or schools;
- Weapon/suspicious devices on or near school grounds;
- Gang related activities;
- Unusual/suspicious behavior of students or staff;
- Self-harm or suicidal sentiments; and
- Any other School safety related concerns.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

As more fully set forth in the school's Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation or Anti-Bullying Policy (attached as **Appendix 2** to this Handbook), behavior meeting the definition of Harassment,

Intimidation, or Bullying is strictly prohibited. Students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include counseling, suspension, or expulsion from School. The School's commitment to addressing such behavior involves a multi-faceted approach which includes the promotion of a School atmosphere in which this behavior will not be tolerated by students, staff, or the School community.

It is imperative that Harassing, Intimidating, and Bullying behavior(s) be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met because the designation of the conduct of such behavior carries with its special statutory obligations. However, any misconduct, whether or not it meets the required definitions, will be reviewed and the perpetrator will be subjected to appropriate disciplinary consequences.

Student Records/FERPA

FERPA affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the Principal, or appropriate school official, that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal, or appropriate school official, will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If copies are requested, the School may charge the requesting party reasonable copying costs.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Principal, or appropriate school official, clearly identifying the part of the education record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School Officials with a legitimate educational interest in the education record. A "School Official" is a person employed, contracted, or volunteering with the School in an administrative, supervisory, academic or support staff position (whether paid or unpaid), including but not limited to, school employees (whether employed directly by the Board or by a third party on behalf of the Board); a member of the School's Threat Assessment Team; a person with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (i.e.

Attorney, auditor, outside consultant); and a person serving on the Board. A School Official has a "legitimate educational interest" in an education record when the School Official needs to review the record in order to fulfill his or her responsibility on behalf of the School, such as when the School Official is performing a task that is specified in his or her job description or by a contract agreement or other official appointment; performing a task related to a student's education; performing a task related to the discipline of a student; providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, or assisting with the college application procedure; and any other purpose that the Board deems necessary as related to a student's education.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901**

5. The School intends to forward any and all education records to another school which has requested such records for the purpose of the student's potential enrollment at that school. The student's parents, or eligible student, upon request, may receive copies of the records disclosed or have an opportunity for a hearing to amend the records that were disclosed. The School has the discretion of which education records to disclose to the potential new school and FERPA does not provide parents, or an eligible student, the right to prevent such disclosure or prevent the School from communicating general information about the student to the school in which the student seeks to or intends to enroll.

Directory information, which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

If you do not want A+ Children's Academy to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school in writing within 2 weeks from the beginning of school, or within 2 weeks of the student's enrollment in school.

A+ Children's Academy has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's Name

- Student Address
- Student's Date of Birth
- Student's Extracurricular Participation
- Student's Achievement Awards/Honors
- Student's Height/Weight (Athletics)

Pesticides

At times, the School may elect to use a product for bug prevention or weed control that may contain a pesticide. In accordance with Ohio law, you may request and receive prior notifications of the applications of pesticides that are scheduled for a time when School is in session. Please include your email address or telephone number and submit the same to Tom Grimm, ACCEL Schools. The School shall maintain a log of pesticide application that shall be available for inspection at the School office. Please note, this notice provision does not apply to disinfectants, sanitizers, germicides and anti-microbial agents.

Health

Screenings

A+ Children's Academy offers screenings for vision, speech and hearing. Vision and hearing screenings are mandated by the State of Ohio; vision in grades K, 1, 3 and 5 or if you are new to the school and hearing in grades K, 1, 3 and 5 or if you are new to the school. In addition, Ohio law requires that certain students be screened for indicators of dyslexia.

Immunizations

In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases and in recognition that prevention is a means of combating the spread of disease, the Board requires all students meet the minimum immunization requirements established by the Ohio Department of Health (available at <https://www.odh.ohio.gov>) or meet an exemption. If exempt, you must fill out the two immunization exempt forms.

All new students are required to submit a copy of their Immunization Records within the first fourteen (14) days they are enrolled. Students who do not have evidence of proper immunization will be excluded from School after 14 days, in accordance with Ohio law.

Medications

Students needing medication are encouraged to receive such medication at home. If

necessary, for the School to administer any prescription or non-prescription medication, the School will only do so after receiving a written request, signed by the parent or guardian, that the medication be administered to the student. In addition, the School will not administer any medication unless it also receives a signed prescriber/physician approval containing the information listed below. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to track the amount of medication kept at School and to provide necessary refills.

Per Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.716 students are permitted to possess and use a metered dose or dry powder asthma inhaler to alleviate or prevent asthmatic symptoms at the School.

Per Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.718(B) and 3314.03(A)(11)(d) students may be permitted to carry and use an epinephrine auto-injector to treat anaphylaxis (an intense allergic reaction). In order for a student to properly possess or use an epinephrine auto injector at the School written approval from the student's physician and parent must be signed and received by the School.

For medications, asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto injectors, written approval by the student's physician must include all information as detailed herein below or as indicated on the Food Allergy Action Plan, if applicable. If a student has or develops a serious food allergy, the parent must complete a Food Allergy Action Plan.

"Written Approval" hereunder must include the following information, as appropriate:

- The name and address of the student
- The name of the School and class in which the student is enrolled
- The name of the medication and the dosage to be administered or the name and dose of the medication contained in the inhaler or auto injector
- The times or intervals at which each dosage of the medication is to be administered
- The date the administration of the medication is to begin
- The date the administration of the medication is to cease (if applicable)
- The circumstances in which the auto injector should be used
- Acknowledgement that the physician has determined that the student is capable of possessing and using auto injector appropriately and has provided the student with training in the proper use
- Any severe adverse reactions that should be reported to the physician and one or more phone numbers at which the physician can be reached in an emergency as well as one or more phone numbers at which the parent, guardian or other person having care or charge of student can be reached in an emergency
- Written instructions outlining procedures to follow if the medication does not provide adequate relief
- A list of adverse reactions that may occur if an individual for whom the medication was not intended uses the medication

- At least one emergency telephone number for contacting the physician and one number for contacting the parent
- Any other special instructions

Should any information regarding the medication change, the parent must submit a revised written statement. All medications must be in the prescribed container. Parents are responsible for keeping a record of the amount of available medicine provided to the School and for sending more medicine as necessary.

The School shall acquire and retain copies of each request and accompanying statement. The statement shall be given to the employee authorized to administer the drug by the next school day after receipt.

The School shall store the medication in a locked location in the School office or other location as determined by School personnel that meets legal requirements for storage. Any drugs that require refrigeration shall be stored in a refrigerator located in a place not commonly used by students.

Properly trained School staff may administer epinephrine in an emergency situation, in accordance with the Written Approval and/or the student's Food Allergy Action Plan when emergency medical service providers are not immediately available, and the exigency of the circumstance requires immediate action. School staff will immediately request assistance from an emergency medical service provider whenever a student is administered epinephrine at the School or at an activity, event, or program sponsored by the school. This request for medical assistance applies whether the student self-administers the medication, or a school staff member administers it to the student.

The School has adopted separate policies regarding the use of asthma inhalers, epinephrine auto-injectors, and the care of students with diabetes. Contact the Principal for information regarding these policies.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

The School recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse is a serious problem. Drug and alcohol abuse prevents individuals from reaching their academic and social potential. The School, therefore, prohibits students and all other individuals from using, possessing, concealing, or distributing any drug, alcohol, or any drug/alcohol related paraphernalia or look-alike product in the School, on School property, on vehicles used or operated by the School and at any School sponsored event. In addition, the School prohibits the use, possession, sale or distribution of tobacco and look-alike substances, including vaporizers and electronic cigarettes, in the School, on School property, in vehicles used or operated by the School, and at any School sponsored event. To read the full policy, see website.

Food Policy

A+ Children's Academy is a nut-free zone. No peanut butter or nut products may be on school property. If a student brings nut products they will be confiscated.

Lice

Occasionally, we have reports of head lice. The only way to eliminate this nuisance is for you to check regularly and treat when necessary. Parents are the most important means of controlling this health problem. The child will be excused for one day for treatment for the first incident of lice. Should future incidents occur, days missed will be deemed unexcused.

If your child has head lice, you **MUST** have clearance from our School office stating that your child has been diagnosed nit-free before they will be permitted to return to class. **Parents must accompany their student to the School office and wait while they are checked to be sure that he/she is cleared to attend class.**

ACADEMICS

Grading Policy

All core subjects taken by students at A+ Children's Academy are graded courses, including the Arts – Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Art.

Scale Grades K-5

(A) 90-100

(B) 80-89.9

(C) 70-79.9

(D) 60-69.9

(F) 0-59.9

Report Cards

Report cards are issued following the completion of each grading period. Please carefully review your child's progress. Contact the School if you have questions regarding grades. Parents are encouraged to call the School to set up conferences with teachers to discuss their child's schoolwork at any time during the school year.

Promotion/Retention

A+ Children's Academy Board recognizes that the personal, social, physical and educational growth of children will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

It shall be the policy of the Board that each child is moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with his/her own development. Such a

pattern should coincide with the system of grade levels established by the Board and instructional objectives established for each.

A student will generally be moved to the succeeding grade level when he/she has:

- Completed the course requirements at the presently assigned grade.
- In the opinion of his/her teachers, achieved the instructional objectives set for the present grade.
- Demonstrated sufficient proficiency to permit him/her to move ahead to the education program of the next grade.
- Demonstrated the degree of social, emotional and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade.

Procedures for Promotion/Retention of Students

- Every effort will be made early in the school term to identify students who are having difficulty with class work. Assistance by the classroom teacher, parent and school supportive services (e.g. guidance counselors, remedial reading teachers, school psychologist, etc.) will remediate the student's difficulties before s/he is retained.
- In the event that improved performance is not shown after the above actions, the parents will be notified of the situation and of the possibility of retention of a student at grade level.
- In making the decision of whether to retain a student, the recommendation of the classroom teacher will be considered.
- In the event a student is to be retained, a letter indicating such retention will be sent to the parents by the Principal. A conference will be scheduled in which the Principal will make recommendations including the possibility of remedial instruction (including summer school) or tutoring to attempt to help the student. Placement of a student into the next grade may involve extenuating circumstances and is made upon the recommendation of the principal.
- The Principal will have the final responsibility for recommending to promote or retain each student.
- Unless meeting an exception or exemption, if a 3rd grade student doesn't earn a passing score on the 3rd grade state reading test they will be retained. (Third Grade Reading Guarantee)

Please note, Ohio law requires that a student be retained if they have been truant for more than 10% of the required attendance days of the current school year and has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas. A student may only be promoted under these circumstances if the Principal and the student's teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted.

Make-up Work

The School provides make-up work for EXCUSED absences. Students or their parents are responsible for requesting make-up work immediately upon the student's return to School. If dates of absence are known in advance, the teacher should be notified and planned assignments may be given. If an absence has been excused, the student will be permitted to receive credit for make-up work. The amount of time permitted to complete make-up work will be determined cooperatively by the teacher and student, but will not exceed the number of absent days.

Conferences

Parents are encouraged at any time to schedule a conference to discuss their child's progress. This means of communication is perhaps one of the best for the child, parents and the School personnel. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held throughout the school year.

In order to meet with a staff member at the School, a conference must be scheduled ahead of time. Unannounced walk-in requests to meet with a staff member or administrator may not be possible.

Distributing Statement

"The A+ Children's Academy is a community school established under Chapter 3314 of the Revised Code. The school is a public school and students enrolled in and attending the school are required to take state tests and other examinations prescribed by law. In addition, there may be other requirements for students at the school that are prescribed by law. Students who have been excused from the compulsory attendance law for the purpose of home education as defined by the Administrative Code shall no longer be excused for that purpose upon their enrollment in a community school. For more information about this matter contact the school administration or the Ohio Department of Education."

School Policies

Please visit our website at <https://apcacad.org> for copies of some of the policies contained in this Handbook. Alternatively, or if a certain policy is not contained on the website, please

contact the Principal.



School-Parent Compact

2023-2024

A+ Children's Academy and parents of students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1116(d) agree that this compact outlines how parents for all children, the entire School staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the School and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards. This School-parent compact addresses all students.

School Responsibilities

A+ Children's Academy will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards by:
 - Content lessons aligned to standards;
 - Opportunities to participate in lessons/activities and to work directly with teachers toward mastery of standards-based skills and content;
 - Access to a variety of core and supplemental interactive content resources designed to offer practice and review of course concepts;
 - Ongoing assessment strategies and tools to measure student progress with the goal of continuous growth for every student;
 - Opportunities to gain skills needed for college and/or future career paths; and
 - Build the capacity for parent-teacher collaboration through the education and support of parental contributions.

2. Parent-teacher conferences are provided to discuss the individual child's achievement and how parent/school/student responsibilities are to be coordinated for continued student progress. Face to face parent- teacher conferences are held twice a year; and
 - Parent may request a conference anytime during the school year.

3. Parents are provided frequent reports on their child's progress.
 - Four times during the school year, a report card will be sent home that indicates how their child is progressing.

- Frequent student progress messages are provided to parents for students who are struggling academically. Students receiving Title services or who have an IEP also receive frequent progress monitoring information.
4. Parents and families are provided access to staff by:
 - Schedule an agreed upon time between parent and teacher and;
 - Ensuring a familiar language is used for two-way communication;
 - Send a message on Dojo or through email;
 - Phone call to School
 5. Parents are provided partnership opportunities for involvement-engagement by:
 - Participating at parent meetings, workshops and other parent-related activities.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

In partnership with our School, We, as parents, support our children's learning in the following ways:

- Work with my child's teachers on a regular basis;
- Monitor my child's work completion on a regular basis through contacting the teachers and/or checking my child's grade book;
- Stay informed about my child's education and communicate with the School by promptly reading all notices from the school either received by my child, by mail, and responding, as appropriate;
- Ensure my child attends School on a regular basis by arriving on time, being prepared for classes and completing assignments on time;
- Provide positive reinforcement to my child as he/she participates in learning activities;
- Participate in decisions relating to my child's education by contacting the teacher for further information of my child's academic progress;
- Encourage my child to participate in A+ Children's Academy scheduled events which may include field trips to expand his/her learning experience; and
- Make certain that my child(ren) participate in the required State Tests.

Internet/Network Usage Form

I have read, understand and agree to the A+CA Internet Safety Policy .

Student Signature_____

Parent/Guardian:

I understand that Internet/Network access is used for educational purposes and that precautions to eliminate inappropriate material have been taken by the School and consent to the monitoring of my child's activity online. I understand that despite every effort for supervision and filtering, access to the internet may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged students. While the School will provide age appropriate internet safety instruction, every user must take personal responsibility for his or her own use of the network and internet.

NOTE:

Please mark one of the selections and provide your signature and requested information.

_____ I GIVE permission for my child to use the internet/network independently for educational purposes.

_____ I DO NOT give permission for my child to use the internet/network independently.

Acknowledgement Page

Student's Full Name: (Please print clearly): _____

Grade Level: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name (Printed): _____

Phone: _____

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

I have received the Student/Parent Handbook and I have reviewed its content with my son/daughter. We agree to abide by and support the School's policies and Code of Conduct in the Parent – Student Handbook. We recognize that although this Parent/Student Handbook reflects the current policies of the School, it may be necessary to make changes from time to time to best serve the needs of the School and its students, especially in the upcoming year. As a result, we agree to make affirmative efforts to review new policies and information related to changes at the School on a regular basis.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Student

Date

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Directory Information is defined as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height received, honor rolls and/or scholarships.

Photographs, Audio, Video or Electronic Images

This applies to photographs, audio, video or electronic images of my student to be used by APCA for exhibition, public display, publication, publicity materials, advertising, a news media story, video, audio or other electronic media, such as the internet, television, CD-ROM or DVD. I understand that my student's full name may also be used with such display except that only my student's first name will be used on APCA Web site, or by entities outside the district.

Original Works of Art and Written Materials

This applies to original written materials, artwork, or other work created by my student for eternal exhibition, public display, publication, publicity material, advertising, a news media story, video, audio, or other electronic media, such as the Internet, television, CD-ROM or DVD. I understand that my student's work and full name may also be shared with organizations or entities outside the District, such as COS'. NOTE: If consent is denied, such denial shall not apply where the student's material is incorporated into a greater or larger body of work (such as a student's voice in a choral reading).

Quoted Statements

This applies to prepared statements given by my student with possible identification by full name, to be used for the purpose of publications, news stories or interviews about the District.

Written Letters

This applies to participation in letter writing assignments as part of the educational experience to people outside the school district (e.g. pen pals, thank-you letters, letters to authors or letters to public officials). Such letters may include the student's full name and may include other personally identifiable information about the student.

I GIVE consent

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I DO NOT give consent

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____