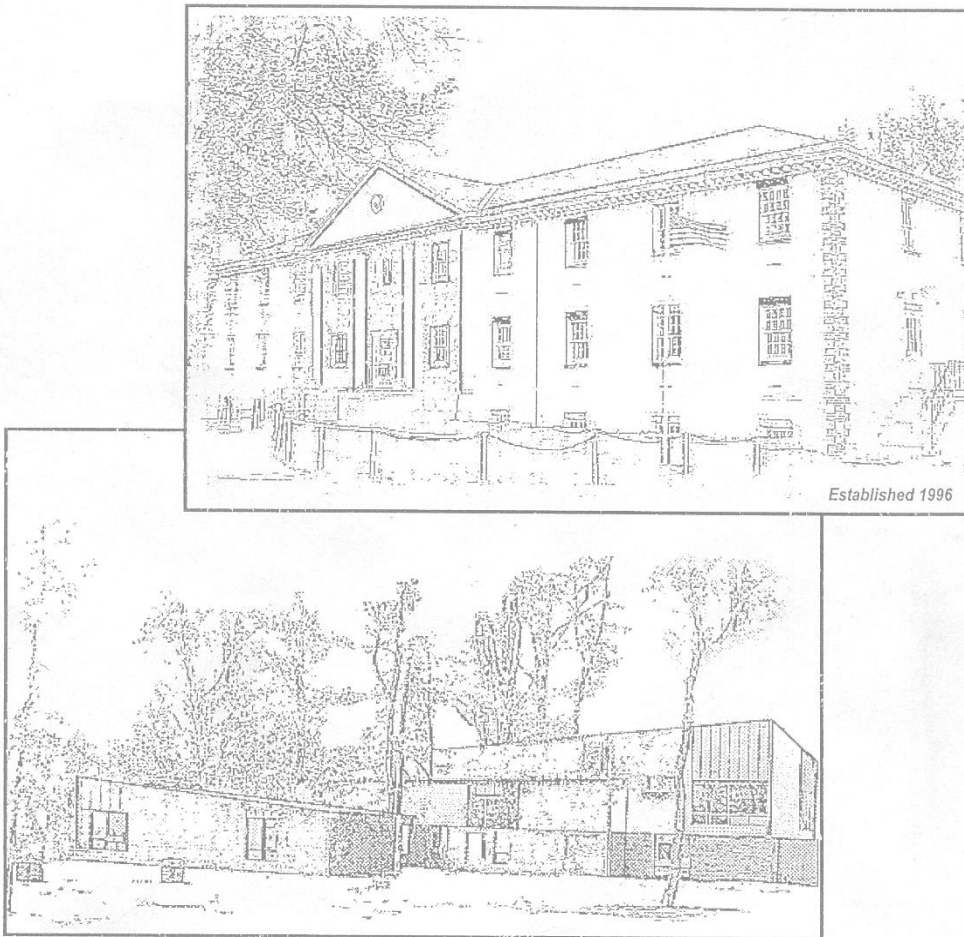


Princeton Charter School Student and Parent Handbook

2016-2017



August 2016

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SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Princeton Charter School intends to provide an orderly environment conducive to learning and based on the principles of student involvement and participation, personal responsibility, respect for others, and good citizenship.

School Day

The school day is from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 PM. Students may be dropped off on campus starting at 7:30 a.m., but no earlier. Students will not be admitted to the buildings before 7:30 a.m. Students are expected to be prepared and in their assigned homerooms by 8:00 a.m.. Students arriving in the building at exactly 8:00 a.m., but who are not at their desks and ready for attendance, will be marked late. This includes students who are at their lockers and cubbies.

Arrival and Dismissal

Late Arrival:

If a student arrives at school at or after 8:00 a.m., the parent/guardian must report to the school office to sign in the child and to notify the school secretary whether or not the child wants to order lunch. If a student is repeatedly late for school, the family will be contacted, and the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

School Bus Information:

Bus transportation is provided by the Princeton Public School District for students who live more than two miles from the school or who would have to follow a route that the Municipality of Princeton has designated as dangerous.

Safety is our main concern for students riding the school buses, and the following rules will be enforced. In addition, The Princeton Charter School Code of Conduct applies to the bus ride.

- Students are expected to sit at all times.
- Shouting, fighting, and putting hands, arms, or heads out of the windows is not permitted at any time.
- Princeton Regional School district regulations do not allow students to ride on any bus other than their assigned bus. (I.e. a parent **may not** write a note allowing his or her child to ride a different bus.) Students may **never** ride home on any school bus other than the one to which they are assigned.
- Students are expected to walk to and from the bus stop, and while entering or exiting the bus.
- Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. The bus driver and/or the school administrators may discipline students who misbehave on the bus. If the problem is severe or ongoing, the student could lose the privilege of riding the bus. Please discuss proper bus conduct with your child. If a child has a problem on the bus, he or she should inform the bus driver or a school administrator.

For more information about bus transportation, call the Transportation Coordinator for Princeton Public Schools at **806-4209**.

Drop Off:

Follow the direction of traffic as indicated.

After 7:45 am the center entrance on Bunn Drive will be closed. All cars should enter through the upper parking lot.

5-8 building drop-off: cars stay to the right and drop students off before the stop sign in the designated area (cars should pull over to the right).

K-4 building drop-off: cars stay to the left and proceed all the way down to the bottom of the parking lot (cars should pull over to the curb)

Children should be dropped off at the drop-off zones marked by the signs (5-8 in the upper parking lot, K-4 in the lower parking lot).

Please stop your car only long enough to drop the student off.

If you need to get out of the car, the car must be parked in a lined parking space.

Do not leave your car unattended if you are *not* parked in the designated lined area.

Do not park in the school bus/fire lanes. No exceptions. For school events where additional parking is needed, you will be directed where to park.

Do not park on Bunn Drive.

Walking to and from School:

Students must cross the street at the marked crosswalk and obey all traffic signals. When students arrive, they should enter the building directly.

Bicycles:

All traffic and safety rules should be obeyed when riding a bicycle to and from school. For safety reasons, students riding a bicycle should always **walk their bicycles** on the school grounds and in the parking lot. Bikes should be stored in the bike rack during the day.

It is recommended that students have chains and locks to secure their bikes. Helmets are mandatory in New Jersey. Princeton Charter School is not responsible for any damage to or theft of bicycles.

Dogs on Campus:

Dogs are not allowed on campus at any time. This includes the parking lot, sidewalk, and playground areas. (However, dogs may stay in a car when parents are picking up a child.)

Regular Dismissal:

The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. After dismissal, students will be supervised on the designated play area until their bus or parent/guardian arrives to pick them up. The student may also be inside working with a teacher until his/her bus or parent/guardian arrives.

K-1 procedure: Students will stay in the Charterette Room or designated fenced / supervised play area until pick-up or their buses arrive. The outside dismissal supervisor will call for students to be dismissed when he/she recognizes the parent/guardian. If he/she does not

recognize the person picking up, that person must park, enter the building and present identification to the office.

At 3:15pm students in grades 2-8 will be dismissed to the supervised playground area in the front of the school. Students who are walking home, will leave the campus. Students who are leaving campus by car should be picked up between 3:15pm – 3:30pm. Once a parent or guardian has picked up a child, the student is considered under the supervision of the parent/guardian.

At 3:45pm, remaining students who are waiting for a bus will be sent to the Charter Room. All other remaining students will be sent to Princeton Charter School's After School Program. *N.B.:* Parents and guardians will be responsible for all After School Program fees incurred.

Change in Regular Dismissal:

Sometimes it is necessary to alter a child's regular dismissal routine. If a child is walking home to another child's house or is being picked up by another parent/guardian, the school office is to be notified in writing of the change.

If a student is to leave school with someone other than a parent or guardian, the school must receive written permission from the student's parent or guardian.

The school will not accept changes in procedures for pick up of a student after 2:45 PM. The school must be notified before that time. Changes for K-4 students with specials as the last class cannot be accepted after 2:15 p.m.

Early Dismissal:

It is highly recommended that dental and medical appointments be made after school hours. When picking a student up early, the parent/guardian should report to the school office to sign the student out. Study hall and end-of-the-day lessons have a purpose, so students should not be signed out early unless this is unavoidable. Unless prior arrangements are made with the office staff, a child will be released only to the custody of a parent/guardian. Students will be released from classrooms when the parent arrives in the office. If the student returns to school on the same day, the parent/guardian must report to the office to sign the student in.

Absences

Students are expected to be in school unless physical illness prevents their attendance or extenuating circumstances prevent them from benefitting from the instruction in school as per New Jersey state law. The Board Policy on Attendance is appended to this handbook for further information.

If illness or an emergency prevents a child from attending school, the parent/guardian should call the Nurse's office, Ext. 2403 or email: nurse@princetoncharter.org to notify the school of the absence before 8:00 AM.

If the school does not hear from a parent before 9:00 a.m., the nurse will contact the parent at home, work, or via cell phone to verify the absence.

If a student needs to leave school early due to illness, the school nurse must dismiss the student, *i.e.* parents are not to make arrangements directly with the student via cell phone or office phone.

If a student is absent for more than three (3) days, the student must have a note from a physician verifying that the absence was due to illness and the student was under his/her care. This must be delivered to the nurse on the student's return.

Students who have a pattern of between five and nine absences from school without verification of a doctor's care may be considered truant. Parents will be contacted by the relevant Division Head to determine the cause of absence and may be asked to meet to discuss the matter and its remediation as per the Board of Trustees' policy on absences. A copy of the Board policy on absences is attached to this Handbook under Appendix A.

Homework when Absent:

In order for the work to be available for parents at the end of the day, requests for daily assignments must be emailed to the student's individual teachers (first initial, last name @princetoncharter.org) by 9:00a.m.. Teachers will submit work to the front office by 3:00 p.m. for pick-up. Homework is to be picked up by a parent or a designee, not the ill student. Alternatively, for grades 3-8, the parent/guardian can obtain the homework from the school's homework website.

If a child is too ill to complete homework while absent, upon return to school, he/she will need to meet with teachers to arrange any necessary work to be completed.

Whether work is requested during an absence or assigned upon the child's return, the student is responsible for completing all missed work.

In the case of unexcused planned absences (such as family day trips or vacations), students will be responsible for the work that is missed. Teachers are not required to have the work available prior to a planned absence, but may do so upon request as a courtesy.

If you know that your child will be absent from school, please let the school know in advance. Your child should also inform teachers of the absence and request any work in advance.

Make-up Tests and Assessments:

Students who miss tests and assessments must report to the relevant teacher on the day they return and arrange to take the test. If the student missed only one day of school, the missed assessment can be given on the day he/she returns unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

Participation in After-School Activities:

If students are to participate in sports, plays, or other extra-curricular activities, they must be in school by noon of that school day. Students with an after-school detention will have to serve this before they may participate in these activities.

Vacations:

Vacations should not be planned during the school year. If a vacation is planned during the school year, the absence will be unexcused, and the student is expected to complete missed classwork and homework assignments upon his or her return to school. Students may receive some general guidelines or supplemental work from the teacher, but they should not expect individual tutoring or assignments and tests ahead of time because of a vacation absence.

Extended Leave:

The enrollment status of students with lengthy planned absences such as sabbatical travel will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Head of School and reviewed by the Board of Trustees, subject to enrollment requirements of state law and regulations. As much advance notice as possible is requested.

Emergency Closings

Should inclement weather force the cancellation of school, the decision will be made as early in the morning as possible. Since our students share buses with Princeton Public Schools, the Charter School will follow the closing decision of the Princeton Public Schools. Messages regarding school closing will be sent to telephones, cell phones, and email via our School Messenger system. This information may also be obtained from radio (101.5 FM) or the cable TV network. If it is announced that the Princeton Public Schools will be closed for the day due to travel safety concerns, Princeton Charter School will also be closed.

If inclement weather occurs on a day when Princeton Public Schools are not in session, Princeton Charter School will make its own announcement. Please note that there may be rare occasions when the Princeton Public Schools would close, but Princeton Charter School would remain open. In this case, Princeton Charter School would make its own announcement via its website and the automated phone call system.

Early School Closing:

If it becomes necessary to close school during the day because of travel safety concerns or emergency situations, an announcement about early dismissal will be sent via the School Messenger system to telephones, cell phones, and email. You may also check Princeton Charter School or Princeton Public School's websites. Again, Princeton Charter School will dismiss early whenever the Princeton Public Schools dismiss early for travel safety concerns

Safety Drills

We have one fire drill per month. When students hear the alarm, they must follow the instructions of the classroom teacher. All students, teachers, visitors, and other personnel must leave the building immediately. Silence is mandatory until everyone is outside and attendance is taken. A signal will be given to return to the building when it is deemed safe.

In addition to the required fire drill, Princeton Charter School is required by the State of New Jersey to have a shelter in place, active threat, or evacuation drill each month. These drills help to prepare staff and students for various emergency situations.

During either a drill or actual emergency, it is essential for everyone's safety that students follow the directions of the teachers and administration. There are emergency plans in place for various contingencies and school personnel are trained for this purpose.

School Dress

Students should wear clothing to school that is neat, comfortable, safe, and appropriate. There will be outdoor recess during the winter months. Please make sure that students come to school with hats and gloves.

Sneakers are required for physical education classes.

Students should refrain from coming to school wearing cut-offs, short shorts or short skirts; shorts, pants, skirts, or dresses that expose the buttocks, underwear, undergarments, midriff, or navel; spandex shorts during the course of the school day; dresses or shirts with spaghetti straps; halter tops; tube tops; half shirts or mesh shirts; flannel-type pants and sleepwear; and flip flops. In addition, the wearing of clothing bearing obscene writing or promoting indecent or unacceptable behavior such as the use of alcohol, tobacco and/or controlled dangerous substances, whether stated or implied, will not be permitted.

Unless required to do so by religious custom or medical condition, no student is permitted to wear a hat or any other head covering in school or sunglasses in the building.

In all such cases, students wearing inappropriate items will be asked to remove or replace them. When it is determined that students are in violation of these guidelines, they will be sent to the office where the division head will determine if the student needs a change of clothes or cover and will notify the parents..

N.B.: School administrators will have the final say about what is appropriate school attire and what is not.

Cubbies and Lockers

No Princeton Charter School student is to carry a backpack in the school building during the school day. Students are not permitted to carry backpacks to their classes. K-5 students have cubbies where they can keep their school materials and book bags during the day. They will be given the opportunity to get their possessions out of their cubbies during the school day.

Students in grades 6-8 have lockers for their supplies, possessions, and backpacks. Because of time limitations, they will not be permitted to go to their lockers between each class. Instead, they should take all materials for two or three periods with them at one time. Students may find locker shelves helpful for organizing their belongings; however, shelves with expansion mechanisms are not permitted.

Students should not share their combinations with anyone and are prohibited from defacing lockers with stickers or markers. Improper use of lockers or dangerous, discourteous behavior around lockers is subject to disciplinary action from teachers or administration.

School lockers and cubbies are the property of the school and may be inspected by school officials in the interest of school safety, health and hygiene, enforcement of discipline, and other school regulations.

Lunch and Snacks

Students may either bring a bag lunch or buy a lunch at school. D'Angelo's of Princeton will provide fresh, nutritious meals. Students who opt to buy lunch must order it in homeroom at the beginning of the day. Once the order has been placed, students/families are responsible for the cost of the lunch, except in the case of absence due to illness.

Students will have the amount withdrawn from a lunch fund maintained in their name. Parents must maintain a positive balance on this account. (Parents and guardians should check lunch account balances on <https://www.payforit.net>.) All payments to maintain a balance in the student's lunch fund must be made by check and submitted to the division

office, or via the on-line payment system. Checks should be made payable to Princeton Charter School. The amount of money owed by an individual student may not exceed \$20.

A child may be eligible for free or reduced cost lunches. Eligibility is determined after the appropriate form is completed. Students who qualify for a reduced lunch pay \$.40 cents a day (\$2.00 for the week). Application forms are sent home in the Back-to-School mailing in August, but a parent/guardian may request one at any time during the school year. All matters regarding free or reduced lunch are kept strictly confidential.

Food is to be eaten at lunchtime or during designated snack “break” time only. It is not allowed to be eaten in the hallways or while students are using computers. One food item and one drink per snack period are allowed.

Birthday Celebrations, Holidays, and Special Occasions

Parents/guardians may provide special treats for special celebrations. Please arrange treats with K-4 teachers or the lunch coordinator (if treat will be at lunchtime) in advance of the day. *N.B.:* In the 5-8 building, all special occasion treats are distributed during the lunch period. Classroom celebrations (for example, Halloween and Valentine’s Day) should encourage healthy choices and portion control. Please consider the restrictive diets and allergies of other students in the class.

Invitations to a child’s private birthday party, thank you notes, and all personal mail are not to be distributed to individual students unless the entire class is included. This guideline lessens the distress to those students who are not invited. Finally, if a child misses a birthday party, please do not send him or her to school with a present for the birthday child, because it may upset the children who were not invited to the party.

Please bear in mind that if birthday treats are distributed during lunch, they should be for the entire class (48 students).

Wellness and Nutrition Policy

Under new state regulations, food of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as defined by the US Department of Agriculture may not be served at school during school hours as provided in Princeton Charter School’s Wellness and Nutrition Policy. The definition of snacks with minimal nutritional value includes soda, candy, gum, and similar items. A list is maintained in the office of each building that gives examples of snacks with minimal nutritional value. No food that lists sugar as the first ingredient is allowed. **Bake sales and candy sales during the school day are not permitted.** If you have additional questions, the Wellness and Nutrition Policy in its entirety is available for review in the Business Office.

Lost and Found

“Found” articles will be placed in a designated area. If a student’s name is on the article of clothing, notebook, or book cover, it can be returned directly to the owner. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity four times a year. Please mark your child's name on every item that your child brings to school: this includes clothing, books, assignment pad, and notebooks. Small valuable objects (such as eye-glasses, phones, calculators, and jewelry are usually held in the K-4 and 5-8 offices).

Pest Management Plan

The school contracts with an outside provider for pest control services. In the past year, only “low impact” pesticides (such as permethrin) were used, and the school’s policy is to use the lowest impact control methods available. If you have additional questions, the Pest Control Policy in its entirety is available for review in the Business Office.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Princeton Charter School Code of Conduct

The **code of conduct** guides the decisions and behaviors of students during their daily life, activities, and interaction with others within the school in order to 1. foster a safe, just, diverse, and supportive community committed to the pursuit of intellectual values and academic excellence, and 2. support the development of personal values for individual students at PCS.

To achieve these goals, students will conduct themselves with integrity, and a conscious effort informed by the awareness of others, and ownership of one’s actions and their consequences.

1. **Safety:** PCS is committed to the safety of all members of the school community. Students are responsible for:
 - a. Behaving in a manner that does not harm or endanger others whether or not that is the intended outcome.
 - b. Respecting the physical space of others; keeping one’s hands to oneself.
 - c. Walking inside the buildings.
2. **Care of community.** PCS is committed to a community where all members actively seek to care for one another, the school, and the broader community beyond its campus. Student are responsible for:
 - a. Helping other students and modeling best behaviors and conduct.
 - b. Respecting the property of others.
 - c. Demonstrating care for school property and the campus.
3. **Integrity:** PCS is committed to a school community where all are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty in all aspect of school life. Students are responsible for:
 - a. Being truthful in communication with to others
 - b. Representing only one’s own work on papers, projects, homework, and assessments.
4. **Respect;** PCS is committed to a community characterized by mutual respect for others. Students are responsible for:
 - a. Demonstrating respect for teachers, classmates, adults regardless of differences.
 - b. Appreciating the differences that enrich our community.
 - c. Listening to others and following the direction of adults.
 - d. Speaking in a timely, appropriate, and courteous manner.
5. **Academic excellence:** PCS is committed to a community where individuals contribute to a climate of academic excellence. Students are responsible for:
 - a. Being on time, being prepared, and participating in class.

- b. Contributing to an environment that promotes academic achievement — not disrupting teaching and learning.
- c. Valuing the intellectual contribution of others.

Student Rules

- Students are expected to attend school and all classes regularly and on time.
- Students may not deface school property either inside or outside the building. This includes writing in books, on desks, bathrooms, walls, etc.
- Students may not litter and are expected to pick up paper and litter in the classrooms, hallways and lunchroom. Students are expected to keep their lockers neat and clean.
- Students may never borrow, touch, or take another student's property, food or money without permission.
- Students may not sell anything in school.
- Students may not borrow money from other students in school.
- **Cell phones** are to be turned off and kept out of sight inside the school buildings and between 7:45 a.m.. and 3:15 p.m.. Before and after school, students may use cell phones in the Charter Room and outside. Students found using a cell phone during school hours or in the school building without permission may have their cell phones confiscated until the end of the day. In the case of repeat offenders, a parent may need to come into school to retrieve the cell phone.
- During the regular school day (i.e. until 3:15pm on full days), students may not record, photograph, or videotape students, teachers or the classroom setting without express permission from the teacher. Students may not use Skype or Facetime or use their phones or other devices to share what is happening in school without express permission from the teacher.
- Students who are participating in after-school sporting events (on campus or at another school) or who are participating in public events such as the Science Bowl competition do not have the expectation of privacy on the stage or on the soccer field. Under these circumstances, students may share pictures or videos just as any member of the audience would. However, students should maintain an expectation of privacy in bathrooms, dressing rooms, and other environments where photographs and recordings would be prohibited.
- Students should not bring large sums of money, expensive jewelry, toys, or other valuable property to school. The school will not assume responsibility in the event of their loss, damage, or theft.
- Students need to walk safely in the hallways and on school grounds. **There should be no running or jumping** when moving from activity to activity. Excessive noise is discourteous to other students.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school for any reason.
- Students are expected to use courtesy words such as “please,” “thank you,” and “excuse me,” when appropriate.
- Students are not allowed to consume food or drinks in the hallways or on the playground.

Lunch and Recess Behavior

The K-2 lunch period is 45 minutes long and begins with a 15-minute break before eating. All other lunch periods at Princeton Charter School are 30 minutes long. Grade 3 and 4 students

will have a brief 10-minute break before eating their lunch. At lunchtime, students are expected to use good manners within a friendly, informal atmosphere. We ask 5-8 students to use at least the first 15 minutes of the lunch period to eat their lunch. Talking with their classmates is permitted, but should not be loud or boisterous.

After 5-8 students finish eating, they will be dismissed to go outside in good weather. The students are expected to cooperate and to follow the rules of the school at this time. When the weather dictates, recess may be held inside.

All students are expected to dispose of their trash properly and to leave the area clean.

Students who do not follow the rules, may be required to forfeit their recess period. Any student who repeatedly causes disruptions in the lunch or play period will be subject to disciplinary action, and the parents/guardians will be notified of our concern.

Discipline

All students are expected to abide by the rules and the Code of Conduct of Princeton Charter School. Disciplinary consequences for violating the rules or Code of Conduct depend on whether the violation was “major” or “minor” and whether there is a pattern of repeated rule violations. The Disciplinary Committee confers on major disciplinary issues.

Minor Offenses: Teachers handle minor offenses that occur in the classroom and elsewhere in the school. Minor offenses include, but are not limited to, being uncooperative, causing a disruption in the class or during an outside activity, making inappropriate responses to teachers or classmates, or engaging in rough-housing or other inappropriate behavior. Such offenses may result in being kept in from a break, a lunch period, or after school.

Major Offenses: In the event of major offenses, the Head or Assistant Heads of School will become involved. In certain cases the disciplinary committee will be convened. Major offenses normally constitute a student’s removal from class with orders to report immediately to the appropriate administrator’s office. The school’s administrator will be notified by the teacher of the major offense and discuss the problem with the offending student. The administrator will set an appropriate penalty and inform the student’s parents/guardians of the offense and penalty.

Major offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cyberbullying
- Hurting others by physical or repeated verbal abuse or harassment.
- Demonstrating conduct that constitutes a continuing danger to the physical well being of other pupils.
- Stealing or deliberate damage to PCS property or the property of others.
- Possession and or use of weapons, drugs, or alcoholic beverages.
- Disobedience, disrespect or defiance to a faculty member.
- Repeated cursing or use of vulgar, offensive or abusive language.
- Plagiarism, cheating, or lying.
- A major disruption of a class.
- A major disruption of a school event.
- A repeated pattern of minor offenses.
- Inappropriate use of the computer or misusing the Internet.

Any student who causes or commits a major offense may, at a minimum, be detained after school after notification of the parent/guardian or may be suspended from attending school for a time period deemed appropriate by the school administration.

A student who receives a detention will serve it from 3:15-4:15 p.m. These detentions will be scheduled by the Assistant Heads of School and may require work projects like cleaning the school or other service activities. The detention will take priority over practices, rehearsals, extracurricular activities, family business, etc. In the 5-8 building, these **major offense detentions** will take place on Monday afternoons. In some cases, after a student has committed a major offense, the parent/guardian may be asked to pick the student up from school during the day and to meet with the administration and faculty before the student can return to school and class.

At the discretion of the administration, after a major offense or a pattern of repeated minor offenses, a student may lose a leadership position or the privilege of attending school functions or trips.

Suspension and Expulsion

Any student who is guilty of serious acts of misconduct or repeated acts of minor misconduct may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the school.

Any student who is guilty of a firearms violation shall be treated in accordance with the State of New Jersey's Zero Tolerance for Guns Act.

The Head and Assistant Heads of School, after appropriate consultation, may for good cause suspend a student for a period of up to 10 days. The Head shall report the suspension to the Board of Trustees for further action.

Any student who commits an assault upon another student, a teacher, administrator, or other employee of the Charter School shall be immediately suspended from school.

A student may be expelled by the Board upon recommendation of the Head of School, in consultation with the student's teachers.

The procedures used for suspension and expulsion of students shall be consistent with New Jersey Statute 18A, such that each student is assured a due process hearing.

Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying

The Princeton Charter School Board of Trustees expects the members of the PCS community, including students, administrators, faculty and staff members and volunteers, to treat each other with civility and respect. Expectations for student behavior are described in detail in the Code of Student Conduct and the School's Rules, published in the Parent and Student Handbook and on the school's website, www.pcs.k12.nj.us.

Acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying by students, faculty or staff are prohibited, and are subject to disciplinary and remedial action. Such acts interfere with the learning process and undermine the provision of a safe, civil and respectful environment. Bullying takes many forms, from verbal cruelty or intimidation to physical aggression. For ease of reference, every use of the term "bullying" in this policy includes harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined below.

Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty and staff members, and volunteers and peers should demonstrate appropriate behavior such as treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The Board requests the commitment of every member of the PCS community to enforce this policy and thereby to foster an environment of safety, civility and respect.

This policy:

- Defines harassment, intimidation and bullying;
- Specifies both consequences and remedial actions;
- Describes the process for ongoing dissemination of the policy, including publication on the school website and notice of such publication;
- Requires staff and student education and training regarding the subject-matter; and
- Provides for annual review of the extent and characteristics of harassment, intimidation and bullying, with community involvement.

Definition

In defining acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying (HIB), Princeton Charter School follows New Jersey statute 18A: 37-14

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L.2010, c.122 (C.18A:37-15.3), that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

- a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
- b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- c. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

As prescribed by law, behavior that meets this definition is subject to disciplinary and remedial action under this policy. This includes cyberbullying.

In cases in which a school employee is made aware, bullying between students that occurs outside the School Environment also may be subject to disciplinary and remedial action by PCS, as prescribed by law:

- (a) If reasonably necessary for the affected students' physical or emotional safety or well-being or for reasons relating to the safety and well-being of other students, faculty or school facilities; or
- (b) If the conduct materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.

Observations of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB); Reporting Procedures and Investigation

All administrators, faculty, staff members and volunteers shall be alert to possible circumstances of bullying. An administrator, faculty or staff member or volunteer who detects bullying or planned bullying shall immediately inform those involved of the prohibition against bullying and direct them to cease all bullying behavior or intentions to bully.

Note: HIB between students that occurs outside the school environment also may be subject to disciplinary and remedial action by Princeton Charter School, as prescribed by law

Also Note: Students are expected to report instances of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) and are expected not to participate actively or passively as an "audience," to HIB behavior initiated by others since such participation reinforces HIB behavior.

Any student who believes that he or she is experiencing HIB, who has witnessed, or who has reliable information that a student has been subject to HIB, shall report the incident(s) to a supervising adult or one of the school administrators as soon as possible. Oral reports shall be considered official reports. Individuals may report HIB anonymously, and the administrators shall initiate further investigation of the complaint.

The school's policy on bullying, harassment and intimidation, adopted by the Board of Trustees, is available for review in the Business Office and on the school website.

The School has established the following positions to assist in the prevention and response to incidents of HIB:

School District Anti-bullying Coordinator (Division Heads): The responsibilities of the district anti-bullying coordinator are as follows:

- Coordinate and strengthen the school district's policies to prevent, identify and address HIB of students.
- Collaborate with school anti-bullying specialists in the district, the Board of Trustees and the Head of School to prevent, identify and respond to HIB of students in the district.
- Provide data, in collaboration with, to the NJDOE regarding HIB of students.
- Execute such other duties related to school HIB as requested by the CSA.
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school anti-bullying specialists in the district to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify and address HIB in the district.

School Anti-bullying Specialist (School Guidance Counselor): The responsibilities of the school anti-bullying specialist are as follows:

- Chair the school safety team as provided in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21
- Lead the investigation of HIB in the school.

- Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of HIB in the school.

School Safety Team: The school safety team must meet at least two times per year. The responsibilities of the school safety team are as follows:

- Receive any complaints of HIB of students that have been reported to the principal.
- Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of HIB.
- Identify and intervene with patterns of HIB of students in the school.
- Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and intervene with HIB of students.
- Educate the community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and intervene with HIB of students.
- Participate in the required HIB training required and other training which the principal or the district anti-bullying coordinator may request.
- Collaborate with the district anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of district policies to prevent and address the HIB of students.
- Execute such other duties related to HIB as requested by the principal or district anti-bullying coordinator.

School District Anti-Bullying Coordinator:

- School Counselor, Susan Kushner, skushner@princetoncharter.org

School Anti-Bullying Specialists:

- For K-4 Building, Gail Wilbur - gwilbur@princetoncharter.org
- For 5-8 Building, Lisa Eckstrom - leckstrom@princetoncharter.org

School Safety Team: Larry Patton, Head of School; Gail Wilbur, Assistant Head of School; Lisa Eckstrom, Assistant Head of School; Susan Kushner, School Guidance Counselor.

Drugs, Smoking, and Alcohol

Princeton Charter School adheres to the laws of the State of New Jersey. Illegal drugs and alcohol are not to be used by our students. Title 18A:40A-9 and other laws in New Jersey apply.

By state law and our commitment to health, no smoking or other use of tobacco products is permitted in our school buildings, school vehicles, or on the school's property.

STUDENT HEALTH; SPECIAL SERVICES

Emergency Information:

It is required that each parent/guardian return the student health questionnaire and emergency information form in August before the start of school. If an accident or illness happens at school, first aid will be administered, and the parent/guardian will be notified. If the injury or illness is serious, appropriate intervention will be activated. Please let us know whom to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.

School Nurse:

There is a Registered Nurse on campus every day that school is in session until 3:45pm on regular days and 12:00pm on half days. The Nurse's Office is located in the K-4 building. The nurses can be reached at nurse@princetoncharter.org or by calling 609-924-0575, extension 2403.

N.B.: The nurse does not accompany PCS students to games or other events held off campus during the school day with the exception of *some* field trips. For more information about a particular field trip, please contact the Nurse or the teacher who is organizing the field trip directly.

In the event that the nurse is not in the infirmary during the school day (8:15am – 3:45pm), sick or injured children should report to the school office so that the nurse may be contacted.

When a student feels ill or is injured, he/she should notify the nearest teacher who will fill out a permission form for the student to take to the nurse. The teacher will determine whether the student is at risk of fainting or further injury on the way to the nurse. If this is the case another student might be designated to accompany the student. If necessary, the nurse will be called to the student's location.

Students who feel ill and do not think that they should remain in school must be evaluated by the nurse. Students should not call the parent directly to request to be picked up. Once evaluated by the nurse, the nurse will call the parent and /or emergency contact.

Illness:

Actively ill children do not belong in school. Headache, nausea, diarrhea, and earache are signs that demonstrate that your child may need to spend a day recuperating at home. Sore throats, swollen glands, and skin rashes will probably need professional medical attention as well.

Please remember that your child's day includes outside breaks and recess. Students are to participate in outside time. The nurses can only accept a physician's note to exclude a student from outside breaks/recess. As parents, if you feel your child is too sick, or has a bad cold that would prevent participation in gym or outside play, then please do not send the student to school.

We are not equipped to keep an ill child at school. Any children who have symptoms of a potentially contagious illness (vomiting, diarrhea, temperature of 100.5° or above) will be sent home. If their temperature is slightly elevated but below 100°, they will be sent home if they exhibit other symptoms such as those listed above. Please have an emergency contact available to pick up your sick child if you are unable to do so. Injuries or illnesses incurred at home should be treated at home. Please call the school if a student is home with a contagious illness or condition: chicken pox, strep infection, conjunctivitis (pink eye), influenza, ringworm, impetigo, or head lice (pediculosis).

Keep all ill children at home for 24 hours following the establishment of a normal temperature or after 24 hours of an antibiotic, as directed by the child's physician. **The nurse must evaluate children who have recovered from an infectious disease before returning to class.** Children with chicken pox must remain out of school for at least seven days. Students who have been found to have live lice or nits must be treated with an approved shampoo. The American Academy of Pediatrics and our school physician recommend a shampoo containing permethrin 1%. This is available over the counter. You may consult with the student's primary care

physician for any questions. Once the child has been shampooed, the remaining nits must be removed, using a fine-tooth comb. Before entering the classroom, the student must be evaluated by the nurse to determine if live lice are still present. Follow-up examinations for lice and nits are required. Parents should frequently check the student and other family members. Repeat shampoo may be required according to the directions on the shampoo.

Medication:

Students are not allowed to carry their own medication, whether it is prescription or non-prescription medication. It can only be kept and dispensed by the school nurse, her designee, or the parent/guardian. However, students may self-carry their asthma inhalers if they have a signed doctor's permission, but the physician must be the prescriber, not a parent who is a physician. Prescription medication will be dispensed in school if we have permission from the parent/guardian, the medication is in the original container, and we have a written statement from the physician which indicates the type of medication, the dosage, the times to administer the medication, and the purposes of the medication. Non-prescription medication may only be given with the written permission of the parent or guardian, as per our over the counter medical policy. No student is allowed to share or dispense medication (prescription or over the counter) to another student.

If your child has a chronic condition like asthma or allergies, we recommend that you confer with the school nurse and that medication be kept at school.

Medication orders of any kind are only valid for the current school year. The parent at the beginning of each school year must obtain new orders. The nurse has all of the medication request forms, and can assist you with any questions.

Injuries and Special Physical Needs:

Temporary or permanent physical needs that affect a child in school should be immediately reported to the nurse. Physical education or recess restrictions should be requested in writing, with the reason and time period included. Notes from the physician are required for injuries that involve casting, splinting, and crutches. Generally, students who are well enough to return to school after an illness are well enough to participate fully in all school activities. Students who are unable to participate in school activities are also unable to participate in extracurricular activities. They must be in school by noon to participate in an extra-curricular activity that day.

Physical Examinations:

NJ State law requires that all parents submit documentation of a student's health examination within 30 days of enrolling into school. This is true for new as well as transfer students. School policy requires subsequent medical examinations of the student at least once during each developmental stage (grades 3 and 6). History and Physical forms will be sent to applicable students, and are also available in the nurse's office and online.

Sports Physicals:

NJ State law requires that any student wishing to participate in interscholastic sports must have a physical examination conducted within 365 days prior to the first practice session for the sport. This physical examination must be documented on a NJ State Department of Education approved form which is available in the nurse's office and online. Prior to the student's examination, the parents must complete a Health History Questionnaire, also approved by the

Department of Education. This questionnaire must be presented to the examining physician at the time of the visit.

The sports physical should be performed at the student's medical home so that his or her primary care physician can completely evaluate the student. If a student does not have a medical home, or cannot obtain the required examination prior to the start of practice for the sport, our school physician will be available on specific days to perform the examination.

Each student whose medical examination was completed more than 90 days prior to the first practice session shall provide a health history update of medical problems experienced since the last medical examination. This shall be completed and signed by the parent.

Prior to the start of each sport season, our school physician will review the documentation of the student's physical examination as well as the health history questionnaire. The school physician will then either approve or disapprove the student's participation in sports. The parent and the coach will be notified of this approval/ disapproval in writing

Screening:

The school nurse will be conducting the following health screening at some time during the school year:

- Screening for height, weight, and blood pressure will be conducted annually for each student.
- Screening for visual acuity will be conducted every other year for each student (grades K, 2, 4, 6, and 8).
- Screening for color blindness will be performed on 1st grade students.
- Screening for auditory acuity will be conducted annually for students in K through grade 3, and in grade 7.
- Screening for scoliosis will be conducted every other year for students once they reach the age of 10.

The school nurses will conduct all screenings. The student's privacy and confidentiality will be ensured.

Any parent who wishes a scoliosis screening to be performed by his or her primary care physician must obtain the required documentation form from the school nurse. This documentation must be provided before June 1 of the current school year in order to insure completion of records before the end of the school year.

Parents will be notified of any concerns or abnormalities found in the process of screenings. This will be a written notification. Parents must then have the required follow-up screening and documentation of findings returned to the nurse's office before June 1 of the current school year.

Immunizations:

NJ State Law requires that all students enrolled in school have the required immunizations against communicable diseases. Documentation of immunization is required upon enrollment to the school. Any child who does not have the required immunizations will be excluded from school. The school nurse or your primary care physician can provide you with a current list of required immunizations.

NJ state law allows exemptions only for medical or religious reasons, not for conscientious exemptions. The school nurse can provide you for the criteria for these exemptions.

Please provide the nurse's office with an updated immunization record whenever your child receives any new immunizations. This must be an official document from your child's medical home.

Special Education and Related Services.

Princeton Charter School is committed to the success of its students and provides special education and related services to individual students in accordance with their needs. Special educational services are provided to students with documented learning differences in accordance with federal and state laws.

Parents/guardians concerned about persistent difficulties their child is having in school, or who believe that their child needs the services of a speech therapist, should schedule an appointment with the Coordinator of Special Education Services to discuss possible testing, available accommodations, extra help, and related issues.

Princeton Charter School has an in-place tutoring plan. If the tutoring period proves to be insufficient, Princeton Charter School may recommend participation in its after-school program, where students may receive tutoring from after-school staff or other professional educators. Scholarships for the after-school program are available. Princeton Charter School employs college-educated tutors, many of whom are also certified teachers in the state of New Jersey.

Although Princeton Charter School views all subject areas as important, success in reading, writing, and basic mathematics are seen as crucial for kindergarten through fourth grade. During these years, special steps are taken to support any student who appears to be at risk in these areas. If the tutoring period proves insufficient, the Assistant Head of School for K-4 or 5-8, as applicable, in consultation the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), may call for an I & RS meeting to discuss other options for support.

Princeton Charter School contracts with Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission for its Child Study Team and providers of necessary services. The Princeton Charter School Child Study Team consists of a psychologist, a social worker, and a learning disability teacher consultant (LDTC).

HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Communication

School-parent communication can be vital for a successful school year. To that end, we need to make sure that we have up to date contact information for parents, guardians, and for your designees (i.e. emergency contacts) in case we cannot contact you in case of an emergency. If your contact information changes, please email the change to update@princetoncharter.org and put "Contact Update" in the subject header. Examples of changes might include: email, mailing address, or work phone numbers.

Weekly Newsletter: A weekly newsletter is sent electronically each Tuesday. This newsletter will include information about school happenings, programs, meetings, and other pertinent information. Parents/guardians should check this important school-parent/guardian communication for up-to-date information about school activities and events. Hard copies will

be made available in the main office for parents/guardians who do not have access to the Internet.

Parent-Teacher Communication: If a parent/guardian has any questions or concerns about his or her child's classes or needs, he/she should email the teacher to obtain more information or request a conference. It is important that issues regarding a student's work or classroom decisions be discussed with the teacher first, in a scheduled private conference. Please refrain from informal conversations in the hallway or playground where confidential information about your child could be overheard, and where you may not have the teacher's most focused attention. These conversations may detain teachers from supervisory responsibilities or take their attention away from the goal of ensuring student safety. General issues should be directed to the Assistant Heads of School. Contact the appropriate division office to arrange for a conference or return phone call from an Assistant Head of School.

Involvement of Parents/Guardians

Princeton Charter School values both formal and informal involvement of parents and guardians through a variety of activities and services requested by the teachers, Friends of Princeton Charter School, or the Administration. We often look for volunteers to act as chaperones, lecturers, substitutes, and leaders for after-school activities, coaches, or tutors. New ideas are welcome.

Child Abuse

Princeton Charter School will strictly observe all laws, statutes, and regulations governing the reporting of suspected child abuse.

School Visitors

The K-4 and 5-8 buildings will be locked between 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. each day.

Parents/ Guardians: Parents or guardians must report to the school office upon arrival in the building, sign in, and obtain and wear a nametag while on school premises.

Parent/guardian visits to classrooms may be disruptive to the learning environment. Therefore, any requests will be reviewed by and subject to the approval of the administration.

Student Visitors: Students are usually not expected to bring visitors to school. However, if they are expecting a visitor from out of state, they may request the Assistant Head of School's permission to bring the visitor to school. The request should be made in writing and include the visitor's name, age, and place where he/she lives. Visits are limited to a ½ day. This request to the Assistant Head should be made **prior to the date of the visit.**

ACADEMICS

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is held early in the year. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet their child's teachers and the other school staff. Teachers will give an overview of the curriculum and discuss other classroom procedures and homework policies. This is not a time for discussing individual students.

	Mathematics	English	Foreign Language	History	Science	Art and Music
Grade 1	10	10				
2	10	10	10			
3	10-20	10-20	10	10	10	
4	15-25	15-25	15	15	15	10
5	20-30	20-30	15	15	15	15
6	25-35	25-35	15	20	20	15
7	30-40	30-40	20	30	30	30
8	30-45	30-45	20	30	30	30

Homework

Faculty members in all subject areas may assign homework as needed to support Princeton Charter School’s dedication to delivering a program of the highest quality in all academic areas. Each teacher will give guidelines concerning the nature and quantity of homework on Back to School Night. In general, students should not require the assistance of parents/guardians or friends in completing these assignments. If a child consistently has difficulty with assignments, parents/guardians are requested to confer with the teacher.

Princeton Charter School views nightly homework (with exceptions at the teacher’s discretion) as essential in language arts, mathematics, and foreign language, and regular homework (especially reading) as important for history and science.

Princeton Charter School cannot establish precise guidelines as to total homework load for individual students: Homework may vary during the year to meet the needs of the academic program and some students may take longer to complete homework than other students. Accelerated programs (especially in mathematics) may require lengthier assignments. With these caveats in mind, the following rough guide represents the expected homework load at Princeton Charter School in minutes of work. (End-of-week homework should be comparable in volume to that assigned on other weeknights.)

If your child is having great difficulty completing homework assignments, please address the issue with the relevant teacher.

Report Cards, Interim Reports, and Grades

Teachers may email or phone parents on occasion to alert you to a problem with your student’s work in a particular class. But parents should check Powerschool on a regular basis to stay informed about the academic progress of individual students.

Report cards with written comments will be mailed home three times a year. Students who receive an average of A or above earn High Honor Roll; students who receive an average of A- earn Honor Roll. The grades are based on the following numerical equivalents:

A+	97–100	C+	77-79
A	93-96	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69

B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		F	under 60

Effort grades are given based on the following scale:

E	Excellent
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

Final grades are averaged from all marking periods. In grades 6-8, the final grade is averaged from all marking periods and includes a separate final exam grade.

Support Program

The Princeton Charter School *Support Program* seeks to serve the needs of students who need extra support within the regular education program. Students in need may be identified by either teachers or parents and reported to the Division Head. Once identified, a meeting is scheduled that includes the student's teachers, the school nurse, guidance counselor, Division Head, and other individuals deemed appropriate for their knowledge and resources. Intervention strategies designed to support the needs of the learner are collaboratively determined and monitored for student progress. **This intervention step is required before seeking more formalized educational plans such as special education classification or 504 plans.**

Study Hall and Reading Period

Study halls are a time for students to do homework, study, read, or meet with a teacher; they are not free periods for students to talk or fool around.

A sustained silent *reading period* is part of the charter of Princeton Charter School. Students are to read silently or be outside the room working with another teacher. Students are not to be doing homework, talking, working in groups, etc. They are to be reading an age appropriate book that they bring to reading period with them. ***Reading periods are not study halls.***

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring, to help answer questions about your student's progress. All parents/guardians are expected to schedule an appointment via Virtual Paragon and to attend the conference. At other times, special conferences may be held upon the request of the teacher or parent/guardian should either deem it necessary. These should be scheduled in advance to ensure adequate time for discussion of the student's progress and to prevent disruption of classroom instruction.

Standardized Tests

Students in grades 3-8 take the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) standardized test and writing assessment each year as a way to determine whether they need additional work in reading, writing, or mathematics. Parents/guardians should not make doctors' appointments for their child on the testing days and should make sure that their child goes to bed early on those nights and eats a good, healthy breakfast.

Each spring, on dates specified by the state, the third through eighth grades will take PARCC and NJASK Science tests that are mandated by the state of New Jersey. Any student who misses a section of either of these tests will be required to do a makeup test. Therefore, do not schedule appointments for students during these important state tests and please make every effort to have your child at school before attendance at 8:00 a.m..

School Records

Student records are maintained which include name, address, birth date, attendance, health history, academic performance, and other pertinent information about the student. The parent or guardian upon request may review these records. The Head or Assistant Heads of School or a staff member will explain and help you to interpret these records.

Computer Policy

Computers will be available to provide resources and information to the school community, students, staff, and parents/guardians. Computers at Princeton Charter School will support the instructional, research, and administrative activities of the school.

The use of the computer services by faculty, staff, and students should be consistent with the educational and institutional objectives of our school. All users must adhere to the same code of ethics that governs every aspect of life at our school. Therefore, all school rules, particularly those pertaining to privacy, safety and security, academic honesty, plagiarism, and copyright laws, are applicable.

At the beginning of the year, each student and a parent or guardian will be asked to read and sign an acceptable use policy (AUP). Students will not be permitted to use the computers until this policy is signed and returned to the school. Students will then be taught how to log on, how to save documents in their own file, and how to log off the computer.

Anyone who changes the control panels, manipulates the functioning of the computer, or misuses the Internet will be subject to school disciplinary measures and will lose computer privileges for a period of time.

Field Trips

Some out-of-school experiences and activities will take place throughout the year. Teachers will send permission slips home for a parent or guardian to sign whenever a bus trip off the school grounds is planned. In addition, a blanket permission slip will be sent out at the beginning of the year to cover some local field trips. Should additional adult chaperones be desired, the teachers will request volunteers to help. If you are interested in chaperoning, please let the head room parent know.

Appendix A: Board of Trustees Policy on Absences

PRINCETON CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY MANUAL
Princeton, New Jersey

FILE CODE: 5113

 X **Monitored**

 X **Mandated**

 X **Other Reasons**

Policy

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND EXCUSES

The Princeton Charter School Board of Trustees believes that the regular attendance of students in each class and in school in general is critical to its educational mission. Continuity of instruction is an essential element in student performance and allows students the greatest opportunity to succeed at meeting the state learning standards in the Core Curriculum Content Standards. The Head of School shall oversee the development of effective strategies that maximize student attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities and strive to:

- A Encourage good attendance;
- B Discourage unexcused absences;
- C Identify patterns of absence, tardiness and early departures from school; and
- D Intervene to prevent and correct problems with attendance.

Definitions

- A "Attendance" is a student's presence in school and in the classroom to which he or she is assigned at the times scheduled for instruction or other school activities. A school day shall consist of not less than four hours of actual instruction. An approved kindergarten school day shall consist of at least one continuous session of 2 1/2 hours.

The mere presence of a student at roll call shall not be regarded as sufficient to be considered in attendance for a school day. A student shall be present at least one hour during both the forenoon and the afternoon in order to be recorded as present for the full day. In a school which is in session during either the forenoon or the afternoon, a student shall be present at least two hours in the session in order to be recorded as present for the full day.

A student not present in school because of his or her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.

- B "Excused absence" is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:
 - 1 The student's illness;
 - 2 Requirements of a student's individual health care plan;
 - 3 A death or critical illness in the student's immediate family, or others with permission of assistant head of school;
 - 4 Quarantine;
 - 5 Observance of the student's religion on a day approved for that purpose by the State Board of Education;

- 6 The student's suspension from school;
- 7 Requirements of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- 8 Alternate short or long term accommodations for students with disabilities;
- 9 The student's required attendance in court;
- 10 Interviews with an admissions officer of an educational institution;
- 11 Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day.
- 12 Such good cause as may be acceptable to the assistant head of school.

Attendance need not always be within the school facilities. A student will be considered to be in attendance if he/she is present at any place where school is in session by authority of the board. The board shall consider each student assigned to a program of independent study, with parent/guardian permission, to be in regular attendance for that program, provided that he/she is under the guidance of a staff member so assigned, reports daily or weekly, as prescribed, to such staff member the place in which he/she is conducting his/her study, and regularly demonstrates progress toward the objectives of his/her course of study.

C "Unexcused absence" is a student's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed in paragraph "Excused Absences" above. Absence is expressly not excused for any of the following purposes (this list is intended to be illustrative and is not inclusive):

- 1 Family travel;
- 2 Performance of household or babysitting duties; and
- 3 Other daytime activities unrelated to the school program.

Tardiness

The orderly conduct of class activity depends upon the prompt and precise beginning of the program. Tardiness hinders the proper conduct of school activity. Students are expected to arrive to school and class on time. A student who is tardy to any class will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in board policy 5131 Conduct and Discipline and the student code of conduct. Consequences for accumulated occurrences of tardiness may include detention, loss of credit and an unexcused school day absence.

Attendance

In order for the board of trustees to fulfill its responsibility for providing a thorough and efficient education for each student, the complete cooperation of parents/guardians and students is required to maintain a high level of school attendance.

The frequent absence of students from classroom learning experiences disrupts the continuity of the instructional process and limits the ability of students to complete the prescribed curriculum requirements successfully. The following rules shall apply for student absences:

- A A student shall be considered absent from class for tardiness in excess of one half of the total class period.
- B A student shall be considered absent from school for participation in less than four instructional hours during the school day.

A student must be in attendance in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which he/she is assigned.

A waiver of these attendance requirements may be granted for good cause by the school assistant head of school upon recommendation of a review committee, appointed by him/her, and consisting of representative staff, including student service personnel and classroom teachers.

In recommending the granting of a waiver of this attendance requirement, the review committee shall consider the nature and causes of all absences rather than only those in excess. Documentation of the nature and causes of these absences shall be the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school early in the day when a child will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence.

Unexcused Absences

When a student fails to report to class or school accumulating up to four unexcused absences, the school shall:

- A Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents/guardians of each unexcused absence the day of the unexcused absence;
- B Attempt to contact the parents/guardians by telephone, email and/or cellular phone to determine the cause of the unexcused absence;
- C Develop an action plan to assist the student to return to school and maintain regular attendance.

If contact through these means is unsuccessful the school may follow-up with another attempt to contact the parents/guardians or send a letter reporting the unexcused absence and requesting the parent/guardian to contact the school.

If at any time it is suspected that there is a potential of abuse, neglect and/or a student is potentially missing the school shall implement all procedures required by law including reporting protocols, notification of parents/guardians and cooperation with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.

Persistent Absences

If the pattern of unexcused absences continues and five to nine unexcused absences are accumulated the school shall:

- A Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents/guardians of each unexcused absence the day of the unexcused absence;
- B Attempt to contact the parents/guardians by telephone, email and/or cellular phone to determine the cause of the unexcused absence;
- C Conduct a follow-up investigation by contacting the student's parents/guardians in writing to determine the cause of each unexcused absence;
- D The assistant head of school or his or her designee shall schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian and the student.

The purpose of this meeting shall be to evaluate the appropriateness of the action plan to assist the student to return to school and maintain regular attendance. The plan shall be reviewed and revised in coordination with the parent/guardian and may include the participation of the classroom teacher, school nurse, guidance counselor, assistant head of school or other appropriate staff. The plan shall establish outcomes based upon the student's needs and specify the interventions for achieving the outcomes and

supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance. That plan may include any or all of the following:

- 1 Referral or consultation with the school's Intervention and Referral Services team;
- 2 Testing, assessments or evaluations of the student's academic, behavioral and health needs;
- 3 The consideration of an alternate educational placement;
- 4 Referral to a community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource;
- 5 Referral to the court program designated by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts;
- 6 The implementation of all required procedures for potential abuse, neglect or missing child including cooperation with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.

Discipline

All discipline regarding the attendance of students shall be consistent with the board policy 5131 Conduct and Discipline and the code of student conduct. Consequences for absences may include:

- A Students may be denied participation in co-curricular activities if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth herein;
- B Students may be denied participation in athletic competition if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth herein;
- C Loss of partial or total course credit;
- D Detention or suspension.

No student who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday or other excused absence shall be disciplined and/or deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.

Students, parents and guardians shall be notified of disciplinary actions for attendance including loss of credit and may appeal this determination through the procedure as set forth in board policy 5145.6 Student Grievance Procedure.

Truancy

For cumulative unexcused absences of 10 or more, the student between the ages of six and 16 is truant, pursuant to law. The school shall:

- A Make a mandatory referral to the court program required by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts;
- B Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents of the mandatory referral;
- C Continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance;
- D Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate;

- E Follow all procedures required by N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School and other applicable state and federal statutes.

Unexcused Absences for Students in Special Education

The attendance guidelines, discipline and remedial measures set forth in this policy shall apply to classified students where appropriate and in accordance with the student's:

- A Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- B Procedural protections set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14;
- C Alternate short or long term accommodations for students with disabilities as required by law;
- D Requirements of a student's individual health care plan.

Regular Release of Students Before the End of the Normal School Day

There are varying situations which may justify release of certain students from school before the normal time for closing. Such situations are justifiable only if the release does not jeopardize the student's educational program and the reasons for such release can be shown to have positive benefits for the student.

Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

The board of trustees recognizes that from time to time compelling circumstances will require that a student be late to school or dismissed before the end of the school day.

As agent responsible for the education of the children of the school, the board of trustees shall require that the school be notified in advance of such absences by written request of the student's parent/guardian, which shall state the reason for the tardiness or early dismissal. Justifiable reasons may include:

- A Medical or dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours;
- B Requirements of a student's individual health care plan;
- C Requirements of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- D Alternate short or long term accommodations for students with disabilities;
- E Medical disability;
- F Family emergency;
- G Court appearance;
- H Such good cause as may be acceptable to the administration.

No student in grades kindergarten through twelve shall be permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless he/she is met in the school office by his/her parent/guardian or a person authorized by the parent/guardian to act in his/her behalf.

Tardiness not covered by the causes listed shall be cumulative, and may affect course credit.

Legal Custody

A record shall be kept indicating the legal custodian of each student. Such custodian shall be responsible for informing the board of any change in the student's custodian. The assistant head of school may take such steps as seem necessary to ensure that the child is released only to the proper legal custodian.

Potentially Missing Children

- A If daily attendance records indicate a child is absent, and the parent/guardian has not called, a designated person shall attempt to contact them.
- B If no telephone contact can be made, the attendance officer shall investigate.
- C If the attendance officer cannot locate the child, he/she shall inform the assistant head of school, who shall inform the appropriate local authorities.
- D If a child who was present in the morning is absent after lunch, the same procedure shall be followed.

Marking Missing Child's School Record

Whenever the Head of School receives notice from the Princeton Police Department that a child has been reported missing, he/she shall mark the child's records in such a way that whenever a copy of or information regarding the record is requested, school personnel will be aware that the record is that of a missing child. If a copy of a marked school record is requested, the Head of School shall supply the record to the requestor without alerting him/her to the fact that the record has been marked, according to provisions in code and statute on accessing student records (see policy 5125 Student records). After the Head of School has complied with the request for copies of records or information, he/she shall immediately report the inquiry or any knowledge as to the whereabouts of the missing child to the Police Department.

Regulations

The Head of School shall develop procedures for the attendance of students which:

- A Ensure a school session which is in conformity with requirements of the rules of the state board;
- B Identify potentially missing and/or abused students;
- C Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with rules of the state board at N.J.A.C 6A:16-1.1 et seq. including students serving in or out of school suspensions, or excluded for health and cleanliness reasons;
- D Impose on truant students such disciplinary measures as may be appropriate for infractions of school regulations, but no such penalty may have an irredeemable negative effect on the student's record of achievement beyond that which naturally follows his/her absence from school activities;
- E Identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of his/her behavior, and consider modification of his/her educational program to meet his/her particular needs and interests;
- F Address tardiness and class cutting in terms of the intent of this policy;
- G Ensure that students absent for any reason have an opportunity to make up work they missed;
- H Recognize exemplary attendance.

Dissemination and Implementation

The Head of School shall take all necessary steps to publicize this policy and may include these rules in school handbooks and/or on the school website. Parents/Guardians and students shall be notified annually of the attendance policy.

The Head of School shall ensure that the rules for this policy are applied consistently and uniformly, and that all disciplinary sanctions are carried out with necessary due process.

The board shall review the attendance policy on a regular basis.

NJSBA Review/Update: November 2010
 Adopted: October 10, 2012

Key Words

Student Attendance, Attendance, Absences and Excuses

Legal References:	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:11 1 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35 4.9 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36 14, -15, -16 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36 19a <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36 24 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:38 25 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:38 26 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:38 27 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:38 31 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:38 32 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40 7 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40 8 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-9 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40 10 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40 11 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-12 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:54 20 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 52:17B-9.8a through -9.8c <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:11-4.3 <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-1 <u>et seq.</u> <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:32-8.1 <u>et seq.</u> <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:32 8.3	General mandatory powers and duties Student promotion and remediation; policies and procedures Religious holidays; absence of students on; effect ... Newly enrolled students; records and identification through 26 Missing children; legislative findings and Attendance required of children between six and exceptions Days when attendance required; exceptions Truancy and juvenile delinquency defined Violations of article by parents or guardians; penalties District and county vocational school attendance officers Exclusion of students who are ill Exclusion of students whose presence is detrimental to health and cleanliness Failure of parent to remove cause for exclusion; penalty Exclusion of teachers and students exposed to disease Exclusion of students having communicable tuberculosis Closing schools during epidemic Powers of board (county vocational schools) Marking of missing child's school record Charter Schools; student attendance Programs to support student development Student Attendance and Accounting Student attendance
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declarations ...
 16;

Wetherell v. Board of Education of Township of Burlington, 1978 S.L.D. 794

Wheatley v. Board of Education of City of Burlington, 1974 S.L.D. 851

C.R., on behalf of J.R., v. Board of Education of the Scotch Plains Fanwood Regional School District, 1988 S.L.D. (June 22)

Student Attendance Policies and Procedures Compliance Checklist, New Jersey
Department of Education

Possible

<u>Cross References:</u>	*5020	Role of parents/guardians
	*5111	Admission
	*5114	Suspension and expulsion
	*5124	Reporting to parents/guardians
	*5125	Student records
	*5141.2	Illness
	*5141.4	Child abuse and neglect
	*5142	Student safety
	*6146.2	Promotion/retention
	*6147	Standards of proficiency
	*6147.1	Evaluation of individual student performance
	*6154	Homework/makeup work
	*6171.4	Special education
	*6173	Home instruction

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.

CALENDAR 2016 - 2017

(To be added)

PRINCETON CHARTER SCHOOL TRUSTEES & ADMINISTRATORS, 2016-2017

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Lisa Eckstrom, Assistant Head: 5-8; Affirmative Action Officer; Title 9 Officer

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Rob Short, Technology Director

Mark Papp, Athletic Director

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Kelly Byrne, Admissions Coordinator, Administrative Assistant K-4

Linda Schnurman, Registrar, Administrative Assistant 5-8

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