



LA ACADEMIA PARTNERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

Student Handbook

30 North Ann Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

Our Vision:

Our students will be critical thinkers and global citizens, recognized by their commitment to lifelong learning and meaningful contributions to the world.

Our Mission:

A dynamic learning community sustained by partnerships, La Academia transforms today's learners into tomorrow's leaders through innovative instruction, comprehensive student supports, cultural competency, and work-based learning.

Restorative Justice Minded School:

LAPCS believes in the importance of setting forth high expectations for all community members. These student community agreements are designed to support the mission and vision of LAPCS to provide a learning environment with a focus on our learning goals aligned with preparing students for college and career. Please note that these student community agreements are a living document and will be amended and adapted as we learn and grow as a school community.

The following are examples of Restorative Practices:

1. Restorative Practices focuses on harms rather than rules or persons
2. Restorative Practices addresses obligations of the offense resulting from those harms, as well as the community's obligations to both parties.
3. Restorative Practices uses inclusive, collaborative processes.
4. Restorative Practices involves all individuals who have a legitimate stake in a given situation.
5. Restorative Practices seeks to put right the wrongs that have been done, so that each party feels safe and valued, and offenders feel restored to the school community.
6. Acknowledges that relationships are central to the building of the school community.
7. Must establish policies and procedures that harm and misbehavior in a way that strengthens relationships.
8. Focuses on harms done rather than rules broken.
9. Gives voice to the person who has been harmed.
10. Engages in collaborative problem solving.
11. Empowers change and growth for all involved.
12. Enhances responsibility for actions and attitudes for all involved.

Community Agreements at LAPCS:

- Community Time
 - As issues of misconduct arise in the class, Advisors will seek to handle the misconduct by reminding students of their need to follow school guidelines by offering students constructive reminders. If students admit their infraction and immediately seek to correct their behavior, student and Advisor will celebrate the resolution of a problem behavior, and the incident will be considered resolved. If the incident involves a single student, the Advisor will seek to handle the issue in a one-to-one session with the student. If the infraction involves a group of students or the entire class, the teacher will handle the issue in class using an appropriate method, such as a class circle.
 - If the Advisor's attempt to use a constructive reminder does not resolve the issue, Advisors and students will refer to the class Respect Agreement for guidance. Advisors will remind students of their prior agreement, the reasons behind the Respect Agreement, and how the behavior in question violates that agreement. Students are then invited to discuss the issue until a mutually agreed upon resolution is reached.
 - When entering the building, students should remove hats and durags
 - Keep their voices low. An adult-type behavior should prevail.
 - Students should not run, wrestle, push, or shove.
 - Cell phones are increasingly common and provide students and their families with a sense of security and safety through immediate and direct communication. Additionally, electronic devices may serve as an invaluable learning tool when used appropriately by students and advisors. Therefore, electronic device use during school hours will be at the discretion of the advisor (teacher), mentor, and school leader.
 - Illegal drugs and alcohol: Illegal drugs and alcohol are strictly forbidden at all times.
 - If a student is taking medication for health reasons, he or she should notify the school nurse and Advisor of the need for medication
 - Student attire should be consistent with that of an appropriate nature. Joggers, Jeggings, Ripped Jeans or Flip Flops are prohibited. - The School Leadership Team has judgment of inappropriate attire.
 - All incidents of bullying, cyber bullying, and hazing are strictly prohibited.
 - Maintain the respect and dignity of all staff and students, regardless of the situation.
 - Any destruction of school property
 - Disruptive or inappropriate behavior in class
 - Failure to complete responsibilities
 - Disrespect of Advisors and/or other students
 - Sleeping or chewing gum in class (according to advisor discretion)
 - Excessive playfulness in class
 - Overt signs of sexual affection.

- Academic honesty
- Gambling
- Minor dress code violations (e.g. wearing a hat, etc).
- Bathroom misconduct or failure to follow procedure
- Raising one’s voice in a verbal conflict
- Repeated Failure to follow dress code
- In class possession of electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, computers, etc) not being used in the learning process
- Lying to Advisors or other staff
- Bullying behavior toward Advisors or other students
- Throwing objects at anyone at anytime
- Loitering in the hallways, not having a hall pass or leaving class without permission.
- Littering anywhere on school grounds – inside or outside.
- Eating in class without adult permission or supervision.
- Unexcused absences, lateness or cutting class
- Disrespectful or abusive language or gestures
- Repeated offenses of in-class issues mentioned above
- Repeated academic issues not resolvable in class
- Outside of School Hours
 - Such out-of-school conduct shall include, but is not limited to:
 - Acts of violence which are punishable by law
 - Sexual offenses which are punishable by law
 - Felonies
 - The sale, transfer, or possession of drugs which would constitute an offense punishable by law

A student found to be in violation of these agreements at this level is to be suspended and the school leader shall bring the matter to the board. In considering appropriate disciplinary action, the board shall consider the age and maturity of the student involved to determine the appropriate disciplinary action. Out-of-school conduct can result in a recommendation for expulsion. *The Code of Conduct is not all-inclusive and a student committing an act of misconduct not listed will still be subject to the authority of the principal or designee

All students are expected to behave in a manner that will reflect favorably on the school, not only during school hours, but also at any out-of-school activity connected with the school, including but not limited to school functions, internships, field trips, and athletic games. Behavior at any such activities will be part of the student’s record and misbehavior will be dealt with accordingly by school officials.

Culture of Respect:

At the beginning of the school year, each Advisor will lead his/her class in the development of a “Respect Agreement” for the class. The Respect Agreement’s purpose is to have students and teachers agree as to the guidelines for behavior that will create a safe, cooperative and

constructive classroom setting. The Respect Agreement will address the following four areas of behavior:

- Students respecting themselves and other students;
- Students respecting Advisors and Adults in the school;
- Advisors respecting Students; and Students and Teachers respecting school facilities and equipment.
- Respect Agreements must also include school rules outlined in the student handbook

Step 1: Conferencing and Circles:

If an incident occurs between students of different classes, or attempts to resolve an issue in class has proven unsuccessful, students will be given one of three options:

1. The student may elect to have the Advisor decide an appropriate resolution to the incident;
2. Students may request that the School Leader serves as a mediator to work with students or to come to a resolution; or
3. Students may choose to work at resolving the issue without a mediator. If the incident involves a student and an Advisor, and an appropriate resolution has not been reached, the Advisor can then refer the student to the School Leader for a restorative conference. If the incident involves a number of students, the School Leader may choose to hold a restorative circle with students and adults involved in the incident. Who to include in the conference or circle will be up to the discretion of the School Leader.

Step 2: Community Service (Logical Consequence):

The community service will be conducted in conjunction with a restorative conference involving all persons affected by the student misconduct. Affected persons may include staff, faculty, school leader, other students, community members, law enforcement officials, and the offender's family members. The participants in the conference will be determined by the RPC in consultation with the offender and primary person of the misconduct. The nature of the community service performed shall be related to the nature of the offense (e.g. vandalism would include repairing and/or paying for damage done) and shall be determined in the context of the restorative conference.

The School Leader and/or other designated personnel shall oversee the fulfillment of the community service performed and shall document the nature of the service, and the beginning and completion dates. Both the RPC and the offender will sign the document, and it shall be placed in the student's file. The student will then be released from any further obligations to community service, and a message shall be sent by the School Leader and other affected parties indicating that the offender had fulfilled the obligations of his/her community service.

Step 3: Taking a Break from the Community:

In those instances where the person(s) committing the misconduct or inflicting the harm does not agree to be restored, he or she will be asked to take a temporary break from the community, and not come to school for a period of one to three days.

Prior to being asked to take a break, the student will be asked to think about the reasons for his temporary break from the community, and to write a 1-3 page paper addressing the four restorative questions (above). When the break time is over, the School Leader will meet with the student and his/her parent(s) to review what the student has written, and to discuss appropriate measures for restoring the offending student to the community.

Depending on the nature of the misconduct or harm done, the student may be asked to take additional actions in order to be fully restored. Once those actions are completed, the student will be formally welcomed back into his/her classroom as a full participant. During the time away from school, the student is also responsible to complete any assignments that would be due during his/her time away.

While the decision to require a student to take a break from the community will be up to the discretion of the School Leader and/or designated personnel, some common behaviors requiring students to take a temporary break from the community might include the following:

- Coming to school under the influence (but not in possession of) of alcohol or illegal substances
- Bullying behavior
- Academic dishonesty
- Abuse of computer privileges
- Destruction or defacing of school property
- Sexual harassment
- Voluntary sexual acts while in school
- Theft of school or personal property
- Truancy or leaving school property without permission
- Smoking on school grounds or school-sponsored events
- Possession and/or use or transfer of matches, lighters, or any incendiary devices
- Tampering with fire alarm/extinguishers
- Arson
- Terroristic threats
- Encouraging fighting
- Counterfeiting, forging another's signature on school-related documents, or presenting another student's work as one's own
- Failure to abide by previously decided resolutions

Step 4: Permanent Break from the Community:

If the student's misconduct continues, and he/she does not appear in the School Leader's and/or designated personnel's judgment to be acting in good faith to change his offending behavior, the School Leader may recommend to The Board to permanently exclude (i.e. expelled) the student from the community. The decision to permanently exclude a student will be decided by a majority vote of the Board.

Student Dress Code Policy:

Students and staff strive for excellence at LAPCS and the dress code reflects this. The school leader and staff have the sole discretion to enforce the items below based on their judgment of inappropriate attire.

1. Appropriate and safe footwear should be worn at all times. Specifically, house slippers, flip-flops, and excessively high heels are not permitted.
2. Hats and head coverings are not to be worn in the building during school hours (Religious head coverings are permitted).
3. Any garments, as determined by the staff and School Leader, in conjunction with this Board-approved policy, to be inappropriately tight, short, or revealing (including, but not limited to mesh tops, midriff tops, tank tops, tube tops, short shorts, mini-skirts, short dresses, etc.) are prohibited during school hours and at school events.
4. Any garments, as determined by the staff and School Leader, in conjunction with this Board-approved policy, to have excessive holes, rips, studs, or other accessories are prohibited during school hours and at school events.
5. Any attire, as determined by the staff and School Leader to be disruptive to the educational process is prohibited. Attire that is unsafe, unhealthy, offensive to generally accepted standards, or obscene is not to be worn. Decals, slogans, or pictures that contain references to inappropriate substances (i.e. drugs, alcohol, smoking, etc.) or immoral behavior are not allowed.
6. Undergarments should never be exposed. Likewise, plunging neckline, bare midriffs, excessively high shorts and/or skirts, and any other exposure will not be accepted
7. During internship hours, students are expected to dress for the environment of which they are a part. This will vary for each student, but dress code will be discussed with the mentor, advisor, student, and parent prior to the beginning of an internship.
8. All attire – whether for school, internships, or other school-related activities – is expected to be neatly worn, clean, and worn appropriately.
9. Items not specifically covered in the above-listed guidelines will be at the discretion and good, reasonable judgment of the staff and School Leader as supported by this Board-approved dress code policy.

Attendance Policy:

LAPCS shall comply with all attendance laws and regulations of the state. Students must attend school each day it is in session.

Students who are absent for three days or more without a legal excuse shall be considered truant. A referral shall be made to the advisor and/or school secretary who shall take appropriate action. No student under the age of 18 may withdraw from school unless his/her parent/guardian signs a formal withdrawal form.

Students that have 18 or more unexcused absences will NOT BE PROMOTED to the next grade. This goes for grades 6-12.

Every 4 tardies to school will result in 1 unexcused absence.

The following conditions only will result in an excused absence:

- Illness of the student
- Medical diagnosis and/or treatment
- Death in the immediate family; funerals of other relatives or close friends, not to exceed one day in the locality or three days if outside the state.
- Contagious disease in the home of the child subject to regulations of the Division of Public Health, Department of Health and Social Services
- Legal business requiring the student's presence
- Suspension or expulsion from school
- Observance of religious holidays
- Approved college visits during the junior or senior year
- Authorized school-sponsored activities

Cell Phone and Chromebook Use:

LAPCS acknowledges that electronic communication devices such as cell phones are increasingly common and provide students and their families with a sense of security and safety through immediate and direct communication. Additionally, electronic devices may serve as an invaluable learning tool when used appropriately by students and advisors, which is the reason we are a one to one technology based school (each student has a chromebook). Therefore, electronic device use during school hours will be at the discretion of the advisor (teacher), mentor, and school leader.

This policy will be enforced in all areas of the campus. Therefore, electronic devices and headphones are not permitted in the hallways and common areas, except during a student's lunch period. LAPCS believes in the importance of teaching students to appropriately and effectively use their electronic devices.

For example, if an advisor informs students that they are able to use their electronic devices for an instructional activity, students will be permitted to do so. Likewise, if an advisor instructs a student to put an electronic device away, students are expected to comply. Failure to do so will result in a referral to the School Leader who will hold onto the electronic device until the end of the school day.

The advisor will notify parents/guardians of the failure to cooperate when violations of this policy have become a pattern. In order to maintain a safe and responsible environment, students may not use electronic devices for communication purposes, unless instructed to do so by a staff member. Likewise, destructive devices such as ear buds are not permitted without a staff member's approval.