

Chain Exploration Center  
Family Handbook



CEC

*Explore your passions*

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# Welcome to the Chain Exploration Center, Charter School!

## MISSION

**The mission of the CEC is to be a place where children explore their passions and gain a strong educational foundation through project-based learning in a collaborative community.**

The following components serve as cornerstones to the vision and mission of CEC, enabling students to grow in wisdom:

- a. Project-based approach focusing on student readiness and fully integrated coursework, including the following:
  - i. A structure that allows students to help design the media through which they learn best
  - ii. Meaningful and motivated learning by authentic application of ideas
  - iii. Increasing student responsibility for selection and completion of projects
  - iv. Individualized instruction and differentiation of coursework based on student learning styles, strengths, interests, and readiness, while addressing areas of need
- b. Student proficiency in meeting the State Standards as adopted by Wisconsin
- c. Multi-age classrooms focusing on leadership development, problem solving, communication, interpersonal skills, and peer collaboration
- d. Development of creative and innovative critical thinking skills
- e. Local and global partnerships including businesses, nonprofits, community members, and more as defined by the student-selected projects
- f. Awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of our natural environment
- g. Utilization of a host of technologies and engineering (S.T.E.M.) skills

## HISTORY

The idea for a Charter School was envisioned by the Waupaca Community as a way to offer children another opportunity within the public school system for alternative learning styles and outcomes.

The idea for the project-based, multiage school was drafted by a core of five women; the “Core Team” including educators, administrators, parents and school board members. Support from the School District of Waupaca, the DPI, community members and local organizations and businesses was overwhelming. The available space at the Chain O’ Lakes Elementary School was designated as the perfect place for studies in Environmental Sciences, Agriculture, Science and Technology, and the Arts.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTNERSHIP**

Parental involvement is critical for the success of the CEC's students. Parent and community ties to the CEC are strong. Parents of CEC students develop a positive relationship with the school, its Advisors and their children due to consistent school-home communication and support, and input on and/or through the Governance Council. Parents and family members are encouraged to offer their time and expertise for the benefit of the school and many student interest projects. Community and family experts are utilized in delivering instruction in conjunction with the certified staff of the charter school. Because of the student led nature of project based learning, parent or caregiver involvement is more rigorous than in a traditional school setting. This partnership contributes to the increased success of the students.

There are many opportunities for parents to approve their childrens' project ideas, attend project showcase nights, fundraisers and informational events. Prior to students beginning at the school, all parents have an orientation meeting. This meeting gives the parents a full view of the educational environment at the CEC.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

The CEC welcomes regular volunteers. Much of the learning done in project-based schools is outdoors and hands-on. Adult supervision is welcomed. If you are interested in committing to a regular time, please see the Administrator for a background check form and scheduling plan. See PTG below for further opportunities.

### **LIVE SOURCES**

Since much of the learning that takes place in project-based schools involves student research on topics of interests, we are in need of live sources. Parents are asked to volunteer their expertise and help recruit other live sources to aid student research on topics of their choosing. A survey will be sent out regarding your interests and skills.

### **PARENT TEACHER GROUP (PTG)**

Chain Exploration Center's PTG works to benefit the needs of all students in our building, from enhancing facilities and equipment, to funding field trips. There are plenty of spots available. Meetings are held monthly. More information can be found on our website or on the PTG bulletin board at the main entrance.

### **ADULT EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION**

The school may offer adult education and enrichment opportunities during the year in the Community room. These may include guest speakers, workshops, and study groups. Such opportunities will be publicized in the newsletter. The Community Room is open every day for parent use; to browse resources, use the internet, or hold meetings. All parents and guardians are "members" of the CEC and are eligible to run for office on the Governance Council and also to vote for Governance Council members. All members are

encouraged to attend Governance Council meetings and vote at the annual meeting on the fourth Thursday in June.

## **FUNDRAISING**

The CEC has created an environment of financial giving; all families are encouraged to donate not only their time, but financial philanthropic donations. Annual fundraisers such as the U-Rah-Rah Upcycle Rummage Sale and the Spring Musical garner funds for professional development, school gardens, and other student needs. The Governance Council plays a large role in reaching out to the larger community to develop donors and business partnerships to help support the charter school. In addition to fundraising grants, there are continued efforts for a vast array of school needs. This work is done by the Governance Council Fundraising Committee, Student Council, and the PTG.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **NONSECTARIAN**

The CEC is a public school that is nonsectarian in its practices, programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.

### **ADMISSION/ENROLLMENT**

The Chain Exploration Center Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of a student's sex, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability/handicap. It works to retain a student demographic aligned with the community and make special efforts to reach families who are typically underrepresented. Enrollment is voluntary and there is no tuition. The CEC is open to all District students. Open enrollment students may also attend the school in accordance with state law and District policies. A CEC application for all students is required as part of the admissions process. Additionally, if the student has never attended the School District of Waupaca, district registration is also required, including proof of residency.

If a student is admitted and is attending CEC to find that project-based and personalized learning is not the right fit for them, a meeting will be held to determine the best school placement for the student. If a child leaves the CEC during the year for another school, he or she may not re-enter the CEC until the next school year, and must follow the new student application and lottery process at that time. An exit survey is completed upon withdrawal, to help us determine community needs.

### **LOTTERY**

There is an enrollment window each year. If applications do not exceed the established cap, all students are accepted for admission and no lottery is held. Additional students are accepted with the time-stamp of application being the establishment of priority. If more than the established cap enroll during the window, by law, all applicants make up the lottery pool. The totally random selection ensures fairness and equal access. The total

number of openings will be posted, and all names applying for those openings will be added to a pool and pulled at random until each grade level is full. In the case of new families applying with more than one student, the family last name will be entered into the lottery. By law siblings are admitted together if room is available. The Governance Council performs the lottery, and it is part of school record. Those not accepted are placed on a priority waiting list in the order drawn. The waiting list is in effect until January 1 of the next year. An automatic enrollment preference shall be extended to siblings of students currently attending the CEC or alumni, and children of the Governance Council and employees (whose children shall not be more than 10% of the student population); then to students currently enrolled in the School District of Waupaca. Students currently attending the CEC do not need to reapply each year.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

### **VISITORS**

Our doors are locked at all times, but we welcome visitors and volunteers. Please ring the bell and when admitted, go to the office, sign in and get a visitor name badge. If you are not wearing a name badge, staff will request you to go to the office and get one. This helps us know who is in the building at all times.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Doors open	7:15
School begins	8:00
Dismissal	2:50
Bus departure	2:55

### **WEDNESDAY EARLY DISMISSAL**

Students are dismissed at 1:50 pm and may either be picked up by guardians or take the bus home as usual.

### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES**

Students dropped off by parents **should not** arrive at school prior to **7:15 am**.

**Supervision is not provided for students before this time.** Parents picking up students at the end of the school day should expect students dismissed from classrooms at 2:50 pm.

### **PARKING**

If you choose to come in and get your child, please park in designated parking slots and utilize the circle turnaround. Park your car and come to the entryway via the crosswalk to get your child. Alternatively, you can stay in your car and utilize the pick-up, drop-off lane. Do not get out of your car if you are using the drop off lane. There is no parking in the drop off lane except for concerts and evening events. All pick-up and drop-off is in front of the building. Bus pick-up and drop-off is in the rear of the building.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

CEC students residing within the District are provided transportation according to current transportation routes. CEC follows the District's procedures for provisions of transportation. If there are changes to your child's bus schedule, or address changes, please call the bus garage office at 715-258-4155 and notify them of those changes. The riders shall conduct themselves on the school bus as they would in the classroom except that reasonable visiting and conversation are permissible. The Waupaca Way behaviors are expected on the bus ride. Continued disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for refusing transportation service to any pupil. When it becomes necessary to refuse a pupil transportation service due to misconduct, the school Administrator shall notify the parents of such refusal with a full explanation. More detail is provided as follows:

### **BUS RIDER RULES**

The School District of Waupaca is responsible for the safety of children and the rights of others while on a school bus. CODE: 443.21 – STUDENT CONDUCT RULES

- A. Be on time at the designated school bus stop and help keep the bus on schedule. Sit in the assigned seat when designated by driver.
- B. Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
- C. Be careful in approaching the place where the bus stops. Do not move toward the bus until the bus has been brought to a complete stop.
- D. Do not leave your seat while the bus is in motion or while discharging or boarding riders along the bus route.
- E. Remain in the bus in the event of a road emergency until the driver gives instructions.
- F. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times after entering and until leaving the bus. Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
- G. Remember that loud talking and laughing or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and could result in a serious accident.
- H. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad-crossing stop.
- I. Treat bus equipment as you would be expected to treat valuable furniture in your own home. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- J. Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary at all times. No eating is allowed on the bus unless approved by the bus driver.
- K. Carry no animals on the bus or large instruments or objects that take up a passenger seat.
- L. Keep books, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisles.
- M. Be courteous to fellow pupils, and the bus driver.
- N. Help look after the safety and comfort of smaller children.
- O. Do not ask the driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; he is not permitted to do this except by proper authorization from a school official.
- P. Observe safety precautions at drop off points. Where it is necessary to cross the highway, proceed to a point at least 10 feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the highway where traffic may be observed in both directions. Then wait for a signal from the bus driver permitting you to cross.

Q. Observe the same rules and regulations on other trips under school sponsorship as you observe between home and school.

R. The advisor, in the case of field trips or in cases where transportation is used for other than the regular bus routes, shall assume the responsibility for student behavior and control in order that the driver may give full attention to driving.

S. The School District of Waupaca approves the use of video cameras on the school buses for the primary purpose of reducing disciplinary problems and vandalism on the bus, thereby allowing the driver to focus on driving the bus, providing for safer transportation for our students.

## **BUS RIDER DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

The School District of Waupaca generally utilizes a progressive discipline policy when school bus rules are not followed. Discipline procedures may simply involve a call to the parent from the driver or a meeting with parents, student, and the Administrator to go over proper bus riding behavior. However, depending on the severity of the rule broken or incident involved, the administration may immediately suspend a student from riding the bus.

## **CHILD'S RELEASE FROM SCHOOL**

Students are only released to their parents. Students are not released to other relatives or family friends without written authorization or verbal verification from the parents.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The school attendance policy in the School District of Waupaca was created with the intent to demonstrate commitment to student success in school. Enforcement of attendance policies and truancy procedures shall be a shared responsibility between schools, students, parents and caregivers, service agencies, law enforcement officials and community. Student attendance records are kept electronically in Infinite Campus, and follow students throughout their school career. This data is also reported to US Civil Rights authorities.

The state truancy law redefines the following categories of truancy:

Truant: a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of any day on which school is held during a semester.

Habitual Truant: a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five days on which school is held during a semester.

The Waupaca City Ordinance 9.061 pertaining to students less than 12 years covering habitual truancy has been amended to include the following: Parents/guardians of students under 12 years of age will be referred for contributing to truancy which carries a fine.

### **ABSENCES**

Parents should call the CEC office prior to 8:00 am if their child is not going to be at school unless a prearranged absence form has been completed. Your child will be

marked unexcused if this communication is not made. All absences are recorded as one of the following:

1. Unexcused absences and/or tardies: A student who misses part of a school day (part or all of one or more classes) shall be considered tardy and may be subject to the same conditions and dispositions as truancy.

2. Excused absences: absences which the school district approves, such as:

- a. personal illness
- b. emergency in the family
- c. medical appointments
- d. death in the family/funeral
- e. religious holiday
- f. court and/or legal appearances
- g. approved school activities
- h. special circumstances (approved in advance when possible).

3. Pre-Arranged Absence: Students absent for reasons other than the above will be considered unexcused with this exception: parents may PRE-EXCUSE their child for any reason for up to ten days per year. This means that any absence for reasons other than the above may be excused providing there is a WRITTEN PRE-ARRANGED FORM. (Pre-arranged forms may be picked up in the office prior to the date of absence. And are available on the school website.)

The CEC encourages educational outings and family trips that encourage learning and exploration of new places and cultures. Homework packets for family trips or extended absences should be requested at least 48 hours in advance. At the Advisor's discretion, work might be made up upon return rather than during the absence.

### **LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY PICK UP**

When bringing your child to school after 8:00 or when picking up your child before 2:50, please go to the office and enter your student's name on the sign in sign out sheet.

### **SCHOOL CLOSURE**

If for any reason, school starts late or is canceled, you will be notified via Infinite Campus messenger according to the phone number you have on file. Every attempt will be made to notify the radio and TV stations by 6:45 a.m.

### **ACTIVITY FEE**

An activity fee of \$20.00 is collected from each student. The money is used for student project supplies.

### **TELEPHONE/CELL PHONES**

Use of the school telephone by students is limited to emergency calls and school business.



Students are allowed to bring cell phones to school for use in an emergency or if Advisors have planned activities using cell phones for instruction. Cell phones shall be kept in lockers at all other times. If a student brings a cell phone to school it is their responsibility in the case of damage or loss. Possession of a cell phone by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

All other personal items, such as toys, games, electronic devices, etc. are best to remain at home unless needed for a project. Inappropriate items will be held in the office and may be picked up at the end of the day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

During the course of the school year, students frequently misplace personal items like jackets, hats, gloves, etc. It is much easier to return these things if your child's name is marked on all of their personal items. Items that are not claimed at the end of the year will be sent to Goodwill.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS**

CEC will share pictures and videos of students participating in educational activities during school day and project showcase night as well as art projects done by students. These will be used on the CEC website, Facebook page, Instagram, in marketing materials, the school yearbook, and local cable news and local papers. Your permission for use of your child's photos is given annually when you update your registry in Infinite Campus. **Parents/guardians may revoke any or all of these permissions by submitting a written request** to the school Secretary or Administrator.

### **SURVEILLANCE CAMERA**

We have surveillance cameras recording 24 hours a day in the front lobby, hallways, and entrance doors. Observation of the monitor is not continuous, but it is recording at all times.

### **POSTING OF MATERIALS AND PROPERTY**

If you would like to share a poster or announcement please submit it to the CEC office for review and approval by the school Administrator. No items will be sent home with all students, but if approved, your event will be posted on the current happenings board and in the Community Room.

### **DANGEROUS ITEMS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The possession of a dangerous weapon or "look alike" weapons on school premises, in a school vehicle, at a school event, or other setting under supervision of a school setting is prohibited except as otherwise specifically provided. "School premises" includes any

school building, grounds, recreation area, or any other property or vehicle used or operated for school purposes or administration. A person found in violation of this policy may be subject to a criminal misdemeanor or felony charge. A child in violation of this policy is subject to the provision of Chapter 48 of the Wisconsin Statutes unless jurisdiction is waived to adult court.

### **STUDENT ATOD POLICY (ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUGS)**

Students of the School District of Waupaca are hereby notified that the unlawful manufacture, distribution and possession of or use of a controlled substance or the use of alcohol on school district property, including all district owned vehicles, is prohibited at all times. These same provisions shall be in effect at school-sponsored events or extra-curricular activities while off school premises. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Failure to abide by this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school. Such disciplinary action shall be done in accordance with state law and established procedures. Violations of this policy may also result in referral to law enforcement officials for prosecution under specific state or local laws. The use of tobacco and vaping products on premises owned or rented by, or under the control of, the School District of Waupaca is prohibited.

### **STUDENT LOCKERS**

School District of Waupaca Board Policy specifies the Board retains ownership and possessor control of all school lockers and school officials may conduct locker searches without notice.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY NETWORK AND INTERNET**

The School District of Waupaca Network and the Internet are seen as resources that are available to students as part of the School District of Waupaca's curriculum. No student shall be required to take part in the School District of Waupaca Network or Internet activities if their parent(s) files a written objection to such participation with the building Administrator. The District's Acceptable Use Policy is available from the building Administrator upon request.

## **COMMUNICATION POLICIES**

### **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

Please be as direct as possible in all your communications at the school. Please utilize the student agenda or email for daily correspondence with your child's advisor. Charter schools utilize different approaches to learning. Many times students need to adjust to new techniques. During this time of adjustment and learning, the following should help you efficiently get your questions, answers and concerns addressed. Our website, [chainexplorationcenter.org](http://chainexplorationcenter.org), provides for easy email access and also has a suggestion box.

## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

● concerning daily operations, policy or procedural issues, events, committee work, enrollment, childcare, carpooling, school newsletter, etc. should be addressed to the School Secretary

## **QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR CHILD**

● should be addressed to your child's Advisor. Healthy, open communication between parent and advisor is essential for your child's educational experience. If you need to relay a message to the Advisor, sending a simple note in your child's agenda is best. In the event that the message requires dialogue, communicate directly with the advisor after school or leave a message at the office to schedule an appointment. Email is also appropriate.

## **QUESTIONS RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL ISSUES**

● such as curriculum, teaching methods, classroom management, and discipline policies and procedures, advisor-student relationships should be addressed to the Administrator.

## **QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO LEGAL OR FINANCIAL ISSUES**

● should be addressed to the CEC Governance Council.

## **QUESTIONS REGARDING COMMUNITY EVENTS**

● including fundraising activities should be brought to the Committee Chair.

## **CONFLICTS AND GRIEVANCES**

CEC encourages conflict resolution in our community that starts with direct communication with the involved parties. If not resolved we will follow the district decision and appeals process, including Governance Council in lieu of School Board.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY**

The CEC follows the district PBIS plan, promoting positive behaviors. The entire staff has the goal of establishing a caring atmosphere throughout the school in which children will feel safe, secure and happy, and in addition, have a maximum opportunity to learn and explore their passions. Our Waupaca Way reflects the staff and student commitment to building this environment.

### **I am Respectful, I am Responsible, I am Safe, I am Prepared**

CEC is dedicated to a positive discipline approach in which the ultimate goal is that the children develop self-discipline, mutual respect, a sense of responsibility for their actions, and an intrinsic desire to make things right. CEC is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child. We are equally committed to helping our children grow into healthy, happy, responsible adults.

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS**

CEC has high expectations for the social climate of this school community. The Code is generated mutually by students each year, and is part of the way our community works.

In the entire district and community, our PBIS behavior plan focuses on explicitly teaching expectations for all locations, within the school and community, and re-teaching expectations throughout the year.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

It is a worthy goal that every student has a clear understanding of how their actions affect others. Our goal is to encourage the child to right the wrong and do better in the future. Thus, conflict resolution and esteem building are integral parts of our curriculum. Students are required to take responsibility for their actions and work toward improvement with support if needed. Parents will be contacted to help with this plan. If at any time a student puts themselves or another student in physical danger, the student may be suspended according to Administrator's decision.

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

The school strives to nurture the emotional well-being of its whole community. In order to feel good about yourself, you need to feel good about how you treat others. All students are expected to refrain from any comments, attitudes, bullying, physical touching, or attentions that are unwanted by or upsetting to another person. The CEC will follow the anti bullying and harassment policy of the District, 411.1. CEC does not allow harassment, bullying and intimidation of pupils on school property or during school sponsored events.

## **SCHOOL CULTURE**

### **EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS**

Because of our close school community, we celebrate milestones and completion of long term projects. Family members are invited to participate in project showcase nights, as supporting your child's hard work. Fundraising events, such as the annual Musical are important milestones in your child's school life and participation is encouraged by all. Project Night presentations are part of your child's grade. A calendar of events will be sent home the summer before the school year.

### **DRESS CODE POLICY**

It is the policy of our school district to encourage appropriate dress for students. We feel that school is a place for respect and expect that children will dress accordingly. Student dress should be comfortable and in good taste. Clothing advertising alcoholic beverages and tobacco products and containing inappropriate language and/or messages will not be worn. Students are not allowed to wear hats, coats, or bulky outerwear in the school during school hours. Flip-flops, open toed and/or strapless heeled sandals are discouraged, for safety reasons. Shorts and shirts should be at least fingertip length and

no midriff showing or strapless shirts are allowed.

Because much of our time at CEC is spent outdoors it is imperative that students are dressed for all kinds of weather. In winter this means snow pants and boots, warm jackets, hats, scarves, and mittens. Rubber boots are required as part of the school supply list. It is a good idea to mark clothing with children's names, and send extra socks for wet outdoor activities.

### **SUNSCREEN AND BUG SPRAY**

Students will work outdoors many days at the CEC, and especially long hours on field days. Students are outside almost daily for Physical Activity classes and garden work. Please be mindful of personal sun and insect protection for your child. This is not provided by the CEC.

### **ANIMAL CARE**

Students and staff at the CEC are charged with the care of various school pets. The goal is to teach students where food comes from, nutrition, the compost cycle, and life cycles. Students observe, feed and care for fish, chickens and rabbits at the CEC. The CEC has a safety program in place that stresses the importance of washing hands after handling the animals and how to treat animals with respect.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The CEC recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning; therefore, the CEC encourages that field trips of significant educational value, which are related to the total school program and curriculum, be encouraged. No student shall be denied the privilege of participating in a field trip or school-sponsored trip because of financial inability to pay the fee. The CEC model of learning required research into chosen topics, and may require more field experiences than in a traditional school. At registration, parents are asked to provide permission for all field trips. There are times when a field experience may only be necessary for individual student's research. Your child's Advisor will work with parents to arrange transportation for these events.

### **OUTDOOR RULES**

- Stay within the school boundaries.
- Children may explore in the outdoor classrooms with adult supervision only.
- Shoes must be worn outdoors at all times.

During outside time children are under the supervision of advisors and/or advisor assistants. Weather permitting, all students will be expected to go outside for some fresh air and exercise. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure their children are dressed appropriately for the weather. Jackets are recommended if the temperature is below 50 degrees. Boots, jackets, snow pants, hats and mittens are required in the winter. Boots must be worn whenever there is snow, slush or mud on the ground. Outside time may be

limited during extremely cold weather.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES: RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING**

It is the goal of CEC to preserve the natural environment that is the home for our program. We promote citizenship and stewardship of our resources, and work to reduce and reuse whenever possible. In this goal we have a recycling and composting program. Food scraps are composted for the garden. In addition, students will be in charge of recycling paper and other products used in the school.

### **MINDFULNESS**

Students and Advisors practice mindfulness each day following lunch and recess. This is a time for quiet refocusing on our goals for the rest of the day and community building.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

The CEC will rely upon District nursing staff and trained staff to provide the necessary resources. The CEC abides by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding health and safety standards. School nursing services are provided by a full time Health aide in conjunction with the oversight of a District RN.

#### **ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES**

In case of an accident or emergency requiring a physician or hospitalization, we will immediately attempt to contact a parent. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the person listed on the child's emergency card. If immediate action is required, the school may call 911 while continuing attempts to reach the parents.

**EMERGENCY RELEASE FORM In case of an emergency, your child will only be released to those people indicated on the Emergency section in Infinite Campus. Proof of identification will be required. Those NOT identified on the emergency card can only pick-up the child with a written and signed note from the child's parent. CEC may call the parent of the child for confirmation. The Emergency Card is kept on file in the office and must be updated at the beginning of each school year.**

#### **EMERGENCIES (SCHOOL-WIDE)**

In case of a school-wide emergency, the school will follow the district's Standard Response Protocol. Should the school have to be evacuated due to an emergency situation, everyone will proceed to our designated alternate safe location.

Parents will be contacted via Infinite Campus, cell or home phone to inform you of the situation as soon as possible. It is therefore essential that you keep the office informed of any changes in your contact information.

In case of a lockdown or lock-out situation, all persons on the property will be escorted to a safe location inside the building and all entries and exits will be locked. NO ONE is allowed to enter or leave the designated lock-down area until it has been deemed safe and announced as such either by the School Administrator or Emergency Personnel in charge of the situation.

Lockout and Lockdown drills are conducted each year.

### **FIRE AND TORNADO SAFETY**

Fire drills are conducted monthly, in compliance with State statutes. Fire extinguishers are located in all buildings and exits and are updated annually. Tornado drills are conducted in the basement areas. When the alarm notice is given, everyone will assume tornado position in the basement until the all clear is given.

### **HEALTH/SICKNESS POLICY**

Keeping each student as healthy as possible is the goal of School Health Services. The school health aide is available to oversee the health needs of students during school hours. Information obtained from the parent, physician, and dentist at 4 year old kindergarten registration time is used to begin a permanent health record. Pertinent information is then added as the student's school life progresses. This information is confidential.

Screening programs in areas of hearing and vision are carried out by Health Services personnel and trained volunteers. Parents are promptly notified of any abnormal findings.

The School Nurse and Health Aide are always available to help with health problems of your child as they affect his/her school life. Please feel free to contact them for assistance.

### **WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME**

Please be mindful of others with impaired immune systems when determining whether your child is too sick to attend school. Students should not come to school if they have any of the following:

- Vomiting &/or diarrhea
- Head lice
- Fever of 100 or higher
- Rash
- Severe or productive cough
- Pink Eye
- Infectious runny nose (green in color)
- Any signs of a communicable illness

Should a child become ill during the school day, they will report to the Advisor or the school office. Arrangements will be made for care, and emergency contact will be called

to pick your child up if needed. If the child is hurt on school grounds or in class, it should be reported at once to the adult in charge.

If your child is diagnosed as having a communicable illness, CDC recommends having a doctor's note, granting permission for the child to return to school, on file in the office upon the child's return to school. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the child being asked to leave school until such a note is produced if staff suspects that the child is still contagious. Working parents are encouraged to arrange for back-up care for their child ahead of time in case of sudden onset of illness.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

Students needing medication during the school day must report to the health office in their building. Students are not allowed to bring bottles of prescription or over the counter medication to school. An adult must deliver all prescriptions or over the counter medications to the Health Office.

The medication must be in a **current prescription bottle with the name of the student, type of medication and instructions for dispensing** of the medicine. "Physician's and Parents requests for Giving Medication at School" forms must be completed and on file in the Health Room. Forms are available at the clinics and Health offices. The assigned Health Assistant in each building will dispense medication. Students who receive a prescription for antibiotics due to a contagious infection must stay home for 24 hours of first dose.

Routine items such as ice-packs and bandages may be dispensed to children without parental permission. We do not give cough drops and do not recommend that you send them to school.

## **STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS**

All students admitted to the district's schools must present immunization records as required by law. Except as otherwise provided, immunization are required for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, chicken pox and polio.

A student may be waived from the immunization requirement when the student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian submits a written statement objecting to the immunization for reasons of health, religion, or personal conviction.

## **LUNCH AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES**

### **GENERAL NUTRITION GUIDELINES**

We ask that lunches and snacks be packed with thought given to the health and growing needs of children.

### **CEC LUNCH PROGRAM**

Hot and Cold lunches are offered through the district Tuesdays through Thursdays. On Mondays and Fridays, only the cold lunch option is provided. Calendars are on the



school website prior to the beginning of the month. Families can choose the days they wish for their child to participate. We participate in the federal free and reduced lunch program. Please fill out a form for assistance.

Our food service often uses locally sourced food in the lunches. Food is also harvested from the onsite garden and tower garden greenhouse by students to be used in lunch production. We want students to understand the food cycle from beginning to end and participate in all stages.

### **BREAKFAST PROGRAM**

The school district provides a breakfast program for all students. Breakfast is served from 7:45-8:00 am.

### **SPECIAL DIETARY ISSUES AND ALLERGIES**

If your child has special dietary issues, please make these known to the office and the Advisor. Food allergies must be reported during the registration process or by filling out health information and handed in to the office prior to the start of school.

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

#### **PBL CURRICULUM**

The CEC curriculum is designed to provide a strong educational foundation while allowing students to explore their individual passions. This is accomplished through project-based learning and personal learning plans. Students are taught to develop ownership of their learning and build on their strengths. Along the way, they reflect and make changes. Students in the charter school will learn all of the core academics, using common core standards, that students in the traditional setting learn; it is the approach to that learning that will be fundamentally different. CEC Advisors recognize that their role is to inspire, mentor, and facilitate the learning process. This is part of the reason they are called “advisors” rather than “teachers.” They are trained to identify the best response to the changing interests and needs of each unique child and they adjust their strategies and timetable to fit the development of each of their pupils. CEC advisors create a classroom environment that optimizes the learning ability of every student regardless of difficulties a student faces in learning. The documentation will be kept in the child’s Personalized Learning Plan.

#### **PARENT APPROVAL OF PROJECTS**

Because of the extra effort required in the personalization of education, parents are asked to approve their child's project proposals. By your approval you are showing your support in helping your child find resources for his or her project.

#### **AREAS OF EMPHASIS**

The CEC encourages project exploration in the fields of Agriculture, Environmental Studies, Science and Engineering Technology, and the Arts. All projects will require

research, written notes, and collaboration. Projects will culminate in a product, performance, or presentation. This process builds inquiry, communication skills, and increases self-confidence in the use of technology and public speaking. Students are also explicitly taught 21st century skills like critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration. They are given multiple options to participate in community service within the school community and the greater community. All of these activities are tracked in their PLPs.

## **MULTIAGE**

Students are placed in homerooms or “advisories” in mixed grade groupings. The benefits of multiage communities are shown in content and social learning each day. They receive instruction in these groups for all subjects except Math.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Students receive instruction in Language Arts, Mathematics in the morning. The afternoon serves as integrated project time with Specialized classes on alternating days.

### Language Arts

The language arts skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are developed in a workshop atmosphere. The Advisor will present a mini lesson to the whole group and the students practice the skills in their own reading and writing(Workshop model). The advisor confers with individuals as they work.

### Mathematics

Students receive math instruction at their grade level equivalent. CEC students also have a personalized supplemental Math and a technology program.

### Social Studies and Science

These subjects are taught through the project process.

### Engineering

All students participate in the Project Lead the Way Curriculum several times during the year. There is also dedicated time for Makerspace Lab activities each week

### Agriculture/Environmental Ed

All students have dedicated classes to these subjects at least once a week.

### Arts

The arts are interwoven into the curriculum through project work. In addition, students have dedicated Art through grade 5, General Music through grade 5, Suzuki (required in grades 3-6), Foreign Language in grades 3-8, and Physical Activity classes in all grades.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The CEC students may participate in all co-curricular activities at the district Elementary and Middle Schools, as appropriate. Extra curricular activities held here at the CEC include Destination Imagination, Robotics Club, and All school Musical. Students grade 3 and up may run for election to the Student Council, which helps make

decisions on school and community activities.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

The CEC students undergo required state and federal testing and assessments as administered to the students in the district. In addition, they take district assessment such as the iReady, to enable comparisons to norming groups and track progress. More importantly, these tests show the advisors and students areas that may need intervention or acceleration.

### **STUDENT REPORTS**

Families receive student progress reports. These assess student progress in academic and social skills based on Advisor observation and data. Students also keep Personalized Learning Plans, which include rubrics, showing progress based on samples of student work. In grade 3 these PLPs start to be kept by the student in electronic form.

### **ADVISOR CONFERENCES**

Parent - Advisor conferences are held at least two times each year. The October conference will be student-led, so please plan on attending together. If you wish to speak to your child's advisor at other times, please send a note or call and leave a message so that the advisor may call and make arrangements with you. In addition you can view your child's progress electronically on Infinite Campus or in their PLP.

### **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students with special educational needs are evaluated and an Individualized Educational Plan is created. The CEC works with district personnel such as a school psychologist, speech and language clinician, physical and occupational therapists, and special education advisors to create this plan. All students with disabilities undergo the same application process for admission as any other student applying to the school; if there are more applicants than spaces available, students are entered into the lottery.

### **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)/MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)**

Response to Intervention is an educational model that promotes early identification of students who may be at risk for learning or need challenge above grade level. Its design may include a tier system that provides appropriate learning experiences for all students and identifies students at risk in specific areas, both academic and behaviorally. Students benefit when their current level of skills and abilities are aligned with instructional and curricular choices provided within the classroom. When a mismatch occurs, student learning and outcomes are altered as needed. Some students require more challenging curriculum or more support. The core features of RTI include the following:

- High-quality research-based classroom instruction
- Student assessment with classroom focus
- Universal screening of academics and behavior
- Continuous

progress monitoring of students ● Implementation of appropriate research-based interventions ● Progress monitoring during interventions (effectiveness) ● Implementing programs, assessment and progress monitoring tools with fidelity.

**GIFTED AND TALENTED**

CEC students receive interventions as necessary, but will not receive separate Gifted and Talented services from the district since their Personalized Learning Plans are set according to individual needs.

**COMMITMENT TO COMMUNICATION**

I have reviewed this handbook and agree to follow and uphold the guidelines for our school.

\_\_\_\_\_ Advisor signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardian signature

