

Christopher Columbus Charter School

916 Christian Street

1242 S. 13th Street

Philadelphia, PA 19147

www.columbuscharter.org



Student – Family Handbook

2026-2027

A Title I School

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A Message from Our CEO

CCCS Families,

I am extremely excited to officially welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year at Christopher Columbus Charter School. As we embark on another successful journey, I would like to express our appreciation to our amazing teachers who have made a commitment to providing the consistency that our children need. We are excited to have our returning students back and we would like to welcome our new students and families who have joined us this year.

Every summer at this time, I am reminded that each new school year provides us with another opportunity to give our students the very best education. Our teachers have worked tirelessly throughout the summer months to develop a learning experience for our CCCS students and families. We are committed to making the connection between family, staff, and students is at the center of everything we do.

This Family Student Handbook is filled with important information regarding school policies and procedures. It is designed to allow you to become familiar with all aspects of our school and to encourage you to participate fully in helping to make our students' experience at CCCS rich and meaningful. Please review this handbook with your child(ren) and discuss the topics as a family. When you sign and return the Acknowledgement page, you are stating that you are aware and agree to the information contained within the handbook and committing your support of our school's values and policies. Please keep this handbook in a convenient location so that it can provide answers to most of your questions as uncertainties arise. However, if any topic of your concern is not addressed in the handbook, please contact us for clarification. At CCCS, we are striving to move from good to great. We live by our number one rule of respect to support the growth and development of all our children, to build the character of our school community, and to meet the academic challenges of this new school year. Your partnership and commitment to supporting our goals and values will ensure limitless possibilities for the academic achievement of our students and the overall success of our school.

Sincerely,

Nathan Blodgett

The Mission

The mission of Christopher Columbus Charter School is to provide students with content-rich academic rigorous Core Knowledge education, with a well-defined, sequential curriculum in a safe, orderly, disciplined, and caring learning environment. CCCS students will learn to express themselves in at least one international language, and will utilize computer technology to support learning in all major subjects, and become literate in the technologies of the 21st Century.

The Vision

The vision of the founding board members of Christopher Columbus Charter School was the development of a school community in the ever-changing “Italian Market” area of South Philadelphia, which could be a source of hope for children from all cultural backgrounds and family situations. This vision included welcoming all children so that they could experience the joy of learning. One of the major goals of the founding board members’ vision was to promote responsible citizenship and the skills for utilizing that citizenship throughout their lives.

Mailing Address

The mailing address for our K-4 building is 916 Christian Street Philadelphia, PA 19147 and 5-8 is located at 1242 S. 13th Street Philadelphia, PA 19147. Please note that the school will NOT accept any deliveries of food, gifts, or supplies to students at ANY TIME. Items sent to students will be refused by the front desk and will be returned to the sender. The school is not responsible for any deliveries to students.

Student Arrival Policy

9th Street Building

Students may not arrive at the school building prior to 8:00 a.m. Students arriving prior to this time will be unsupervised, and CCCS will not be responsible for the students at this time. Before Care is available prior to 8:00 a.m. but there is a charge for this service.

13th Street Building

Students may not arrive at the school building prior to 7:30 a.m. Students arriving prior to this time will be unsupervised, and CCCS will not be responsible for the students at this time. Students who are taking advantage of the offered free breakfast period (7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.) should report immediately to the cafeteria. If students fail to abide by school rules during this time, they may be excused from the cafeteria until 8:00 a.m. It is also expected by the school that middle schoolers who are dropped off by their parents/guardians will enter the building directly. All students should be in the building by 8:15 a. m. Late slips will be issued to any student arriving after 8:30 a.m.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be in school and on time every day. CCCS has a legal obligation to ensure that all students attend school every day.

Pennsylvania's Compulsory School Attendance Law mandates that all children under the age of 17 attend school once enrolled. Every parent/guardian of a school-aged child is responsible for the child's attendance at school. Failure of a child to attend school has certain legal consequences for parents and, possibly, for the student.

In Pennsylvania, truancy is defined as when a child of compulsory school age is absent from school for three (3) or more days without a valid excuse. Absences without a valid excuse are considered "illegal" absences. If a child is found to be truant, their parent/guardian can be convicted and incarcerated for the crimes of Corrupting the Morals of a Minor and/or Endangering the Welfare of a Child.

Absence Notification

The parent/guardian must call or email the school no later than 8:00 a.m. if a student is sick and unable to attend school. CCCS will notify the parent/guardian if the phone call or email was not received by the designated time.

9th street families may also choose to email northattendance@CCCS.K12.PA.US if their child/ren will be absent from school. Doctor's notes may also be sent to this email.

13th Street families may also choose to email southattendance@CCCS.K12.PA.US if their child/ren will be absent from school. Doctor's notes may also be sent to this email.

Absent – "Excused – Parent Note"

Parents/guardians are required to submit written notification of the reason(s) for a student's absence *within three (3) school days of the student's return*. The absence will be counted as "excused" as long as the written note is provided during this three (3) day period. Administration reserves the right to approve a parent note written for the absence. CCCS does not allow more than three (3) parent notes to be accepted for excused absences per year; for any absences beyond the third parental notification, a physician's note is required. Parent notes are accepted for illness only.

Absent – "Excused"

CCCS may excuse student absences under certain circumstances, as long as original documentation is provided. Those circumstances include only emergency (non-routine) doctors' appointments, court subpoenas, funeral notices, and other reasons recognized by law. Routine medical and dental appointments are to be made outside of school hours. If a student is absent for three (3) or more consecutive school days, a doctor's

note must be presented within (3) days of the student's return in order for those days to be counted as excused.

Absent – "Unexcused"

All absences are treated as unexcused/illegal until CCCS receives original documentation/written explanation of the reason(s) for the absence. The absence will be permanently recorded as unexcused if the parents/guardians do not provide the original documentation/written explanation within the three (3) days of the student's return. Family vacations will be counted as unexcused absences from school. Teachers are not responsible to provide work in advance to students who miss school due to vacations or other unexcused absences.

Tardiness

Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. are considered late. Students who arrive at school after 11:30 a.m. will be considered absent one half of the day. Students who leave before 1:30 p.m. will be considered absent for one half of the day. It is the responsibility of the student who is late and misses class to contact their teacher about what may have been missed, especially at the middle school. Parent notes and phone calls will not be accepted to excuse a student's lateness.

Chronic Absences and Tardiness

A student is considered truant in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania once they have accumulated three (3) or more unexcused absences. A notification of five (5) illegal absences will be sent home to families in an attempt to rectify the issue and will also be reported to the District Attorney's Office's "Project Go" program. Phone conferences, virtual meetings, or in person meetings will be held with administration, as well as the District Attorney's Office's "Project Go" program after ten (10) absences in order to work together and remove any barriers that are preventing the students from attending school. Students and their families will be referred to DHS or Truancy Court once a student reaches ten (10) unexcused absences. Students will be dropped from CCCS's enrollment after ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences. Students may be required to attend summer school once they reach twenty (20) unexcused absences and may be retained in their current grade if they reach twenty-five (25).

Students who arrive after the start of the school day (8:30 a.m.) will be considered late for school. Students who reach twenty (20) tardies may be required to attend summer school and may be retained in their current grade if they reach thirty (30) tardies.

Early Dismissal

Parents/guardians may request for the early dismissal of students during school hours in cases of emergency, which include crises within the family that cannot be managed without the student's presence. Early dismissals for activities such as music, dancing, gymnastics, dramatics, etc. are not allowed. Please make routine medical and dental appointments after school hours.

Early dismissals will be granted if the student provides a valid appointment slip from a physician or court system. Students must hand in these appointment slips during morning entry. CCCS may call the family to confirm the early dismissal request. The parent/guardian can also come in person to the school's front desk to process a request for early dismissal. Telephone requests for early dismissals will not be granted except in cases of emergency. Students who accumulate twenty (20) early dismissals will be considered for summer school.

Students who leave before 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for the entire day. Students who leave between 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. will be considered absent for a half (1/2) day. Students who leave at 1:30 p.m. will be marked as early dismissal. CCCS cannot accommodate early dismissals after 3:00 p.m.

Parents/guardians can pick up their student from school if they are listed as a parent/guardian or an emergency contact. They will be asked to present a state ID or driver's license to ensure the safety of the student. Anyone not listed as a parent/guardian or emergency contact will not be permitted to pick up the student.

Dress Code

School uniforms create a sense of school pride and community. It is expected that students come to school wearing clothing that is neat, appropriately sized, and that fully covers undergarments. Pants are to be worn at the waistline. Students will wear the complete school uniform from the first day of school until the last day of school. Uniform inspections will be held on a regular basis. Uniform warnings and further disciplinary action will address repeated violations of the dress code.

As a school that values diversity, Christopher Columbus will make exceptions to the school uniform. Religious garb is expected to match the school colors (navy or light blue) and must be worn consistently. These exceptions should be communicated by parents/guardians to the administration via email prior to any adjustments.

Hair Styles

Hairstyles should be neat and pulled back out of the face. No extreme or “unnatural” dyed hair is permitted. Natural colors include black, brown, blonde, or red. The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes a hairstyle that does not follow our dress code. Students are not permitted to wear hats or hoods in the building. They are only permitted to wear head coverings for religious purposes.

Option 1

This uniform consists of **solid black or white sneakers** (no boots, Crocs, etc), dress khaki pants, a belt, and dark blue polo shirt with the CCCS insignia. These uniforms are required to be worn between October 15th and April 15th. They can be purchased from uniform stores such as KO Sporting Goods, Triple Play, Mr. Tees, or Flynn & O’Hara. No jeans, leggings or cargo pants are allowed.

This summer uniform consists of **solid black or white sneakers** (no boots, Crocs, etc), khaki dress shorts, and dark blue polo shirt with the CCCS insignia. Students are allowed to wear this uniform instead of the formal uniform until October 15th and after April 15th.

Option 2

This uniform consists of **solid black or white sneakers** (no boots, Crocs, etc), navy blue khaki pants, a belt, and light blue polo shirt with the CCCS insignia. These uniforms are required to be worn between October 15th and April 15th. They can be purchased from uniform stores such as KO Sporting Goods, Triple Play, Mr. Tees, or Flynn & O’Hara. No jeans, leggings or cargo pants are allowed.

This summer uniform consists of **solid black or white sneakers** (no boots, Crocs, etc), navy blue khaki dress shorts (no more than 1 inch above the knee), and light blue polo shirt with the CCCS insignia. Students are allowed to wear this uniform instead of the formal uniform until October 15th and after April 15th.

Gym Uniform

The gym uniform consists of navy blue sweatpants (or mesh shorts no more than 1 inch above the knee during Summer Uniform months) with the CCCS insignia, gray tee shirt with the CCCS insignia and **solid black or white sneakers**. Students may also wear a gray or navy sweatshirt with the CCCS insignia. All gym clothing must have the CCCS insignia on it. If a student is unable to wear the gym uniform, then that student must come to school in their regular school uniform. Noncompliance with these regulations will warrant a uniform warning. Three warnings will warrant a demerit.

Jewelry/Accessories

The only jewelry permitted are post earrings in each ear, one bracelet and a watch. Children are asked to leave all rings and other types of jewelry at home. No nose jewelry, eyebrow, tongue or other facial jewelry is permitted. Visible tattoos are not permitted. Additionally, students should not wear decorative stickers on their faces nor anywhere else. Band-aids are acceptable, but nothing should be worn for the purposes of decoration. Nails must not be any longer than the student's fingertip. Nails can be painted, but **no acrylics or fake nails are allowed**. CCCS students with acrylic or fake nails will be subject to demerits or detention.

Links for appropriate sneakers

Below are some links to appropriate sneakers should you need help finding affordable options

Amazon:



DVTENI Unisex-Child White Boys Girls Shoes Antiskid (\$26.99)

https://www.amazon.com/DVTENI-Unisex-Child-Antiskid-Sneakers-Outdoor/dp/B08THY3HBH/ref=sr_1_17?crd=3J1ERHICBSBAY&keywords=white+kids+sneakers&qid=1657114632&s=apparel&srefix=white+kids+sneakers%2Cfashion%2C44&sr=1-17



Skechers Unisex \$30.00

https://www.amazon.com/Skechers-Glimmer-Sneaker-Medium-Little/dp/B07LB3ZJB9/ref=sr_1_2?crid=3J1ERHICBSBAY&keywords=white%2Bkids%2Bsneakers&qid=1657114632&s=apparel&sprefix=white%2Bkids%2Bsneakers%2Cfashion%2C44&sr=1-2&th=1&psc=1



Kids Shoes Toddler Boys Girls Athletic Running Sports Strap Sneakers - \$27.99

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08P8FJJ2L/ref=sspa_dk_detail_6?pd_rd_i=B08P8GXTNM&pd_rd_w=VrXvC&content-id=amzn1.sym.386c274b-4bfe-4421-9052-a1a56db557ab&pf_rd_p=386c274b-4bfe-4421-9052-a1a56db557ab&pf_rd_r=2YGMWRWMFDJW48KZB22P&pd_rd_wg=VQXnY&pd_rd_r=472e996a-6919-4fe5-9ee7-6e0edb21f3e9&s=apparel&sp_csd=d2lkZ2V0TmFtZT1zcF9kZXRhaWxhdGhlbWF0aWM&th=1&psc=1

The CCCS Academic Program

Our academic program is designed to bring students rigorous, engaging instruction in a safe environment. To create this educational environment, we incorporate the following elements: a relationship-driven classroom culture, the strategic use of data, and a continuum of student support. Below are outlines of our elementary and our middle school academic programs.

Our MTSS programs (also known as “What I Need” or “WIN” time) in both ELA and Math use data to guide students to improvement by meeting them at their current fluency/competency.

Elementary Program (Kindergarten through Grade 4)

ELA – Savvas myView (Literacy)

Loyola Press Voyages (Grammar and Writing)

Reading Horizons Discovery (Phonemic Awareness and Phonics)

- Standards-aligned program
- Engaging in diverse texts
- Student-friendly resources that facilitate the development of literacy skills
- Rigorous curriculum that prepares students for middle school and secondary school success

Math – Great Minds Eureka²

- Standards-aligned program
- Rich digital resources such as virtual manipulatives
- Rigorous curriculum that prepares students for middle school and secondary school success

Science – Savvas Experience Science

- Research-driven, flexible, new solutions built for the Next Generation Science Standards
- Three-dimensional approach helps students develop key skills like collaboration, communication, and problem solving

Social Studies – Savvas myWorld Interactive

- Up-to-date, research-based content makes social studies more relevant than ever
- Partnership with National Geographic Society ensure geographic literacy
- Fully integrated Big Ideas deepen understanding of key social studies concepts

Handwriting - *Benson Handwriting*

- K-2 - Printing Instruction
- 3-4 - Cursive Instruction

Specials

- Physical Education/Health
- Art
- Music
- Italian
- Library
- Computers

Middle School Program (Grade 5 – Grade 8)

ELA - Literacy - myView (5th Grade), MyPerspectives (6th - 8th Grade), Loyola Press Voyages (Grammar and Writing), Sadlier (Vocabulary), Handwriting (5th)

- Standards-aligned
- Interactive, engaging, and relevant learning environment through diverse readings

- Provides next-gen learning experiences that promote higher achievement and develop the competencies needed for college and career readiness

Math – Eureka/ Sadlier Algebra

- Standards-aligned program
- Rich digital resources such as virtual manipulatives
- Rigorous curriculum that prepares students for middle school and secondary school success

Science – McGraw Hill (5th Grade), OpenSciEd (6th - 8th Grade)

- Research-driven, flexible, new solutions built for the Next Generation Science Standards
- Three-dimensional approach helps students develop key skills like collaboration, communication, and problem solving

Social Studies – McGraw Hill Up-to-date, research-based content makes social studies more relevant than ever

- Partnership with National Geographic Society ensure geographic literacy
- Fully integrated Big Ideas deepen understanding of key social studies concepts

Specials

- Physical Education/Health
- Art
- Music
- Italian
- Enrichment/Technology

Grading & Promotion

At CCCS, we value outcomes-driven instruction based on student data. Teachers implement daily, informal checks to ensure students are understanding the material as well as regular benchmark assessments to gain insight into concept mastery, growth, and gaps. Data analysis informs daily lessons, targeted student supports, and differentiation. Robust data systems and reporting tools put actionable information into the hands of the teachers.

CCCS School Grading Policy

All grades are recorded by the teachers on PowerSchool. Any grade below a 70% is considered a failing grade. We ask that parents/guardians download the PowerSchool app and check their child(ren)'s grades frequently. If any parent/guardian has issues with installing or setting up PowerSchool, please contact Ms. Boyle via email (aboyle@cccs.k12.pa.us). Progress reports will be sent home in the middle of each trimester as well. Teachers are available via Dojo or email during regular school hours to discuss any grading concerns. Please allow 24-36 hours for teachers to reply.

Assignments are consistently weighted in every CCCS classroom. The chart below identifies grading weights for each grade type.

Kindergarten - Grade 4

Assignment Types	Weight
Assessments	70%
Projects	20%
Work Habits (Classwork & Homework)	10%

Grades 5-8

Assignment Types	Weight
Homework	15%
Classwork	15%
Projects	30%
Assessments	40%

At the end of the school year, a cumulative course grade is determined by averaging the grades students earned each report period (a total of 3 report periods).

Report cards are distributed prior to Parent-Teacher Conference Days. To ensure that our school works in partnership with students and their families, parents/guardians are expected to attend parent-teacher conferences when requested. If a parent/guardian cannot attend a conference, we ask that they notify us so that we can arrange another time to meet.

Honor Roll

To be eligible for the honor roll, students must pass all of their classes and have a passing "Character Development" grade. CCCS recognizes students who excel academically with the following designations:

Achievement	Grade Range
Distinguished Honors	<u>≥95</u>
High Honors	<u>≥90</u>

Plagiarism and A.I. Policy

Academic integrity is a cornerstone of the educational process, particularly that academic integrity fosters an environment where everyone can trust that the work presented is authentic.

We also understand there are a vast majority of resources, including artificial intelligence (AI), that can quickly provide an answer or solution. It is important that students are producing and turning in work that is theirs, and not a product of AI. This also contributes to fairness and celebrates the time and energy invested by students who are turning in authentic work, which in turn helps the teacher know where to support students further.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty occurs when a student uses or supplies someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source and is highlighted in CCCS's Acceptable Use of Internet and Technology Policy. This includes:

- Using ChatGPT, Grammarly, Gemini or *any other* AI to generate/submit any aspect of original work for any class assignment (unless specifically instructed to do so by the teacher)
- Copying from the Internet or any other source
- Copying from another student
- Turning in another person's work as your own
- Submitting a group project that includes plagiarized, copied or AI generated work
- Supplying another student with work that is not their own

Teachers have the right to verbally follow up with the students regarding work that is turned in and to submit student work through plagiarism and/or AI detection software. If a student is caught plagiarizing, using AI or otherwise, the following consequences may occur:

- Loss of points up to a **zero** on assignment
- Required resubmission
- Parent meeting
- Detention

If a student needs help with an assignment, we encourage them to speak with their teacher, who will provide support.

CCCS Summer School and Retention Policy

A student who has over twenty (20) days of unexcused absences, latenesses, or early dismissals may be required to attend summer school. Please see our attendance policy for details about "unexcused absences."

A student who fails either Math or Reading will be required to attend summer school. Summer school runs for five weeks in June and July. Students who fail to attend or pass summer school may be retained.

Students who fail both Math and Reading may be retained. Parents of such students will be contacted at least three times during the school year, including via report cards and progress reports. Parent conferences will be held before the decision to retain a child is reached.

Special Education Overview

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

Child Find:

According to state and federal Special Education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. This can be found on the school's website. School Districts, intermediate units and Charter Schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via the Individuals with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Identification:

CCCS identifies and refers students who might be eligible for special education services for evaluation. Students are monitored through our Multi-Tiered System of Support. Once completing six to eight weeks of small group support using intense interventions, a team meeting is held to discuss progress and determine if additional testing is needed; such as Reading and mathematics diagnostic assessments, classroom performance, benchmark examinations, vision and hearing screenings, and the Student Assistance Program (SAP) if necessary. Whenever a student is referred by the SAP Team for a multi-disciplinary evaluation, CCCS must obtain written consent from a parent/guardian before the evaluation can be conducted. Please note that, if a parent/guardian consents to the evaluation of their student, they are agreeing to an evaluation of their student's eligibility for services, not to the implementation of special education services.

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request, at any time, that the Charter School conduct a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. Requests for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation must be made in writing to the Director of Specialized Services at the Charter School. If the public school denies the parents' request for an evaluation, the parents have the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or through voluntary alternative dispute resolution such as mediation.

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

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process

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

The IEP is written by a team of qualified professionals, and parents/guardians are critical members of the team. Parents/guardians are invited to attend all IEP meetings. We value parent/guardian and student input during these meetings. This input allows the team to devise an IEP that will meet the student's individual academic and/or social-emotional needs. When the student turns fourteen (14) years of age within an IEP term, they will be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss post-secondary goals and transition

needs.

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

Start Services and Progress Monitoring

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

Specialized Programs Overview

504 Plan

School age children who have a disability but do not meet the eligibility criteria for an IEP may be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is an Act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. It assures that persons with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students. The act defines a person with a disability as anyone who: (1) has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working); (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

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

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

English Learners (ELs)

Christopher Columbus Charter School provides an appropriate planned instructional program for students identified as English learners (ELs) which meets Federally Mandated criterion that is: (1) based on sound educational and language learning theory; (2) implemented with sufficient resources and staffed by appropriately prepared personnel; and (3) periodically evaluated. The program model uses Content and Language Integrated Learning; our PA Standards-based curriculum (including the PA English Language Proficiency Standards) provides the content for language learning. Our EL students fully participate in the general curriculum and receive push-in English language support in the classroom and pull-out instruction in small groups with ELs in the same grade.

The active encouragement of family engagement and regular collaboration with classroom teachers ensures that students thrive and achieve at high levels. We encourage literacy in and maintenance of the home language, and the full participation of ELs in the CCCS community. We support our learners in attaining control of academic language and fluency in the domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Language skills are fostered and developed in small grade-level groups, with lessons created sequentially using the WIDA Can-Do Indicators. By working with students in small groups in addition to push-in collaboration with classroom teachers, instruction for our students can be individualized and language learning accelerated.

The EL program is designed to provide students with direct language instruction through grade level content using a balance of what Paul Nation describes as “The Four Strands”; meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. Our EL specialists work with all teachers to create adaptations to instruction and assessment in content areas, both of which must be commensurate with the student’s level of English proficiency. Students in the EL program are provided with meaningful, comprehensible access to instruction in all content areas and are graded using the same grading system as all other students. The grading of ELs reflects what the students know and are able to do at their level of English language proficiency. ELs cannot be retained based solely on their level of English language proficiency.

Our EL teachers are PA certified and highly qualified, and are required to continue their professional development and to remain current regarding state and federal regulations and best practices in the teaching of English learners. They have a wealth of resources and technology, and are dedicated to the success of our students.

Identification Procedure

Upon enrollment, all parents/guardians are given a Home Language Survey to complete. Based on the results of the home language survey and parent interview, students identified as potential English learners will be screened within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or within 14 days of enrollment for transfer students. The test used to assess English proficiency is the WIDA W-APT. If a student is found to be in need of language support parents/guardians will be notified immediately in writing *in the preferred language* of the results of this screening test, and the specifics of the schedule and curriculum. CCCS follows the entrance criteria determined by WIDA and the PA Department of Education.

Families have the right to opt-out of some or all portions of our language program, but once identified as an EL they must be included in the annual ACCESS assessment. Families can also reinstate services should they choose to do so after opting-out.

Reclassification and Monitoring

CCCS follows the state-mandated reclassification and monitoring criteria for English learners as outlined in current PDE exit criteria and PDE's Basic Education Circular (providing guidance for compliance with 22 Pa. Code section §4.26, reviewed and revised July 1, 2017). Program exiting takes place each year when the results of the WIDA ACCESS test are reviewed; determination of students' status is made by September 30 and reported to the state in the October enrollment data. An EL must demonstrate the ability to access challenging academic content and interact with other students and teachers both academically and socially in an English language setting in order to be considered for reclassification. Evidence of this ability is demonstrated by the student on the annual English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for EL's, and gathered by teachers using standardized language use inventories.

Reclassification Criteria

Students are reclassified and exited from the EL program through two metrics; the ACCESS test score and language inventories from EL and content teachers. If the total points awarded are 10.5 or greater, then a student should be reclassified. However, if there is compelling evidence to suggest that a student should remain identified as an EL when his/her score exceeds the cutoff, and this evidence is documented along with the ACCESS for ELLs® score report and language use inventory forms, then the EL status may be retained.

Monitoring

Exited students are actively monitored for two years; the E L teacher and classroom teachers maintain communication and complete monitoring forms each quarter. EL teachers provide support to monitored students as needed, assisting with projects, writing assignments, classwork, and assessments. The student is classified as an exited

EL in the first or second year of monitoring. In the third and fourth year of monitoring, students are classified in PIMS as former ELs but are not actively monitored.

Redesignation Process

If a student who has exited the EL program is not making adequate progress or is not meeting academic standards after supports and interventions have been put in place, redesignation as an EL and participation in the EL program is considered.

Parents/guardians would be notified if a student was found to be eligible for redesignation. Our goal is to provide the students with the appropriate support so that they can reach their highest potential.

School Culture

Non-Violent Community

Safety is an absolute priority at CCCS. Students are not to use violence for any reason whatsoever at CCCS, while representing CCCS, or with any members of our school community. Students are officially under CCCS's Code of Conduct from the time they leave home in the morning until they reach home in the afternoon. CCCS will follow mandated due process procedures and determine appropriate consequences for any violation.

Restorative Practices

CCCS believes that learning comes from understanding one's responsibility to oneself and to the community. Therefore, we embrace a restorative practices approach. This school-wide culture system is built around strengthening and repairing relationships both in the classroom and in the school community. Students and staff are expected to demonstrate our Number One Rule of Respect in their behavior. Students who violate our Code of Conduct will, at the discretion of the administration, be granted the opportunity to give back to the community they violated and repair relationships they have damaged. (However, CCCS cannot facilitate restorative meetings between students' parents at any time.)

Kindergarten through Grade 4 Code of Conduct

The culture system in the elementary building is structured to encourage students to make good choices. A behavior calendar is used to help students and families see how their choices impact themselves and the school community. Students receive a "number" when they violate a school expectation. Three numbers equal one demerit and three demerits result in a lunch detention. After three detentions, the student may receive a three-day suspension instead of a fourth detention.

Grade 5 through Grade 8 Code of Conduct

The conduct system in the middle school building is structured to encourage responsibility and accountability. A demerit system is used to help students and families see how their choices impact themselves and the school community. Students receive a demerit (or demerits) when they violate a school expectation. Three demerits result in a Wednesday after-school detention. After three detentions, the student may receive a three-day suspension instead of a fourth detention.

Procedures of the CCCS Discipline Policy

Demerits will be issued for minor infractions such as, but not limited to, the following: chewing gum/eating, talking in class, misbehavior in the cafeteria, disrupting class, and other minor offenses.

Private detentions may be given by teachers for a variety of reasons including not completing home assignments, school assignments, not returning test papers, etc. Private detentions will be issued by a teacher and families will receive 24-hour notice prior to the detention.

Lunch detentions may be given by an administrator for various infractions of the discipline code. The students will be assigned to alternative placement during lunch and recess when serving a lunch detention. School lunches will be provided if requested.

Participation in extracurricular activities such as sporting events, dances, trips, etc. may be dependent on behavior and attendance.

Detentions will be given for accumulated demerits and also for more serious offenses such as, but not limited to, disrespect of any kind, foul language, cheating, teasing other children, and non-compliance. Families will receive a phone call when the 3 demerits/detention is given to inform them of the undesired behavior.

Three detentions will warrant school suspension on the next detention. Suspensions may also be imposed upon a student who deliberately disrupts a class, exhibits gross disrespect, consistently violates school rules and expectations, and/or brings drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other inappropriate items to school. A one day suspension will be issued to all students who do not turn in their cellphones at the beginning of homeroom and/or fail to turn off their phone while inside the school building. This applies at dismissal time as well. The type and length of suspension will be determined by the severity and frequency of the disciplinary infraction. An informal hearing is required for

any suspensions greater than three (3) days. Families must reinstate any student who was suspended at a conference with an administrator after the suspension has been served. Students with continual disciplinary difficulties may be placed in a program of positive behavioral support. This procedure warrants a monthly, weekly, or daily report.

Ten-Day suspension is a third suspension period served by students who have not responded to prior reinstatements, assistance from the school counselor, meetings with parents, etc. This is a suspension period that may occur following a hearing with the CCCS Board of Directors. These measures listed in the above paragraphs are measures of last resort. Every effort is made to assist a youngster who finds it difficult to maintain an appropriate social presence in the school community. Some interventions that may occur are: interviews with the administration, students, and their families, assistance from the school counselor, daily behavior reports and rewards from the classroom teacher, behavioral support program with a monthly report, and many other types of intervention programs. Students who face disciplinary hearings will be afforded the due process rights outlined below. A formal hearing shall be required in all expulsion actions.

Steps to ensure due process include: Title 22 Chapter Pa Code 12.8: Hearings

Informal hearings. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

(1) The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.

(2) The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:

(i) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.

(ii) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.

(iii) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.

(iv) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.

(v) The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

The outcomes of such a hearing may include:

- Additional days of suspension (up to 3 days) and a behavior contract for the student illustrating the full range of possible consequences, including expulsion;
- An invitation to rejoin the community with mandatory or voluntary disciplinary and/or academic intervention;
- A transfer to a disciplinary placement or alternative placement; and
- A recommendation to the Board for expulsion, which would result in the mandatory attendance of the student and parent/guardian at a formal expulsion hearing. See “Expulsion” section below for further information.

Formal Hearings

The formal hearing shall observe the due process requirements outlined below:

1. Notification of the charges in writing by certified mail to the student's parents/guardians.
2. At least three (3) days notice of the time and place of the hearing, which shall include a copy of this policy, hearing procedures, and notice of the right to representation by legal counsel. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when he/she demonstrates good cause for an extension.
3. The hearing will be held within fifteen (15) school days of notification unless otherwise agreed by both parties and shall be private unless the student or parent/guardian requests a public hearing.

During the hearing the student has the right to:

1. Be represented by counsel at the expense of the parent/guardian.
2. Have parents/guardians present.
3. Disclosure of the names of witnesses against the student and copies of their written statements.
4. Request that witnesses against the student appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined. Witnesses, including teachers, should be present only when they are providing information.
5. The right to testify, make arguments, and present witnesses on his/her behalf.

A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing and a copy made available to the student at the student's expense, or at no charge if the student is indigent.

The hearing shall be held within fifteen (15) school days of the notice of charges, unless a delay is mutually agreed to by both parties or is delayed by:

1. The need for laboratory reports from law enforcement agencies.
2. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his/her rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
3. Delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim in case of juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury.

Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision. During the period of the expulsion hearing and decision, the student shall be permitted to access his/her classes. The name of a student who has been disciplined shall not become part of the agenda or minutes of a public meeting, nor part of any public record of the Board. Such students may be designated by code. Appeal requests must be made in writing to the principal. Such a request must be filed with the principal within five calendar days of the suspension decision, or the right to appeal is waived. The parent and/or student have the right to bring forth witnesses to speak on behalf of the student.

In the event the student/guardian is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, an appeal may be filed in accordance with the Local Agency to the Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days of receipt of that Adjudication. Students and their parents/guardians will be apprised of these rights.

Special Education Suspensions

There are special rules in Pennsylvania for excluding children with disabilities for disciplinary reasons. When a student with a disability is excluded for more than ten consecutive school days or subjected to a series of removals that result in a pattern because the removals constitute more than ten school days in any one school year, a change in placement has occurred and prior written notice is required. If any disciplinary action results in a suspension of more than 10 days, an expulsion, or a placement change, a manifestation determination meeting will be held to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of the student's underlying disability or a failure to implement the child's IEP. This meeting will include school personnel, parents/guardians, and relevant members of the IEP team. The manifestation determination meeting will be held within 10 school days of any decision to change the student's placement. If the student's parents/guardians disagree with the manifestation determination decision, a due process hearing may be requested (see due process requirements above). In order to determine that a behavior was not a manifestation of the disability, the team must decide that the current IEP and placement are appropriate and have been put into place; that the child was able to understand the consequences of his/her actions, and that the child could have controlled his/her actions. Children with disabilities cannot be punished for behaviors that are related to, or are manifestations of, their disabilities. If the IEP team decides that the child's behavior was not related to the disability, the child's placement may be changed for disciplinary reasons.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy

CCCS acknowledges the right of parents to send students to school with a personal communication tool. The school, however, maintains its right to limit the use of these tools, especially cell phones, on its property, during school events, and/or while utilizing transportation to and from the school. Students should follow the restriction guidelines regarding the use of personal communication devices. When a student arrives at

school, the cell phone or device should be turned off before they enter the building. It should then be handed into the homeroom teacher, who will place it in a secure location for the duration of the school day. The student may reclaim the cell phone at the end of the day, but may not use it while participating in extracurricular activities or while in the process of dismissal.

An administrator may confiscate the cell phone/electronic device from the student and keep it upon its misuse on school property. The student will receive a one-day suspension if found using the device, hiding the device, or in possession of a device that is turned on. A parent may reclaim the cell phone by making an appointment to see the administrator.

Electronic devices are defined as but not limited to: cell phones, smart watches, laser pointers, laptop computers, personal digital assistants, shock devices, beepers, cameras, etc.

Weapons Violations

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has enacted legislation (Act 26) which requires all public schools to take a mandatory course of action in dealing with students who are found to be in possession of weapons. The law requires the arrest and expulsion, for at least one year, of any student found in possession of a weapon on school property, in a school program, or while traveling to or from a school program, including time on public transportation. The law defines a weapon to include, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. There is no requirement that the student use or try to use the weapon.

Harassment Policy

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or handicap/disability. CCCS faculty is responsible for maintaining an educational environment free from all forms of harassment. Harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated behavior toward another person that creates an inhospitable environment for that person. This includes, but is not limited to, taunting, fighting, threatening, sending threatening images or emojis electronically, using anyone's image or photo without their consent, gossiping about another, intimidating, or a combination of any of these behaviors. Bullying is not tolerated in any way as the CCCS School Community believes that each student has the right to a safe learning environment. A student who is found to be participating in any type of bullying will be

subject to suspension. A repeated pattern of bullying could result in the CCCS Board requesting a hearing to determine the student's continued enrollment at CCCS.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of the internet as a tool to intimidate or disparage another person, by means of transmitting information (true or false) regarding that person. It also includes transmitting threatening messages, using deepfake photos or videos and/or images or using any type of slur. Cyber-bullying is not tolerated in any way at CCCS. Any student who is found by CCCS administration to be participating in cyber-bullying against fellow students, staff, faculty, administration or any CCCS community member will be subject to suspension. This includes the use of CCCS logos or likenesses. A repeated pattern of cyber-bullying could result in the CCCS Board requesting a hearing to determine the student's continued enrollment at CCCS. Local law enforcement will be contacted if any threats of violence or inappropriate depictions (real or AI) of a minor are shared online.

CCCS is asking for each parent/guardian's support in monitoring your child's phone outside of school. Please reiterate to your child that there are serious, real-life consequences including suspension, school transfer, and police investigation. Not only are these consequences real, but they also consume school staff and resources that could be used elsewhere. Please monitor your child's electronic devices- cyber-bullying will be treated as any other form of bullying.

Substance Abuse Policy

The Board of Trustees recognizes that substance abuse and the misuse of alcohol are serious social problems that have far-reaching implications for both the user and the entire community. The Board is committed to the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse and accepts the responsibility for instructing students in the nature of these substances.

The use, possession, sale or distribution, or possession with intent to sell or distribute any substance* (a) on school property, (b) at any place where an interscholastic and/or athletic contest is taking place, (c) during the course of any field trip, (d) during the course of any trip or activity sponsored by the Board of Trustees or under the supervision of the Board or its authorized agents, or (e) upon school transportation vehicles at any time is prohibited, as well as (f) the use of any substances prior to participation in the activities listed in (a) - (e) above is prohibited.

Use, by the student, in proper amounts, of a drug authorized by a medical prescription for the student from a licensed physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

Likewise, no student shall aid, abet, assist, or conceal the possession, consumption, purchase or distribution of any substance by any other student or students (a) on school property, (b) at any place where an interscholastic athletic contest is taking place, (c) during the course of any field trip, (d) during the course of any trip or activity sponsored

by the Board under the supervision of the Board or its authorized agents, or (e) upon school transportation vehicles at any time.

Any student found engaging in any of the foregoing prohibited activities will be subject to suspension or expulsion from school pursuant to existing administrative procedures for the discipline of school students and any other applicable provisions of the law. The suspension or expulsion would include any extracurricular activities.

*Definition: For the purpose of this policy, “substance” shall mean alcoholic beverages, anabolic steroids, controlled dangerous substances as defined in Section 2 of P.L. 1970, c. 266 (C.24: 21-2) or any chemical or chemical compound which releases vapors or fumes causing a condition of intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction or dulling of the brain or nervous system including, but not limited to, glue containing a solvent having the property of releasing toxic vapors or fumes as defined in Section 1 of P.L. 1965, c. 41 (C.2A: 170-25:9), and any prescription drugs, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted. (Refer to the school policy on the use of medications.)

Use and Possession of Tobacco Policy

The Board recognizes that smoking presents a health hazard, which can have serious consequences, both for the smoker and the nonsmoker and is, therefore, of concern to the Board. Smoking will not be permitted anywhere in the school or on school property.

The use of tobacco is defined as the possession and/or use of any cigarette, pipe, cigar, chewing tobacco, vape, snuff, or related tobacco product and/or paraphernalia. Smoking means the burning of a lighted cigarette, pipe, cigar, vape, or any other matter of material that contains tobacco.

Students shall not use or possess any product containing tobacco while on school property or at a school-sponsored event. School functions shall be defined as (a) on school property (b) at any place where an interscholastic and/or athletic contest is taking place; (c) during the course of any field trip; (d) during the course of any trip or activity sponsored by the Board of Trustees or its authorized agents; or (e) upon school transportation vehicles at any time.

Search Policy

In the interest of maintaining an educational environment and providing for the health and safety of our students, CCCS administrators reserve the right to conduct a search of a student's property, person, or personal effects (including, without limitation, purse, bookbags, lunch box/bag, athletic bag, outerwear, lockers, desks, computers, cell phones, other electronic devices, etc.). Administrators may perform such a search if the administrator has a reasonable suspicion that a student has violated or is violating state or federal laws, city codes, or school policies. Students do not enjoy an expectation of

privacy in the items that they bring to school or to school-sponsored events. Small fidget tools, smart putty, etc. will be permitted at the teacher's/administrator's discretion.

To maintain order and discipline at CCCS, and to protect the safety and welfare of students and staff members, school authorities may conduct a search and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered. Law enforcement may be contacted in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding between CCCS and the Philadelphia Police Department.

Parents/guardians and students should be aware of the following.

- The school maintains a record of every locker number.
- The school assumes no responsibility for loss of students' personal property.
- Random "locker sweeps" and bag searches are conducted periodically throughout the year.
- Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding. At least two (2) staff members will be present when searching a student's locker, bag, or person.

Student Technology Policy

Technology Equipment

CCCS students are fully responsible for CCCS technology equipment. Students must take appropriate measures to prevent loss, theft, or damage to the equipment. In the event that CCCS property is stolen, damaged, or misplaced, students will be responsible for reporting the loss to their teacher immediately.

In the event of damage to CCCS equipment, students and their parents/guardians will be responsible for all or part of the repair or replacement cost and may be subject to discipline in the event of negligence. CCCS will retain ownership of all equipment and it must be returned to CCCS at the end of the class, project, or school year for which it was issued.

Limited Rights of Use

Use of CCCS technology is a privilege, not a right. When necessary to protect and ensure the operability, integrity, security, and reliability of CCCS' resources, students may be denied access to said technology. Materials created by students using CCCS technology are the property of CCCS and CCCS retains the right to review, edit, and/or delete any material created by students. Please refer to and sign CCCS's Acceptable Use Policy along with the other required documents.

Security

CCCS technology used by students may contain tracking and monitoring software that may provide CCCS with information pertaining to the use of the technology by the student. CCCS retains the right to enable the location tracking function at any time, especially if the equipment is lost, stolen, or not returned. Inappropriate use of technology (including use of “not school appropriate” websites or apps) will result in disciplinary action.

CCCS provides filtering to help protect students from inappropriate content. CCCS uses third party services to filter/block inappropriate content. As a result, CCCS is not responsible for any inappropriate content that may inadvertently or mistakenly pass through the third-party content filter.

No Privacy Expectation

Any issued equipment is not for personal use. Students have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality with the use of CCCS equipment. CCCS may at any time, with or without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use of the equipment. By using CCCS technology, students agree to such access and monitoring of their use. Monitoring will be limited to student use. At no point will students be viewed or recorded using technology.

Grievance Procedure

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

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

Christopher Columbus Charter School Health Care Policy

***It is not permitted nor is it the teacher's responsibility to contact parents about sick and/or injured students. Please refer all health questions to our medical staff.

All students are entitled to health services by the school nurse as well as mandated screenings. The school nurse shall adhere to nursing standards and the nurse practice

act. The school nurse cares for illnesses and injuries that occur in the school setting. Parents /guardians will be notified in the event of an emergency and/or if a child needs to go home due to illness/injury. The school nurse is available to parents/guardians to assist with health issues that occur outside the school setting within the scope of his/her nursing practice.

Students with health issues will have an Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP), which will reflect his/her specific needs. Medications shall be administered as prescribed by a health care provider in a timely manner. The medication policies are available on the school website and in accordance with the School District of Philadelphia. Health records will be maintained in the Health Office and in accordance with HIPAA regulations.

Immunization Requirements All Grades K-12

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Health
and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health

VACCINES ARE REQUIRED ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!

- A Child must have at least one dose of all vaccinations or risk
- A Child may have a documented medical, religious, or philosophical exemption from these vaccinations, however exempt children may be excluded from school during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease. **Exemption will not be accepted for missed doses, that may result in exclusion from school.
- If a child does not have all the required doses and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive that dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion.
- If a child does not have all the required doses and the next dose is Not medically appropriate, the child must provide a medical plan within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.
- The medical plan must be followed or risk exclusion.

ALL GRADES

The following immunizations are required:

- 4 doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (DTaP)
(1 dose must be on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (IPV)
(4th dose must be on or after 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B

- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity (*documented history of chickenpox or antibody titer*)

GRADE 7

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4)

***ZERO DAY GRACE PERIOD

The additional immunizations for grades 7, must be completed prior to the first day of school or THE STUDENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO BEGIN SCHOOL. These vaccines are single dose therefore there is no grace period.

New Physicals are required for:

- Incoming Kindergarten students
- New or transferred students
- All 6th grade students

**If a student is uninsured and/or the family is experiencing a hardship the school will arrange for an examination at no cost to the family.

School services and mandated programs provided by the school nurse:

- All grades are provided with school health services.
- Maintenance of all medical records and immunizations.
- Dental screenings are offered to grades K, 3 and 7 (who have not had their required private dental screening).
- All students are provided a growth screen, height and weight. Hearing screen provided to grades K, 1st ,2nd , 3rd , and 7th.
- Scoliosis screen for Grade 7(and 6th graders who were not screened on their private mandated physical).
- All grades are provided Near and Far visual acuity tests.
- Vision screen-convex lens test (Plus Lens) provided to 1st grade.
- Vision screen-color vision test provided to 2nd grade.
- Vision screen- stereo /depth perception test provided to 2nd grade.

Special examinations

Children who appear to the teacher, nurse, counselor, or specialist to deviate from their normal growth and development pattern shall be reported to the parents or guardians who shall be requested to have the children examined by their family physician and/or family dentist. The results of these examinations shall be reported to the school. If the children are not examined within a reasonable length of time and their growth and development pattern continues to deviate from normal, the nurse will arrange an examination for these children. The school utilizes a free dental program for screening for required grades.

Scoliosis screening.

(a) Pupils to be tested. A scoliosis screening test shall be administered to students in grade six and grade seven and to age-appropriate students in ungraded classes.

(b) Pupils in grade six who are required to have a new physical may have their screening done by their health care provider.

Tuberculosis Testing

Pupils to be tested. A test for tuberculosis shall be required upon original entry into school however many health care providers opt to decline testing and evaluation will read "no risk".

School Staff Requirements

The Pennsylvania Public School Code, Section 1418(b) requires that school personnel be tested for TB. School personnel to be tested include employees and independent contractors who provide direct services to students on behalf of a school, including but not limited to teachers, nurses, administrators, physicians, dentists, dental hygienists, custodians, janitors, cooks, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, librarians, psychologists, audiologists and counselors, and student teachers and volunteers.

The Department of Health defines "direct service" as those persons in direct contact with students 10 or more hours/week. The law does not contain a provision to allow modifications for school staff/volunteers. They must be tested "prior to working for the school".

Medication Policies

NO CHILD IS PERMITTED TO CARRY THEIR OWN MEDICATION!!!!

1) Medication should be given at home whenever possible.

2) Medications prescribed 3x a day can be given at home (morning, after school and at bedtime).

3) Medication prescribed 4x a day can be given once in school with a doctor's order.

4) All medication must be prescribed by a qualified health care provider using form MED-1. Forms available upon request. A written order by a physician on a prescription pad or letterhead is also acceptable. No medication or treatment will be administered without written permission and dosing from a physician. Medication cannot be administered without directions therefore please DO NOT send the medication to school. (this includes epi-pens, pills and inhalers).

5) In the event of an asthma flare, inhalers may be administered in the nurse's office without a medical form, this is a one time exception. A written order from your child's physician is expected within 10 days. Inhalers will be returned after 10 days if the proper form is not on file.

- 6) Prescription medication must have the name of the recipient clearly visible on the label or box and in its original package.
- 7) Any dose changes to your child's medication must have documentation from the physician.
- 8) OTC (over the counter) medications such as Tylenol and /or Motrin require written confirmation by a qualified healthcare provider (prescription pad, letterhead and/or fax is acceptable). Dosing should be determined by the physician not the parent or the packaging.
- 9) OTC medication must be in the original manufacturer's container (Pills in a bag are unacceptable).
- 10) All medication that is to be given in school (inhalers, pills, etc) must be given to the nurse/health technician as soon as the student arrives at school. Students may not carry medication on them for any reason. Students who are caught with medication will be issued demerits, detention or suspension as determined by administration.
- 11) A new medication form, MED-1 is required each school year.
- 12) Finally, Tylenol will only be administered to students who have a standing order from their doctor.

***Any medication sent with your child that does not meet the above requirements, will Not be administered by the medical staff.

Health Room Policies:

- 1) The health staff cares for illnesses and injuries that occur in the school setting.
- 2) Notification of parents/guardians will be on an as needed basis and at the discretion of the health staff. The school district states you will be called in an emergency and/or if your child's sickness or injury requires them to go home.
- 3) The nurse will not treat injuries that occurred at home, redressing wounds from home is the parent's responsibility and/ or your family doctor. Dressings will only be changed with a doctor's order.
- 4) Children who are sick must stay home; perfect attendance is not an appropriate reason to send a sick child to school. Keep in mind that Tylenol masks/hides a fever, it does not cure it, your child is still sick.
- 5) All health requests should be sent to the health office staff, not the teacher. Please do not ask the teacher to contact you about illness, it is not their responsibility and not our policy.

School Transportation

CCCS does not provide school buses for transportation. Students who reside more than 1.5 miles from their respective building can receive either a SEPTA Pass or reimbursement for their travels.

For additional information please contact Ms. Lana McKenna at 215-925-7400.

Visitor Policy

Parents/Guardians may request to visit their child's classroom, but the request must be made in accordance with established administrative procedures.

The building principal or vice principal must grant prior approval for the visit, and shall notify the classroom teacher prior to the visit. The timing of classroom visits shall be determined by the building principal or designee. The building principal or designee may terminate a visit at any time if, in their judgment, the visit is disrupting children, staff, or the learning process or becomes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children or staff.

Administration reserves the right to request current FBI, Child Abuse, and/or PA Criminal Background Clearances. Visitors will check in with the front desk with a state ID or driver's license and wait for an administrator. They will receive and wear a visitors' badge and be escorted to and from the class by an administrator and follow any health and safety rules that may be in effect at the time of the visit.

Parents/Guardians shall be limited to one (1) class period per month, per child in the school for classroom visitations, in order to minimize disruption of the classroom schedule and the educational program. Parental participation in classroom activities or programs such as room parents, back-to-school events, and chaperones for field trips shall not constitute a classroom visit for purposes of this Policy.

Questions or concerns about a visit or about anything observed during a visit must be addressed to the accompanying school staff member, or by appointment, to the staff member responsible for the classroom, before or after the visit and outside the presence of children or working staff members. School staff shall not share with any visitor personally identifiable information concerning any students other than the student who is the subject of the observation. Visitors shall keep their observations of other children confidential. Visitors will refrain from discussing or sharing their observations of any children other than the subject of their observation to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of every individual.

Under exceptional circumstances and upon request of the program supervisor, classroom teacher, or parent/guardian, the building principal may authorize additional or longer classroom visits by a visitor.

Emergency School Closing

Should CCCS close for any reason (e.g. inclement weather), we will communicate closing information on our website (www.columbuscharter.org), Class Dojo, and families will receive an automated phone message, text, and email.

Families do have the option of not receiving automated calls. To opt out of these calls, families should contact their building's front desk.

Parent/Guardian Contact & Custody

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians must fill out a parent/guardian location form and a medical/health insurance form so that we can keep families informed of their child's progress and contact them quickly in case of an emergency.

Should an address change during the course of the school year, parents/guardians must complete a Contact Information Change form and provide us with a new proof of address.

CCCS may also request a copy of any court order or agreement affecting the custodial rights of parents/guardians. It is important that CCCS understands custodial arrangements in order to determine who is eligible to pick a student up from school and communicate with school staff.

Field Trips

Field trips are a valuable teaching aid. They provide direct experiences for learning and are an extension of what is being taught in the classroom. A permission slip must be signed by the parent/guardian for a student to participate in a field trip. Families are required to pay fees to cover the cost of transportation and other expenses associated with the field trip and have current clearances. Families are also required to pay their fees if accompanying student(s) on the trip. The school will accept cash or Venmo payment only. No personal checks or money orders will be accepted as payment for field trips.

Good behavior and attendance are required for a student to be eligible to participate in field trip activities; the Student Code of Conduct remains in force during all

school-sponsored field trips, and students who violate the Code will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Administration reserves the right to require a parent/guardian to accompany a student who has had difficulty with his/her behavior. Administration also reserves the right to decide whether or not a student may participate in a field trip based on his/her behavior and attendance.

Students will not be permitted to leave the school without a signed permission slip. Unless otherwise specified by administration, students must be dressed in the official school uniform in order to participate in any school trip. There will be no exceptions made.

SAP/Multi-Tiered System of Supports(The “WIN” Program)

CCCS aims at promoting appropriate student behavior and increasing student learning through increasingly intensive interventions. Maintaining our effort to help all students meet with continuous behavioral success through Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII), we are moving ahead with Pennsylvania's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (PA-MTSS), which represents a broad set of evidence-based practices that may be implemented across a system to include academics AND behavior within a recursive and systematic problem- solving process.

Tier 1: Classroom and School-Wide Interventions – Foundation/Standards-Aligned Instruction for All Students.

At this Tier, standards-aligned instruction and school-wide foundational interventions are provided to *ALL* students as part of the general education core curriculum. Students who are making expected grade level progress (benchmark students) in the standards-aligned system and who demonstrate social competence receive regular instruction and interventions at Tier I.

Grade groups meet on an on-going basis to discuss student needs and to act as a peer support group. School administrators and facilitators also participate in the grade level team meetings. Students needing academic, attendance, or behavioral supports are identified using various school- wide and grade-level data and screenings. Classroom teacher(s) and grade groups implement strategies to promote student success. In-class and grade level interventions are clearly documented.

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions for Some Students

In addition to students identified through school-wide data review, a written request for student support may be made by staff and/or parents/guardians for those students who require additional academic and behavioral support to successfully engage in the learning process and succeed in the standards-aligned system.

Standard students supported at this level include students who are in danger of retention, students who have accumulated multiple disciplinary referrals, and students who were retained in the preceding school year.

At Tier II, academic and behavioral strategies and interventions are designed for *SOME* students – those who are not making expected progress in the standards-aligned system and who are at risk for academic and behavioral failure. At this level, *Targeted Interventions* are provided. Interventions are frequently delivered in smaller group settings.

In assessing students' progress at the Tier II level, interventions are documented. Through on- going team discussion and data review, a decision is made to continue with targeted intervention strategies, to implement additional supports and interventions at a Tier 3 level, OR to refer the student for a multi-disciplinary evaluation, i.e. special education testing and services.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions for a Few Students

At this Tier, academic and behavioral strategies are designed for the *FEW* students who remain significantly below established grade-level benchmarks in the standards-aligned system or who demonstrate significant difficulties with behavioral and social competence. *Intensive Interventions* are provided and are individualized.

At Tier III, CCCS proceeds with the recommendation of the Team (including the student's family) for additional levels of support. For each student referred to Tier III, the Team makes a decision to either provide additional supports and interventions and/or recommend the student for a multi-disciplinary evaluation (special education testing). The documentation of interventions continues.

Students who receive targeted or intensive interventions are not generally exempt from disciplinary consequences which may include suspension and/or expulsion. For additional information on special education, please refer to the Special Education Programs section of the handbook.

Equal Opportunity Policy

CCCS and the Board of Directors requires equal educational opportunity for all students including, but not limited to course offerings, sports, guidance and counseling, and tests and procedures, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, social or economic status, parenthood, marital status, or disability.

Students must also respect the rights of other students to receive an education in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and free from discriminatory practices. No student has the right to diminish another student's rights.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or feel it has been violated, please contact Nathan Blodgett (215) 389-6000, nblodgett@cccs.k12.pa.us.

Photography & Video Permission

From time to time, photographs or videos may be taken of students for CCCS public relations publications, professional development of staff, or other school-related purposes. Additionally, students' school-related work may be displayed in a school building in conjunction with displays of other students' work. These photographs, videos, and school-related work (which are not considered student records) will be used/displayed in a manner designed to ensure that confidential information about the child's educational program will not be revealed. Parents/guardians provide consent in the enrollment and re-enrollment packets. Parents/guardians who had provided consent in this packet and currently object to the use of their child's photograph, the videotaping of their child for our professional development program, the posting of their child's name or image on our district website, and/or the display of their child's work by the district in any manner should contact their child's Principal.

Notification of Rights, Policies, & Procedures

Child Abuse Reporting Policy

All CCCS employees, independent contractors and volunteers are mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to report suspected child abuse. The responsibilities of CCCS in this regard are set forth in a Board-adopted policy that can be found at <https://columbuscharter.org/about/schooldocuments/>

Reporters are required to make a report when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student is a victim of child abuse, which includes being physically abused, emotionally abused, neglected, or sexually abused. When reporters have reason to suspect child abuse has occurred, they are required to notify the Commonwealth's child abuse hotline, either via telephone or online. Following the report, staff members are required to notify the CEO, who is responsible for following up on child abuse reports.

Homeless Children

CCCS ensures that any child of a homeless individual has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001. Please see more information at www.columbuscharter.org/policies or contact our school counselors. Their role is to improve identification of students experiencing homelessness, understand the rights of such children (including enrollment and

transportation), and heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

Suicide Risk and School Reentry Policy

If a staff member or student reports a suicide threat or suicidal ideation to the school counselor, CCCS will implement the following protocol:

The school counselor will meet with the student of concern and complete a suicide risk assessment using the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale Screener. Regardless of risk level, the school counselor will call home to inform parents/guardians.

If the results of the screener indicate a low risk, the counselor will call home. If the student is currently under the care of an outside mental health professional, the counselor will recommend the parent follows up with the child's therapist. If the student does not currently have a therapist, the counselor will refer the student for outside mental health services (through the school's Student Assistance Program) and/or adds the student to the counselor's caseload for short-term counseling.

If the results of the screener indicate a moderate risk, the counselor and/or administration will immediately call home. The parent must come to school to pick up their child. The student must be seen and cleared by a behavioral health professional before returning to school. The parent may take their child to Path Urgent Care, the child's pediatrician, or a children's Crisis Response Center for a behavioral health evaluation. The student may return to school with documentation that they have received a behavioral health evaluation and were determined to be safe to return to school. If a family needs help with follow-up outside therapy resources, CCCS counselors will assist.

If the results of the screener indicate a high risk and/or if the student is in crisis, the counselor and/or administrator will immediately contact the parent and/or Children's Mobile Crisis Team. The parent must come in for an emergency crisis meeting. The school counselor and/or staff will stay with the student until the parent or Mobile Crisis Team arrives. If a parent is able to transport the student themselves, they must immediately take the student to Children's Crisis Response Center or to CHOP Crisis Response Center. If a parent is unable to take their student, Children's Mobile Crisis Team will provide transportation to Children's Crisis Response Center. The student may return to school with documentation of a behavioral health evaluation and a treatment plan. The school will implement a safety plan upon the student's school reentry.

Family Education and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In accordance with state and federal regulations, CCCS has established policies and procedures to ensure the confidentiality of student records.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents have the right to request that a school amend records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory" information to third parties. "Directory" information as defined by CCCS includes records such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, parents may request that CCCS not disclose directory information to third parties by completing the opt-out provision below.

If you do not want CCCS to disclose directory information (CCCS designates name, address, email address, parent name/email address, photograph, grade level, awards and accolades as directory information) from your child's education records without your prior written consent, please write and sign a letter to the school including the statement below within sixty (60) days of your students' enrollment:

I have read this statement of privacy rights to information in my student's education record and request that CCCS NOT disclose any personally-identifiable information from my student's records, including what is called "directory information," without my prior written consent, to any outside person or organization.

Annual Notices for Section 504, Title I, Title IX, & IDEA

Please find and review these notices at www.columbuscharter.org/policies. If you have any questions, please contact your building principal.

Right to Amend

CCCS retains the right to amend the handbook from time to time. Families will be given prompt notification if changes are made. CCCS does not discriminate against any child – all are considered equal regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or beliefs.

****Please sign and return the attached forms****

Media Release Form (2026-2027)

We require a signed Media Release form indicating that your child's likeness/image or classroom work may be photographed or videotaped when involved in educational activities as part of the school program. That form contains the following provision:

Check One:

☐ I hereby grant CCCS the right and permission to publish/use photograph, video, and/or audio tapes of my child, and schoolwork created by my child, to promote my child, and CCCS through the school's website, media productions and platforms, or through external media.

In addition, I accept responsibility, knowing that this release is on file for the extent of my child's career at CCCS. If I deem it necessary to remove such consent, I shall notify CCCS in writing of my intent.

☐ I DO NOT grant CCCS the permission to publish or use photographs, video, audiotapes, or any other media showing my child's image, likeness, or school work. I understand, however, that despite CCCS's efforts, some materials (such as videos of large group assemblies) may contain images of my student.

***Please note: if CCCS does not receive a completed and returned Media Release form for your child, CCCS will recognize this as your implied consent to allow CCCS to include your child's image, audio/visual, and or writing in internal and external media.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Family Acknowledgment (2026-2027)

Families,

Please acknowledge that you and your child(ren) have seen and read this Student Family Handbook together by completing the information below. Please also take time to review the annual notifications in the "Policies" section of our website at www.columbuscharter.org. Once you sign this form, please immediately return it to his/her teacher. If CCCS does not receive a signed form from you, we will recognize this as your implied consent.

We believe that long-lasting, respectful partnerships are built on a foundation of mutual respect and shared vision. Your signature will indicate that you have reviewed and discussed the handbook together and you join the CCCS faculty and staff in our efforts to keep our school safe and orderly.

By signing this document, I affirm that I have read, understood, and will comply with the CCCS Student Family Handbook and all policies, interventions, and consequences contained within this document.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Student Acceptable Use Agreement

Date: _____

School Name: Christopher Columbus Charter School

Student Name: _____

Terms and Conditions:

- **Responsibility:** The student is responsible for the care and safekeeping of the loaned computer. This includes protecting it from physical damage, theft, and unauthorized use. Teachers will supervise student assignment and use of technology.
- **Use:** The computer is loaned for educational purposes related to the student's schoolwork.
- **Prohibited Activities:** The following activities are strictly prohibited:
 - Downloading or installing unauthorized software.
 - Attempting to bypass school network security.
 - Using the computer for illegal or inappropriate activities.
 - Sharing the computer with unauthorized individuals.
 - Modifying the computer's hardware or software configuration without permission.
- **Damage or Loss:** In the event of damage or loss, the student/parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement, as determined by the school.
- **Software:** The school may install necessary software on the computer. The student/parent/guardian is not permitted to remove or modify this software.
- **Inspection:** The school reserves the right to inspect the computer and/or student account at any time.
- **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):** The student and parent/guardian acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- **Agreement:** By signing below, the student and parent/guardian agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this agreement.

Signatures:

- **Student Name:** _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____
- **Parent/Guardian Name:** _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____