

Washington Academy Parent-Calendar Handbook

www.washingtonacademy.com

973-759-6555

**Executive Director/Superintendent: Mr. David Schwartz
Principal: Ms. Donna Johnson**

Executive Director's Message

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Washington Academy as the school to educate your child. Over the last 30 years of Washington Academy's illustrious history, thousands of students have learned to view school as an inspiring place to grow and learn.

To ensure that your child's education at Washington Academy is a positive and nurturing experience, this Student/Parent Handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the school, along with a highlight of the programs and services we provide.

The handbook also includes a Calendar to keep track of important dates and events taking place this year. You should expect to receive a monthly updated calendar letting you know ahead of time of school dates, closings, half-days and other events. If you do not receive a monthly calendar, please contact the school at 973-759-6555 to request one.

The school calendar and other information about Washington Academy's programs and services can be found on our website at: www.washingtonacademy.com

I look forward to speaking with you throughout the year, as my office is only a phone call away. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, feedback, positive praise or comments about Washington Academy. All parent communication is important in order to make the school a better place and to maximize your child's education.

Sincerely,

David Schwartz, M.A.
Executive Director/Superintendent

School Mission

Washington Academy provides an academic, social and behavior safety net for students who have interacted previously with school in a negative and unsuccessful fashion. The school is therefore supportive, nurturing and inspiring to students to strive to reach their maximum individual potential.

Goals

- Provide a safe and nurturing environment conducive to student learning
- Build student's academic skills at their individual level
- Build positive social skills
- Provide academic and emotional support for all children
- Integrate technology throughout the curriculum to maximize each student's learning to provide a well-rounded education

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About the Administration

Executive Director/Superintendent

Mr. David Schwartz, M.A. Ed.

Student success in all aspects of their present and future lives is the most important goal for Mr. Schwartz, who oversees the program at Washington Academy. He has nearly 20 years of experience with special needs students and has developed a keen understanding of behavioral education and interventions. Over the last five years under Mr. Schwartz's directorship, Washington Academy students have achieved great success. Many students have earned high school diplomas, after working hard to make-up high school credits, and all students made a transition into the next phase of life. Our eighth grade students have graduated into high school life, and all of our high school graduates have enrolled in 2 and 4-year colleges, as well as gone to work and trade schools.

School Principal

Ms. Donna Johnson, M.A.

Ms. Johnson is a veteran educator who brings 30 years of expertise to Washington Academy. She has taught and has been an administrator in both New York and New Jersey and has various experiences to impact the students of Washington Academy. She will coordinate professional development programs to improve instruction and learning in the classroom. She will research new innovative programs for more technology use in school. She will continue to revise and modify, in coordination with the school's social workers, the behavior modification program.

Assistant Principal/Supervisor of Instruction

Ms. Jennifer Kaufman, M.A.

Ms. Jennifer Kaufman has over a decade of experience in teaching and special education with an emphasis on assistive technology. She has a double Master's degree in Educational Technology and Educational Leadership, which help her as the Assistant Principal and Supervisor of Instruction to ensure that every student meets the goals of academic rigor and become comfortable and familiar with technology and its uses for the 21st Century.

Brief History

Washington Academy was founded over 30 years ago by Dr. Jack Schwartz, who believed that all children were special and some children needed special attention. Dr. Schwartz developed the comprehensive and intensive academic and behavioral program that Washington Academy staff implements today. Dr. Schwartz was a licensed child/family psychologist for 20 years and trained and certified Teacher, Psychologist, and Director. Washington Academy's behavioral program, which is based in research-based methodology, was specifically tailored to meet the needs of today's students.

Overview of Program

Washington Academy consists of three schools within a school program:

- ❖ Preschool disabled classroom
- ❖ Lower School (K-8th Grade)
- ❖ High School (9th – 12th Grade)

At each level, students are provided academic and behavioral support, intervention and strategies to learn to be successful in school and in life.

School Hours (September through June)

School Day Begins: 8:20 am

School Day Ends: 2:00 pm

Delayed Opening:

School Opens: 10:00 am

End of School Day: 2:00 pm

Early Dismissals:

School Opens: 8:20 am

End of School Day: 12:45 pm

Student Handbook

The Student Handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the school, along with a highlight of the programs and services we provide. The student behavioral expectations, dress code, electronics policy, internet policy and anti-bullying policy shall also be explained in general. A full copy of these policies are available on the school website: www.washingtonacademy.com

General Anti-Bullying Policy is located at the back of this Student Handbook.

Emergency Closings

In cases of emergency, inclement weather, or severe storm conditions, it may be necessary to either cancel school or adjust a Delayed Opening of school. The following are the methods parents/guardians can use to find out if school is open or closed.

School Website: www.washingtonacademy.com

Our Main #: 973-759-6555

Channel 2 News: TV Broadcast and also online at <http://newyork.cbslocal.com/>

Radio Station: 101.5 FM and also online at <http://nj1015.com/>

Channel 12, News 12 New Jersey and also online at <http://newjersey.news12.com/>

The school utilizes an instant-alert system that sends a voicemail, text message and email to participants, letting them know if school is open or closed. (Contact the Main Office if you have any questions regarding the instant-alert system).

Admission to Washington Academy

Washington Academy considers all qualified applicants between the ages of three and 21 regardless of race, gender or religion.

Behavior Expectations and Goals

Students enrolled at Washington Academy are expected to read, understand and follow all school rules and guidelines, including expectations for positive and appropriate behavior. The school has put in place many and varied supports and interventions to assist students in following school rules, and encourage students through positive behavior support to strive to meet those expectations.

If at any time during the school year, a student or parent feels that their child may be having special difficulty or challenges with maintaining positive and appropriate behavior, contact the school immediately to set up a parent/teacher/Principal meeting to discuss other strategies.

The long-term success of every student at Washington Academy is paramount.

School Safety

Washington Academy has always put student and staff safety at the top of its priority list. That is why all of our staff are trained and certified in de-escalation techniques Handle With Care and CPI to assist students communicate their feelings and emotions in a positive and appropriate way.

Along with student de-escalation, our school has enhanced security measures to prevent outside persons gaining unauthorized access. These measures include: Video Monitor Intercom, Bus Arrival and Dismissal Procedures, and Electronics policy.

- ❖ **VIDEO MONITOR** – A DIGITAL FACE CAMERA HAS BEEN INSTALLED AT OUR FRONT DOOR (P2), WHICH TAKES A DIGITAL PICTURE AND SAVES IT ON OUR SERVER. (APPROX. 14 DAYS)
- ❖ **BUS ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES** – STUDENTS ENTER AND EXIT THROUGH OUR BUS DOOR (P1) IN AN ORDERLY FASHION WITH MULTIPLE CHECKPOINTS IN THE SCHOOL MONITORED BY STAFF.
 - WHEN STUDENTS ARRIVE AT SCHOOL THEY MUST OPEN THEIR BACKPACKS FOR INSPECTION AND BE WANDERED BY A HAND-HELD METAL DETECTION DEVICE BEFORE ENTERING THE BUILDING. SEVERAL DE-ESCALATION TRAINED STAFF MEMBERS ARE AVAILABLE AT OUR BUS ENTRANCE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND ORDERLY ARRIVAL OF STUDENTS.
 - (ALL STUDENTS THAT ARRIVE LATE TO SCHOOL, AFTER 8:20 AM, MUST REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE AND HAVE AN ADULT SIGN THEM IN.)
- ❖ **ELECTRONICS POLICY** – ALL ELECTRONICS ARE COLLECTED AT THE BUS DOOR (P1) AND PLACED IN AN INDIVIDUAL ENVELOPE, WHICH IS PROTECTED UNDER LOCK AND KEY IN OUR MAIN OFFICE.

- CELL PHONE USAGE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED, AS WELL AS ALL OTHER COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS OR OUTSIDE PERSONS NOT DONE ON WASHINGTON ACADEMY MAIN OFFICE PHONES.
- IF YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD SHOULD HAVE ACCESS AND ABILITY TO CALL YOU DURING THE DAY, PLEASE NOTIFY THE MAIN OFFICE AND ALL ACCOMMODATIONS SHALL BE MADE FOR YOUR CHILD TO HAVE ACCESS TO WASHINGTON ACADEMY PHONES WITH SUPERVISION.

IT IS AGAINST SCHOOL POLICY FOR ANY STUDENT TO RECORD PICTURES OR VIDEO ON PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES, AND ANY REPORT OF A STUDENT OR EVIDENCE OF RECORDED IMAGES MAY BE CONSIDERED A VIOLATION OF THE SCHOOL'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY.

Technology Use Policy

A full version of the acceptable usage of technology and the internet policy is available on the school's website or by contacting the main office. The following is a general outline of the acceptable uses and expectations regarding technology and internet usage at school and on school devices.

This policy is aligned with the school's safety policy/plan and anti-bully policy (N.J.S.A 18A:37-15). Access to electronic devices and the internet is provided by the school as an educational tool for students to be immersed in 21st Century skills, necessary for long-term success in the workplace and in higher education. The school has a web-filtering system in place to help prevent students from gaining access to unauthorized sites. Reports or evidence that students have bypassed or attempted to bypass the filtering system may be deemed a violation of the school anti-bully policy. It is strictly prohibited for any student to access or use an electronic device or website that they have not been instructed to do so by a staff member at Washington Academy.

List of Strictly Prohibited Items in School

This is a general list of items, but is not limited to:

- Weapons
 - Knives, guns, clubs, bats, pepper spray, mace, aerosol spray or any other item that could be used as a weapon or harmful to another person.
- Household Items
 - Lighters, matches, lighter fluid, correction fluid, markers, paint, stink bombs, water balloons, shaving crème and spray paint.
- Electronics
 - Cell phones, iPods, mp3players, radios, any game system such as PSP, Nintendo DS or any other electronic equipment.
- Items for Sale or Purchase
 - Students cannot bring any items to school to sell or solicit. Students who bring money (bills & coins), money order or other currency may not have it in plain sight of other students or staff.
- Devices to bypass school equipment
 - Internet hot-spots, or other devices that by-pass Washington Academy equipment.
- Other items
 - Any items that would interfere with the health or safety of any individual, or which is in violation of any part of the Student Code of Conduct or any local, state or federal laws.

Washington Academy is not responsible for any personal items lost or stolen.

WASHINGTON ACADEMY STRONGLY URGES YOU TO KEEP ALL VALUABLES AT HOME

A copy of our full School Safety Plan is located on our website: www.washingtonacademy.com

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Low Student-Staff Ratio

One of the key advantages for students is class size. Washington Academy has one certified teacher per room, in addition to other highly trained staff to help support the academic growth of each student. (Our student to staff ratio is as low as 3:1 in some grades)

In-Class Supports

The school's curriculum is fully aligned with New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJ CCCS), which means that the courses and topics covered at Washington Academy are similar to the local public school your child began his/her education. This is important because when appropriate, your child may transition back into your local public schools and will need to be ready and prepared for the academic rigor of the neighborhood school.

Courses Offered:

- Pre-K: The intensive pre-k program has a low student/teacher ratio, typically 2:1. The program uses a High Scope curriculum as a general guide for interaction, play and learning. Part of the pre-k program goals are to teach appropriate transition skills through modeling appropriate behavior and experiencing a kindergarten classroom to learn future skills, goals and the ability to follow class rules.

- K-8th Grade: All students receive instruction in all core areas, Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Art, and character education. All courses are infused with technology to meet the challenges of a digital world and the 21st Century Skills.
- High School (Grades 9-12): Students are provided accredited and approved courses that meet the needs of New Jersey's High School Graduation Requirements (N.J.S.A. 18A:35). A copy of the High School Course Guide is available on the school's website, or you can contact the main office for a printed copy.

In addition to the individual classrooms, Washington Academy provides a full Art-Studio, a Literacy Support Lab, Physical Education classes (including Fitness Center for older students), and technology electives.

All of our certified staff has received professional development in different learning styles and providing differentiated instruction. Every staff member also receives a minimum of 20 hours of professional development per year to enhance their skills and expertise as educators.

Highly Qualified Staff

All Staff Members are highly trained, specialized and qualified educators. Our teachers are highly qualified and certified by the State of New Jersey in various core subjects, in addition to teaching students with special needs.

Approximately 40% of our faculty also has attained a Masters Level of education in an educationally related concentration of study.

Specialized and Differentiated Lesson Planning

One of the specialized skills that Washington Academy staff has is the ability to write a curriculum map. Curriculum mapping is similar to the framework of a house. The frame is a basic wood structure, that's held together with nails. You can see straight through the frame, but it's not a yet a house. A good frame allows a good house to be built. The same holds true for a curriculum map. The teacher isn't able to see the student with the curriculum map, but a good map allows the teacher to design a great lesson, which means your child can learn and be successful both in school and in life.

Our staff spends approximately 20 hours per year studying, researching and writing curriculum maps in various core subject areas. Maps are always being adjusted and tweaked, when new technology is introduced into the world or new discoveries happen in math, science or social studies.

Specialized Reading Laboratory

Literacy and Language Arts skills are vital to the short and long term success of a student in school and in life. The reading lab is designed to meet the needs of students that are having significant challenges with reading. Students attend the lab in small groups or in some cases one-on-one with a certified English Teacher.

The reading programs that we offer through the Reading Laboratory are: Wilson Reading Program, Reading Horizons, Discover Intensive Phonics, Reading Advantage, Explode the Code and Jamestown Navigator.

Reading and Mathematics Assessment

To better meet the individual academic needs of our students, we use norm referenced educational achievement assessments to determine the most accurate level of achievement. With those academic benchmarks our teachers tailor an academic schedule for the student to follow for the school year. Students may move at their own pace, which means that students who excel in any subject can move through the curriculum without any limitations placed on them.

Homework Policy

All students grades K-12 are required to receive homework on a daily basis. The only exception is if a student has earned a “Homework Pass”, which excuses the student from homework for that night ONLY. A maximum of 2 passes can be earned per marking period. Passes are given in recognition of outstanding academic effort. Parents/guardians will be notified that day if their child has a “Pass”.

The purpose of homework is not to hand-in ERROR FREE product, but to give the teacher an accurate picture of how well your child has mastered the material. It is valuable for you to check your child’s homework before they bring it to school.

The following homework guide provides the amount of time students should be spending on homework:

Pre-K and K	None	Grade 6	1 hour
Grade 1-2	15-30 minutes	Grade 7-8	1-1 ½ Hours
Grade 3-4	30-40 minutes	Grade 9-12	2-2 ½ Hours
Grade 5	40-50 minutes		

Grading Policy

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress reports are issued four times per year, approximately 4 weeks prior to the end of the marking period. The progress report includes a section for teachers to make comments; this section uses numbers that associate with the specific teacher comments.

Report Cards are issued four times per year, at the end of the marking period. With exception for pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade, all other classrooms shall issue letter grades for all core curriculum, cycle, elective and health/physical education courses. A limited number of high school non-required elective courses may issue a grade of "P" for Pass, or "NC" for No Credit. A Pass indicates the student shall receive the full credit hours designated for that course.

Grading/Attendance

❖ Pre-K through 8th Grade:

Students are required to complete all work with the assistance of accommodations, modifications and learning strategies as indicated in each student's IEP.

In order to receive a grade for each subject area, the student must attend school a minimum of 80% of the marking period, otherwise "INC" (incomplete) will be placed in the subject that attendance requirements were not met.. Student absences are unexcused unless they meet the criteria outlined in the General Attendance Policy.

For grades pre-kindergarten through 8th grade, student attendance shall be noted on the progress and report cards in the comment section.

❖ High School Students (9th through 12th Grade):

High School students are required by the Department of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:35 to complete all content subject course requirements in order to receive a high school diploma.

The school's attendance/grading policy for high school students limits a student's absence from school to no more than 14 total days in any given marking period, otherwise that student may not be eligible to receive a letter grade.

An "INC" (incomplete) shall be placed in the subjects the student did not attend and the student shall be informed that they must complete a make-up course to eliminate the "INC".

Make-Up Credit Program

One marking period "INC" in high school is equivalent to 25 total course hours of study (or 45 days). A student can still earn full-year credit in any subject he/she received an "INC", if his/her make up schoolwork is completed, reviewed, and graded by the *last day of the third marking period*.

Any student that receives two marking period "INC" in one subject area will only be eligible to earn half-year credit hours for that specific course, all other credits may be earned through the ESY program or during the following grade year.

During the regular school year, a student can earn a maximum of five (5) make-up credits to meet the New Jersey Department of Education's strict high school requirements.

ESY CREDITS

Washington Academy offers an ESY program designed specifically to make-up credits for high school students. It is possible to earn a maximum of 12.5 credits over the summer.

General Attendance Policy

Regular attendance in school is vital to achieving success academically and behaviorally. In addition, attendance increases the consistency and the constant attention provided through the behavioral program of Washington Academy. Therefore Washington Academy has outlined the following student attendance policy, which takes into consideration student's individual needs, IEP goals and objectives and classified disabilities. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13 student's must attend an average of 90% of the possible school days in general and all absences are unexcused except for the following reasons.

Excused Absences

Washington Academy considers the following as cause for excused absence:

- A. Disabling illness, as outlined in the student's individual IEP, or as part of the specific classification of the student (in such cases, the attendance procedures shall still be followed, but the parent and Principal shall convene to create an acceptable attendance action plan for the student).
- B. Recovery from accident. The student or parent must submit a notice from the attending physician the student is cleared to return to school.
- C. Required Court attendance. The parent must submit a copy of the court notice.

- D. Death in the family. Documentation must be submitted when the student returns to school, regarding the family member's death. The parent should also call the school (973) 759-6555 to inform the attendance manager that your child will be absent due to a death in the family.
- E. Religious observance (in accordance with statute, no pupil absent for religious observance of a day recognized by the Commissioner of Education shall be charged with an unexcused absence, deprived of an award or eligibility/opportunity to compete for an award). The parent must provide written notification to the school at least 2 days prior to the date of religious observance.
- F. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Executive Director.

*In order for any absence from school to be considered excused,
a note from a parent/guardian with a signature and date is required.*

Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

Any student not arriving on the provided transportation (N.J.S.A 18A:39-1 et seq), must have an adult sign the student in at the main office, when they arrive at school.

Under no circumstances may a student sign him/herself out of school, unless they are of legal age of majority (18). All other students are only allowed to leave school early with a parent/guardian signature, a parent designated legal contact person or law enforcement, court order, or other State agency.

Transportation

Pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:39-1 et seq., students with special needs shall be provided with transportation at no cost to parents and in accordance with the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). The transportation shall pick students up at their home and bring them to school in the morning and return to their home in the afternoon, unless arranged with the local public school case manager, students may not be transported to any other location.

Students that arrive on the provided transportation are not counted as late or absent, if the transportation arrives after the start of the first class period. First period begins at 8:20 am. Students that elect not to take the provided transportation must follow the General Attendance Policy.

Tardiness can affect performance in class and cumulative tardies may have an adverse effect on the grade for the course missed.

Transportation Questions/Comments/Issues

Washington Academy does not contract or oversee the transportation for any student enrolled at the school. All transportation issues or comments must be presented to your local school case manager and/or the contracted bus company. Parents/guardians are encouraged to inform the school of any issues on the buses, so that our staff can intervene with any student disciplinary action or additional training for bus personnel.

(NOTE: Washington Academy does not contract the bus companies, and thus have no direct authority over their hiring practices, routes, or rosters.)

Bus Rules and Regulations

Bus Safety is as important as School Safety, therefore it is expected that all students adhere to the following basic rules for riding on a school bus, van, or other transportation during the morning and afternoon commute and also during the school day on school sponsored trips. (All school behavior rules also apply on the bus as well as throughout the school day.)

All students MUST:

1. Wear a seat-belt
2. Remain in their seat while the bus is moving. (In some cases, seat location may be assigned)
3. Not throw anything from the bus, window, or inside the bus
4. Act respectfully with all staff and students assigned to the bus
5. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times
6. Not vandalize any area of the bus, seats, windows, or sides, doors.
7. Report any and all issues that occur on the bus to the school Bus Duty coordinator at the school's bus entrance (P2)

These rules ensure the safety of students on the bus and must be followed without exception. Any issue that occurs on the bus must be in writing from the bus company, otherwise the school cannot address the issue with fairness to all involved. If a parent/guardian becomes aware of a situation or issue occurring on the bus, call the school immediately, so that we may contact the bus company to request a written report.

Only in cases where a student has been suspended from school for the day, may transportation be suspended as well. If your child has been suspended, the bus will not arrive at your home for that morning.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the morning bus does not arrive at your home on any day except for suspension, call the bus company and the school immediately, so that we may find out any issue or cause.

Students who cannot follow the bus rules and regulations shall be subject to the school's discipline procedures and may result in remedial measures to provide further support and interventions to teach students appropriate behavior on transportation.

Washington Academy's School Counseling Program

Washington Academy has developed a highly specialized and comprehensive therapeutic social/emotional program. The school environment and climate has been tested and proven to provide strong supports and interventions for each child that attends school. One of the key elements of the social/emotional program is the counseling department.

Led by a fully licensed LCSW, each student is assigned an individual social worker, which they meet with regularly throughout the school year. Every student receives at minimum group counseling once per week. And additional counseling is available as needed, whether or not it is indicated in the student's IEP.

The Social Workers work collaboratively with students, teachers and administration to create and maintain a strong therapeutic school community. They develop close relationships with the students and function as the student's advocates throughout the program. They also maintain high ethical standards and confidentiality.

Students make varying levels of social/emotional progress during the time that they attend the school. The goal is to promote pro-social competencies in order to increase students' ability to function appropriately in various settings. *(Please note that our counseling services are not intended to replace recommended psychotherapeutic treatment.)*

Some topics covered during group sessions are as follows:

- Anger Management
- Character Education (Anti-bullying education)
- Social Skills
- Self-regulation (impulse control, self-soothing, self-calming)
- Self-awareness

Positive Behavior Support System

Positive Behavior Support (P.B.S.) is a researched based methodological approach to behavior. PBS is effective when three things are maintained: consistency, persistency and time.

Behavior Modification Plan

Washington Academy has developed a behavior modification philosophy that centers on the student's emotional intelligence and well-being. The staff at Washington Academy receive many hours of positive behavior training each year, and implement a unique classroom behavior plan based on the core philosophy.

Some classrooms utilize a traditional point-earning system, whereas some incorporate many different tier levels of earning and rewards. All students receive on a daily basis three basic emotional needs, "love, attention and affection..."

The following is a highlighted list of rewards the school uses, but is not limited to:

- Field trips
- Friday rewards
- Special School Events
- In-class movies, video games or activities
- School Store/Snack Store
- Field Day/ Environmental Studies Trip (An overnight trip)
- Annual Awards Ceremony

For further information on the psychology behind PBS, please visit www.pbis.org.

Suspension Policy

Washington Academy recommends suspension in cases where the student presents a danger or threat to his/herself or others or have violated school code/policy with extreme prejudice. Upon returning from a

suspension the student meets with his/her social worker to further process the incident. This is done to assist the student in learning from the incident and to conceptualize different strategies to cope with an array of emotions.

Termination from Program

Washington Academy makes a commitment to the student, the family and the local public school to implement the students IEP and also provide a safe, nurturing and positive environment to foster growth socially and emotionally as well as accelerated growth academically.

Recommending or considering termination from the school program is a serious determination and the school considers many factors in relation to that ultimate decision. Washington Academy is compelled to terminate from the program any student whose health and safety cannot be reasonably accommodated at the school. In addition, if a student poses a serious threat to him/herself or others then the school must consider termination from the program.

In some cases, students may be terminated from the school program for other reasons such as: lack of attendance or the student's specific IEP goals and objectives can no longer be met by the established program at Washington Academy, and reasonable accommodation also cannot be made for the student.

Termination Process and Procedures

If a student's placement at the school may be in question, the student's case manager will be notified immediately to discuss the issues surrounding the need to discuss placement. The school and case

manager shall discuss possible alternative strategies or interventions that can be implemented at the school to further support the student's growth and progress

After a reasonable amount of time, if the interventions and/or alternative strategies have not alleviated or reduced the conditions that raised questions about placement, the case manager and the parent/guardian shall be notified of a meeting to discuss termination.

The following procedures shall take place to notify the parent/guardian of a meeting:

1. The sending district will notify the parties involved that a conference is scheduled to discuss any possible alternatives. This conference must be held within fifteen (15) calendar days of notice.
2. If a conference is not requested within fifteen (15) calendar days following notification of the possible termination, the Executive Director or designee will make the final decision as to the student's enrollment in the Washington Academy program.
3. If a decision is made to terminate, the termination will become effective fifteen (15) calendar days following notification of the decision. The student may be permitted to remain in the program during the fifteen (15) day period as long as he/she does not present a danger to him/herself or any student or staff member. Should the terminated student present such a danger, he/she will be suspended from the program for the balance of the fifteen (15) calendar day period.

Health Services

Washington Academy has a registered nurse on staff to attend to the health issues of our students. The nurse administers first aid in case of accidents or sudden illness during the school day. Parents will be notified in case of illness or accidents. No care will be given other than that defined as immediate temporary care (first aid). The nurse supervises the health practices in the school, working closely with all school personnel and parents. Please call our Nurse to discuss a health concern you may have about your child at 973-759-6555 ext 204.

It is required that all children have received all mandatory immunizations. Proof of immunizations will be required and must be provided to the Nurse prior to your child's admission to Washington Academy.

Please Follow these Guidelines for Sending/Not Sending Children to School

- Fever in the last 24 Hours
- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Is nauseous, vomiting or has vomited during the night
- Has diarrhea or has had diarrhea in the night
- Has been exposed to a contagious disease and is exhibiting the signs/symptoms of the disease
- Has a rash of an unknown cause
- You suspect head lice
- A child should be feeling well and fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school
- A child with possible conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be seen by a doctor and must have a doctor's note to return to school.
- A child returning to school following an absence must have a note from parents/guardian.

Student Emergency Contact Information

To ensure the safety and well-being of your child and make progress in your child's IEP, the school requires at least one working emergency contact number at all times. A form is sent home every year that requests full emergency contact information, names of contacts, phone numbers, addresses, relationship to student.

At minimum, one working emergency number is required by the school in extreme cases of emergency. Parents/guardians should notify the school Immediately if an emergency contact number has changed, is disconnected or if a new number is better to reach during the hours of 8:00 am and 2:15 pm.

If a parent/guardian feels that notification or communication with the emergency number is inappropriate by school staff, they should inform the Principal or Executive Director Immediately, so that a corrective action plan can be created to alleviate any stress or anxiety with usage of the emergency number.

CALL 973-759-6555 TO PROVIDE THE MOST CURRENT PHONE NUMBER

Early Dismissal

Students can only be signed out or released to the parent/guardian indicated on the front page of the IEP. All other adults or relatives may not exit the school with a student, unless their name, address and phone number has been entered on the Official School Emergency Contact Form, or a written notice from the parent/guardian that provides, the name, address, phone number of the authorized adult, which includes the parent/guardian signature and date. (There are no exceptions to this Policy.)

Custody and Guardianship

The school is legally required to follow the information provided in the student's IEP, which includes the name of the parent/guardian indicated on the front page. Any other relatives or emergency contacts must be authorized by the person that is legally recognized on the front page of the IEP.

If legal custody or guardianship takes place during the student's enrollment at Washington Academy, please notify the school in writing as soon as the information is available. The school will continue to uphold the information indicated on the front page of the IEP, unless otherwise instructed by a legally binding document that supersedes the IEP information. As part of the written documentation, Washington Academy requires a copy of the part of your legal document that specifies the name change. All student and student related information is kept strictly confidential and all student information is located in a secure and locked location in our school. (N.J.A.C .6A: 32-7 and 6A: 14-7.9.)

DRESS CODE

Washington Academy has outlined the following formal dress code for all students. These minimum standards of dress are required to ensure that every student can benefit from the academic and social/emotional program designed at the school. Violation of the Dress Code, limits the individual student's access to their own educational growth, social well-being and future progress, in addition to providing a distraction and interruption of the education of other students in the school.

Students are Prohibited From Wearing:

- ⊘ **H**ead Coverings of any kind, ie. Baseball Hats, bandanas, other head wear.
- ⊘ **F**lip-flops.
- ⊘ **E**xremely low-cut, plunging or transparent clothing.
- ⊘ **C**lothing that is revealing in an inappropriate fashion, that a reasonable person would consider it offensive.
- ⊘ **T**ube tops, halter tops, backless, or bare midriffs.
- ⊘ **M**uscle tee-shirts or sleeveless undershirts.
- ⊘ **O**bscene or vulgar shirts, jackets, pants
- ⊘ **M**ini-skirts, or shorts that are too revealing, that a reasonable person would consider it offensive.

In the event a student enters the school building who has violated the Dress Code Policy, the parent/guardian must be notified and the student will be subject to consequences and alternative supports, strategies and interventions.

(This may include removing the student from the classroom temporarily. Parents/guardians and students should be aware that consequences are at the discretion of the Administration and may not be in agreement with the student's wants, wishes, desires, whims or fancies.)

Since physical education classes are required for all students to receive in New Jersey, it is recommended that students have Sneakers to participate fully in PE classes. Students are not excused from PE classes because sneakers are not worn. If a pattern of non-participation in PE class is due to a footwear or dress code issue, the parent/guardian shall be notified immediately of the situation. Students who do not participate in PE classes without medical excuse, will be subject to consequences at the discretion of the Administration and it may adversely affect the students grade for PE class. High School students are required to complete a minimum of 10 credits in PE classes over four years, and failure to do so – prevents a student from attaining an official public school diploma.

Dangerous Weapons

Weapons and State Law (N.J.S.A. 2C:39-1f and U.S.C. 921) prohibits the possession, use, or exchange of any weapon in any school building or school grounds or any school sponsored event and on school sanctioned transportation.

For the purpose of this policy, “weapon” means anything readily capable of lethal use or of inflicting serious bodily injury. ‘Weapons’ includes, but is not limited to, all firearms, knives, dangerous instruments intended to inflict harm, components that can be readily assembled into a weapon, explosive devices and imitation firearms. Any pupil who possesses, uses, or exchanges a weapon in violation of this policy shall be subject to stringent discipline, which may include termination.

Any person who possesses a weapon on school premises or school transportation or at a school sponsored function shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Student Substance Abuse Policy

Overview

Our nation has seen drug use reach epidemic proportions among young people. Washington Academy accepts its compelling responsibility to provide a safe environment free of drugs within our school and to assist students in every way possible to learn how to lead drug-free lives. Prevention of drug use is the Washington Academy's primary objective. Washington Academy also seeks through evaluations, counseling, outside referrals or other forms of intervention or support services to assist those students who despite all preventive efforts nevertheless have developed substance abuse problems.

Substance Abuse Policies and Procedures

If information is received by the school or evidence of student substance abuse, it is the policy of the school to notify the local public school case manager immediately. Washington Academy then follows the recommendations and policy protocols of the local sending school in relation to public school substance abuse policy.

If a student is found to have illegal drugs or other contraband on their person on school grounds, Washington Academy is legally obligated to notify law enforcement.

Substance abuse is taken seriously and all efforts, supports and interventions will be made at Washington Academy to ensure that the student's education is not prevented or limited in such a way that the student's IEP cannot be met.

If a parent/guardian or another Washington Academy student has reason to suspect or evidence that a student has a substance abuse problem, they should notify the social workers immediately so appropriate and confidential measures

can be taken. In some cases, it may be necessary for a student to attend Substance Abuse Counseling after school at the local public school, or be admitted to a treatment facility.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The protection of pupil rights amendment affords parents certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent- Before students are required to submit to a government survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas:

1. Political Affiliation or beliefs of the student's parents
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student's family
3. Sex behavior or attitudes
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demanding behavior
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student's parents
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of-

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding:
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for any of the above marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect- Parents/Guardians should contact the school to inspect:

1. Protected information surveys of students;

2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purpose; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

Anti-Bullying Policy **(otherwise known as Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying "H.I.B.")**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15, Washington Academy has adopted an anti-bully policy that prohibits incidents of H.I.B. in school by any student against another student and also ensures that the policy covers events that occur off school grounds.

H.I.B. is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression of mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students.

"Peer Conflict" is defined as a minimum of two students who engage in behavior that would otherwise be deemed H.I.B. if it involved a nondisabled peer, but since both or all students involved were classified with a disability, the potential incident shall be considered "Peer Conflict" if the following criteria are met:

- A. based on the individual student's classified disability the student may be prevented from the cognitive, neurological, or emotional understanding of the behavior or interaction;

- B. the incident that is reported and then investigated shows a pattern of social conflict behavior between the two classified students, in which both students participate in any act that would meet the definition of H.I.B.

Behavior Expectations

All Washington Academy students are expected to follow and abide by all Washington Academy school rules and guidelines for student conduct outlined in this Student Handbook. In addition, all students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times with regard for the rights and welfare of their fellow students and school staff.

Through the Positive Behavior Support system in place at the school and positive school trips and incentives throughout the year, students shall be recognized, rewarded and praised for good conduct and behavior in class, the hallway, bathrooms, and on field trips and off school grounds.

Students that have difficulty following school rules and guidelines should reasonably expect to have consequences for the infraction. All consequences shall be reasonable and relative to the infraction, as well as provide long-term support and intervention to prevent further infractions.

All remedial measures and consequences shall be determined based on certain factors: developmental and maturity of the students; level of harm; surrounding circumstances; nature of the behavior; past incidents or pattern of behavior; relationship between the students and context of alleged incidents; classified disability of the student.

Examples of Consequences are: admonishment; temporary removal from classroom; deprivation of privileges; administrative detention; referral to disciplinarian; referral to in district after-school programs; in-school suspension; short term out-of-school suspension; report to law enforcement or other legal action; recommendation for termination from program; short and long term prohibition from participating in school sponsored trips and functions.

Examples of Remedial Measures are: restitution and restoration; peer support group; recommendations of a student behavior or ethics counsel; corrective instruction; individual learning lesson related to incident; recommend need for one-to-one aide; BIP with benchmarks; leadership responsibility (ie. Hall monitor); involvement of school disciplinarian; student counseling; parent conference; student treatment or student therapy.

Methods to improve environmental conditions are: school surveys; school culture change; school climate improvement; adoption of systemic prevention program; school policy/procedure revisions; modification of schedules; adjustments to hallway traffic; recommend modifying student bus or bus route; provide training guidance for the supervision of students on school transportation; use of monitors; recommend need for one-to-one aide support; small or large group presentations for students and/or staff about behavior and responses to behaviors; re-train staff to identify antecedents to bullying behavior; additional professional development for all school staff; action plans for involved staff; disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem; parent conference; development of general bullying response plan; peer support group; law enforcement involvement or legal action.

A School Safety Team has been formed at Washington Academy to ensure that all reported alleged incidents of bullying are properly filed, investigated and determined with a final outcome, regardless of outcome a violation of the H.I.B. policy or "Peer Conflict." Parents/guardians shall be notified of all investigations involving their child in school. The School Safety Team consists of a Coordinator, Specialist, and a Teacher (the Safety Team Leader), along with the Principal.

The following is the reporting procedures:

Day 1: report is made either verbal or written. Verbal reports must be documented in writing and submitted to Principal within 2 days of knowledge.

Day 2: Principal informs parents/guardians of alleged incident of bullying (victim and bully) and refers report to School Safety Team.

Day 3-13: School Safety Team conducts investigation and moves to find determination as soon as possible or within 10 days of filed written report.

- Day 14-19:** Final report findings are presented to Executive Director who reviews and discusses findings with School Safety Team.
- Day 20:** Parent/guardians are notified of findings of investigation and outcome for alleged victim and bully. Remedial and consequences shall be adjudicated for each student.
- Day 20-30:** Parent/guardian may request a hearing with the Executive Director in writing within 10 days of notification.

Incidents of “Peer Conflict” shall follow similar timelines, except that parents/guardians are notified regularly through communication with the classroom teacher either via phone or in writing on the daily classroom behavior sheet that parents/guardians are required to sign each night.

Parents/guardians may appeal any decision by the school either to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days or to the Department of Education within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Washington Academy prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of H.I.B. The consequence and appropriate remedial measure for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act.

False Accusation: A person found to have falsely accused another as a means of H.I.B. include may be subject to: positive behavioral interventions, including short and long term, in-school and out-of-school suspension and/or termination from the program.

A full version of this H.I.B. policy is available on our website, or by contacting the front office. The policy is also reviewed, revised or modified annually by the School Safety Team. Revisions shall be communicated to entire school community prior to September 1st or each year.

All school staff at Washington Academy have been trained in H.I.B. bully prevention techniques and strategies, as well as suicide prevention. Trainings occur throughout the year and at minimum 4 total hours for the school year.

WEEK OF RESPECT

The State of New Jersey has designated the week beginning with the first Monday in October as “Week of Respect”. All students will participate in prevention programs and positive school climate activities.

School Principal: Donna Johnson Phone: 973-759-6555 ext. 206

School Anti-Bully Coordinator: Miss Sara 973-759-6555 ext. 202