



**Washington Academy
2017-2018**



Parent-Student Handbook/Calendar

Home of The Patriot

www.washingtonacademy.com

973-759-6555

Executive Director/Superintendent: Mr. David Schwartz

Supervisor of Instruction: Ms. Coralie Peary

Executive Director's Message

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Washington Academy as the school to educate your child. Over the last 35 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 Parent/Student 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 and welcomed, in order to make the school a better place and to maximize your child's education.

Sincerely,

David Schwartz, M.A. Ed.
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 for students to strive and 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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Who's Who at Washington Academy...

Executive Director/Principal/Chief School Administrator

Mr. David Schwartz, M.A. Ed.

Mr. Schwartz has been the Chief Administrator since 2009 and has been associated with the school for over 20 years. Washington Academy's reputation has grown rapidly in recent years due to many public schools adopting similar goals and the vision of Washington Academy in their districts. Currently, many public school educators receive training from Mr. Schwartz in areas of special education, positive behavior support and "inclusion" management. He is considered statewide as a LRE expert (least restrictive environment) and consults with public school administrators on building stronger more supportive in-district options since many Washington Academy students transition back to their local schools.

Supervisor of Instruction

Ms. Coralie Peary, M.A.

Ms. Peary is a veteran educator who brings thirteen years of expertise to Washington Academy. She has taught Math and Science in one of the most challenging districts in the state. Her Principal Certification, Supervisor Certification, Biology Certification, Math Certification and Special Education Certification helps to bring a wide range of abilities to Washington Academy. Her goals for Washington Academy are to bring our students into the 21st Century by way of technology, positive school climate as well as providing love, attention and affection to all the students at Washington Academy.

Brief History

Washington Academy was founded over 35 years ago by Dr. Jack Schwartz, who believed that all children were special and that some children needed extra 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, as well as, a 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 our 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)

Regular School Day Begins: 8:10 am-----Regular School Day Ends: 2:10 pm

Delayed Opening - School Opens: 10:10 am-----End of School Day: 2:10 pm

Half Day Session - School Opens: 8:10 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. (Please 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 3 and 21 regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or socio-economic status.

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 a variety of many 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 Policy

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 the de-escalation techniques of Handle With Care (HWC) and Crisis Prevention (CPI), which assists students in communicating 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 (P1), WHICH TAKES A DIGITAL PICTURE AND SAVES IT FOR APPROX. 14 DAYS.
- ❖ **BUS ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES** – ALL BUSES DROP OFF AND PICK UP STUDENT FROM PARKING LOT DOOR (P2). BUS DUTY STAFF ARE PRESENT TO MONITOR AND ASSIST STUDENTS.
 - ARRIVAL PROCEDURE – ALL STUDENTS ENTER THE BUILDING AND SHALL BE WANDERED BY A HAND-HELD METAL DETECTION DEVICE AND THEY MUST OPEN THEIR BACKPACKS FOR INSPECTION.
 - IF A STUDENT ARRIVES AFTER 8:20 AM, THEY MUST REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE WITH A LEGAL PARENT/GUARDIAN TO SIGN THEM IN.
- ❖ **ELECTRONICS POLICY** – BECAUSE THE SCHOOL HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF TECHNOLOGY, STUDENTS DO NOT NEED THEIR OWN DEVICES DURING THE ACADEMIC DAY. THEREFORE, IT IS SCHOOL POLICY THAT STUDENTS HAND-IN THEIR ELECTRONICS DURING ARRIVAL AT THE P2 CHECKPOINT. ALL PERSONAL ELECTRONICS SHALL BE PLACED IN AN INDIVIDUAL ENVELOPE, WITH THE STUDENT’S NAME AND PROTECTED UNDER LOCK AND KEY IN OUR MAIN OFFICE. REFUSAL TO HAND-IN PERSONAL ELECTRONICS TO ANY STAFF MEMBER, WILL REQUIRE A PARENT MEETING AND A WRITTEN INTERVENTION PLAN TO ADDRESS COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS SKILLS. ANY VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY SHALL BE REFERRED TO THE SOCIAL WORKER/SCHOOL COUNSELOR AND THE PRINCIPAL.
 - CELL PHONE USAGE IN THE CLASSROOM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. ALL CALLS FOR STUDENTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE 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/INTERNET USE AND SAFETY POLICY

A full version of the acceptable usage of TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET USE AND SAFETY 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.

The TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET USE AND SAFETY POLICY is aligned with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the school's safety policy/plan and anti-bully policy (N.J.S.A 18A:37-15). Students are granted access to electronic devices and the internet as an educational tool in the classroom. This policy does not guarantee that students will always have access to technology or the internet, and the privilege may be revoked, suspended or modified if a student violates this policy.

In accordance with this policy, the Chief School Administrator is the designated Staff Person in charge of the overall internet access and ensures all parents and legal guardians that an internet filtering system has been purchased and is currently in-place to monitor all internet activity. Washington Academy does not guarantee to any parent or legal guardian that student's will not be able to obtain, view, read, or access inappropriate sites or images/videos via the internet, as no filtering system is 100% fool-proof.

It is the intent of this policy to inform and notify parents and legal guardians that each student and parent/guardian are required to sign a User Agreement annually that gives permission for your child to utilize and access technology and the internet while at school. This user agreement also indicates that both the parent/guardian and student are aware that the student agrees to abide by the instructions of the Teacher, all school policies and will not attempt to bypass, thwart or disable the internet filtering system. Any student found to have done so, or accessed inappropriate materials not related to the coursework or Teacher instruction shall be deemed in violation of this policy and any and all privileges may be revoked, suspended or modified.

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, lasers, shaving cream and spray paint.
- Electronics
 - Cell phones, iPods, mp3players, radios, headphones/headsets, 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. Thus if your child transitions back into your local public school district, they will be adequately prepared for the academic rigor.

Courses Offered:

- **Pre-K:** The highly successful pre-k program incorporates the High Scope curriculum, as well as, a structured instruction in Art, Music Literacy and PE.
- **K-8th Grade:** Similar to the public schools, students are required to meet NJ Core Content Standards in Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education/Health, Art, 21st Century skills and Character Education.
- **High School (Grades 9-12):** Washington Academy's High School Program is approved by the Department of Education and publishes an annual HS Course Guide. Students can earn up to 144.5 credits in four years, which meets all of the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:35, in order to receive a NJ Diploma from your local public high school.
- **Specials:**

- Students benefit from two highly successful programs: the Art-Studio and the Fitness Center. In the Art Studio, students are exposed to Art History, Art Appreciation and other core concepts in artistic expression.
- Specialized Literacy Laboratory: Literacy and Language Art skills are vital to the short and long term success of a student in school and in life. The reading programs that we offer through the Reading Laboratory are: Wilson Reading Program, Achieve3000, Reading Advantage and Explode the Code. Reading Horizons, Dibels Next Bench-Mark Assessment, Ticket to Read, Reading Advantage.

Highly Qualified Staff

It is Washington Academy's policy to ensure that each classroom has a certified, qualified and highly trained teacher. All of the school's staff receives over 30 hours of professional development training per year.

Specialized and Differentiated Lesson Planning

The key difference between instruction at Washington Academy and in the local public/charter school is our staff's highly specialized instructional strategy skills. One of them is curriculum design and writing maps for instruction. This is a highly specialized skill, that is encouraged and taught at Washington Academy and approximately 25% of teachers in New Jersey are currently trained in this area.

Only the highest level of training for staff can provide an advantage to students in the classroom by having in-depth knowledge and understanding of content knowledge, state-of-the-art technology, and also the latest best practices for learning.

Reading and Mathematics Assessment

It is Washington Academy's best practice to annually assess each student in Reading and Mathematics to chart and track overall growth and progress. These assessments are separate from NJ State Testing

and will not affect the student's grade, but will provide greater insight for our staff in regards to student performance and achievement.

Homework Policy

It is school policy that all students, regardless of grade, are required to be assigned homework on a daily basis. Parents/legal guardians should be on alert and notice that if their child does not have any homework, please contact the school immediately. This daily policy is in place to help support student growth and nurture parent/legal guardian involvement in their child's schooling on a daily basis.

Students may earn a "Homework Pass", this pass will be a laminated GREEN pass, in which the child will receive on the day that the pass is issued. "Homework Passes" are limited and rare, and no student will have more than one (1) Homework Pass per month. Parents/guardians will be notified if their child has received a "Homework Pass" for that evening.

Purpose of Homework

The purpose of homework is to help students learn consistent and daily responsibility. Knowing the daily assignment, organizing his/her thoughts, and completing an assignment outside the classroom teaches students many valuable life-long lessons and also prepares students for college and career readiness. It is not necessary for students to hand-in ERROR FREE homework as the purpose for the teacher is to clearly see what each student has mastered or needs more individual support and instruction.

Amount of time Washington Academy students should be spending on homework: (DAILY)

Pre-K and K	5-10 minutes	Grade 6	1 hour
Grade 1-2	15-20 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

Washington Academy has established the following grading policy to help parent/legal guardians and students understand and be aware of the minimum academic requirements in order to pass a course at the school. Any student that receives a Marking Period score below 67 it will be considered an “F” or failure for that marking period. Therefore, if a student’s final grade for a course is below 67, the student has not met the minimum requirements of academic achievement and in most cases will be required to re-take the course during ESY.

<u>Academic Year</u>		<u>Grading Scale</u>		<u>ESY</u>	
Assessment	40%	100-95 A	79-77 C+	Assessment	40%
Class Work/Participation	20%	94-90 A-	76-73 C	Classwork	20%
Homework	20%	89-87 B+	72-70 C-	Class Participation	20%
Project	20%	86-83 B	69-67 D+	Project	20%
		82-80 B-	Below 67 F		

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress reports and Report Cards are issued four times per year. Please take note of these dates which are printed on the calendars in this Handbook.

Progress Reports are a mid-point summaries of your child’s academic and behavioral efforts, which informs parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students of current progress. If your child is struggling in any academic course on their Progress Report, please contact the school immediately to discuss any further support you may provide at home for your child’s school success. For all students that earn below a “C” or 73, a written academic support plan will be in place to help your child meet minimum academic achievement requirements for that course.

Report Cards and Progress Reports shall indicate numeric grades for all courses your child is taking, as well as a number for Social and Emotional Progress. A key will be located on the Report to help parents/legal guardians understand what each number means on the Report.

For a limited number of high school courses that are not required elective courses, students may be issued a Pass/Fail grade, which would be indicated with "P" or "F".

Grade Level Grading

❖ 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 90% of the marking period, otherwise "NC" (no-credit) will be placed in the subject that attendance requirements were not met. (*Only unexcused absences will be used in calculating overall attendance for the marking period*).

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

It is School Policy to follow New Jersey's minimum standards for all public High School students. In accordance with the Department of Education code, N.J.S.A. 18A:35, all Washington Academy students must complete at least 120 credit hours of courses in multiple content areas. In some cases, a student's home district may require more credit hours, which Washington Academy shall adjust the student's schedule to ensure full compliance with district graduation requirements.

All High School students will receive a numeric grade for all marking periods, which will then be averaged together to determine the Final Grade for the year. The final average shall be converted into a

letter grade for the official transcript in accordance with the Grading Policy. In order to earn full credit for any High School course, the student's fourth marking period average must be at least 67% which converts into a D+ for the year. Any average score below 67% is considered less than the minimum academic requirements and would receive an F. Students who earn below a 67%, may be required to re-take the course during ESY.

Academic Probation *(due to unexcused absences)*

Washington Academy's core philosophy is to provide each student with "love, attention and affection" on a daily basis. In order for each student to gain maximum benefit from our supportive program, each student must attend school every day. Attendance issues will contribute to poor performance both academically and social/emotionally. It is sometimes necessary to offer a second-chance and/or school supports to help each student grow and learn.

Any student that exceeds five (5) unexcused absences in any course during the marking period will automatically be placed on Academic Probation (AP). Academic Probation is a temporary restriction placed on a student, in which a student must complete make-up work during a designated block of time in order to ensure that his/her grade does not decrease due to the unexcused absences.

If a Student is placed on AP, a letter will be sent home and to the Child Study team and the code "AP" will appear on the Progress Report.

Academic Probation ends if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Less than four (4) additional unexcused absences occur
2. The student completes 90% of make-up work assigned in the course
3. The student shall take a special Make-Up Exam created by the Teacher and must earn a score of 80%.
4. The student's extra-curricular period "Rewards" is used to make-up course work.

OR

The Marking Period ends (Academic Probation shall not carry over into any succeeding marking period.)

If a student is absent 10 days in any given marking period, the student will automatically fail for that current marking period. A numeric "50%" shall be entered into the Progress Report or Report Card for final grade calculations.

In order to calculate the Marking Period grade for the student on Academic Probation, the make-up work must be fairly combined with the overall grade. If the student successfully completes all four (4) requirements and comes off A.P., the Teacher should omit the lowest grade earned in the Assessment category during the marking period and replace it with the grade earned during Academic Probation.

Final Grades

All High School students will receive a numeric grade for all marking periods, which will then be averaged together to determine the Final Grade for the year. The final average shall be converted into a letter grade for the official transcript in accordance with the Grading Policy. In order to earn full credit for any High School course, the student's fourth marking period average must be above 67%. Any average below 67% is considered less than the minimum academic requirements and would receive an F.

Incomplete Grades *(due to excused absences)*

Should a student need to be absent for an extended-period of time, as long as it is clearly documented and has been brought to Washington Academy's attention, at grade reporting times the student may receive an Incomplete (INC) grade. With an INC mark, the student will be provided with an opportunity to complete the missed work in a reasonable amount of extended time. The student will need to submit the make-up work on or before the end of the extended time, which will be graded by the certified Teacher. At the next reporting term the INC will be changed to a numeric grade. If the student does not complete the work in the allotted time, and

does not address a need for additional time, then the student will receive a failing grade of 50% on the next grade report.

NOTE: Any student who earns a 50% in any subject for two (2) marking periods will be mandated to attend ESY, that same school year in order to make up credit(s).

ESY

High School students are required to attend ESY for academic make-up, if a student has earned an F, (less than 67%) in any two (2) marking periods during the school year and/or has earned an F on the final grade calculation (less than 67%).

Students can only take courses he/she did not successfully pass (less than 67%) or (No Credit Earned) in previous academic years. Students are not allowed or eligible to take NEW courses during the ESY period.

High School Make-Up Credit Policy

Washington Academy has adopted a HS Make-Up Credit policy: Any student that has not earned enough credits to be eligible to graduate with his/her incoming Graduation Cohort, may attend the Extended School Year (ESY) for High School.

ESY Credits

High school students may earn up to 12.5 total credit hours during the ESY program. A five (5) credit hour course would require the student to attend class for at least 80 minutes, whereas all half-year courses would require the student to attend class for at least 40 minutes. The only course High School students cannot take during ESY are Physical Education courses.

PROMOTION TO THE NEXT GRADE

A high school student may only be promoted to the next grade, ie. 10th to 11th grade, if they have attained the following number of credit hours by September of the next year:

10 th Grade	30 credits
11 th Grade	58 credits
12 th Grade	88 credits

Independent Study

A high school student may petition to take an independent study course. The student will need to address this option with their School Counselor, who can assist them with the petition process. A maximum of five (5) credit hours can be earned through independent study, and the course would be scheduled a minimum of four days per week during the regular academic calendar for a total of four (4) marking periods. Students who have earned a minimum of 63 credits are eligible to submit their petition to the Principal of the school for an independent study in order to make-up credits during the regular school year. All independent study courses will receive numerical grades and are not subject to a Pass or Fail graded option.

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.

All students are expected to arrive to school by 8:10 am every day the school is in session. Any day the student arrives after 8:10 am, they shall be considered tardy. New Jersey State Law requires that all students must attend school a minimum of four (4) hours in order for it to be considered a legal day. In addition, state law requires that students attend school at least one (1) hour in the afternoon session. Due to Washington Academy's shortened day of 6 hours, our attendance policy requires students to attend school through 2:10 pm.

Excused Absences

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:

- 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 officer 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 Principal.

*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 officer, 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. Students may not be transported to any other location, unless arranged with the local public school case manager.

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 8:27 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 strongly advised 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 goal is to help each student reduce inappropriate behaviors so they can be appropriate in more settings. Washington Academy strives to provide strong supports and interventions for each child that attends our school. One of the key elements of the social/emotional program is the counseling department.

Each student is assigned a certified school social worker or counselor, which they meet with regularly throughout the school year. Every student receives a group counseling session for 40 minutes at least once per week. Individual counseling is also scheduled for 30 minutes in accordance with the child's IEP. As always, additional counseling is available as needed.

The School Social Worker and School Counselor 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 advocate throughout the program. They also maintain high ethical standards and confidentiality. *(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 (PBS) is a researched based methodological approach to behavior. PBS is effective when three things are maintained: **consistency**, **persistence** and **time**.

Behavior Modification Plan

Washington Academy has developed a behavior modification philosophy that centers on the student's emotional intelligence and well-being. Washington Academy designs specific behavior plans to promote individual student growth through a Positive Behavior Support (PBS). PBS is a behavioral approach to reduce inappropriate behavior and teach alternative choices. The comprehensive PBS approach has become synonymous with Washington Academy and our unique approach has been significantly successful in helping students overcome behavioral challenges and meet goals. Each PBS plan has a minimum of 3-tiers, which will encourage, reinforce, recognize and praise students for positive behavior and pro-social skills.

The key to effective PBS outcomes is due to our highly trained Staff, which Washington Academy fosters through our intensive professional development program. All Staff Members receive annually approximately 30 hours of targeted development training in PBS and classroom readiness techniques.

Some of the rewards students earn through PBS are listed below, but is not limited to:

- Field trips (movies, bowling, mini-golf, roller skating, interactive trips)
- Friday rewards (in-class movies, video games, pizza)
- 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 him/herself, others or has violated school code/policy with extreme prejudice. Upon returning from a suspension the student meets with his/her School Social Worker or School Counselor 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 academic growth.

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 including: 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 accommodations 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 an illness or accident. 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 and all other relatives or emergency contacts can only become authorized adults by the legal parent/guardian if their name, contact information and relationship to the student is included in the Official Emergency Contact Form. If the adult is not included on that form, Washington Academy requires a written letter or email from the legal parent/guardian granting permission for the unauthorized adult to legally sign the student in or out of school.

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/Slippers
- ❌ **E**xtrremely 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 [note: length should be no more than 2 inches above the knee].

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.)

Dress Code for Physical Education Considerations

Since physical education classes are required for all students to receive in New Jersey, it is recommended that students have Sneakers to fully participate in PE classes. Students are not excused from PE classes because proper footwear is 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 many 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 their respective social worker/school counselor 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.

The School Safety Team at Washington Academy ensures 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: On Campus – the day an incident occurs, a written report must be made by Staff Member utilizing a (green) behavior incident report and be submitted to the Principal. **Off Campus** – the alleged victim, witness or bystander must report the incident to the Principal within 48 hours (if it's a verbal report, a written report must be filed within 2 days).

- Day 2:** The Principal informs parent(s)/guardian(s), of all involved, about the alleged incident of bullying and refers the case to the School Safety Team.
- Day 3-10:** The School Safety Team conducts an investigation. The investigation should be concluded as quickly as permissible and the outcome is discussed with the Principal (no more than 10 days from original filing).
- Day 11:** The Safety Team concludes its investigation and submits all documentation to the Principal, who makes a determination of H.I.B. violation or “Peer Conflict.”
- Day 12-13:** The Principal shall determine all remedial services, or consequences for each student, and may consult the Safety Team for recommendations for appropriate counseling or interventions.
- Day 14-19:** The Principal shall write a final report of H.I.B. or “peer conflict” to the Executive Director (see H.I.B. Report Form or Peer Conflict Form) for signature, which shall conclude the proceedings.
- Day 20:** The Principal shall contact the parent(s)/guardian(s), of all involved, to notify them of the final determination and the appeal process.
- Day 20-30:** The parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the final determination by requesting a hearing with the Executive Director in writing within 10 school days.

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 has 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 Anti-Bully Specialist: Mark Monteyne 973-759-6555