

THIS PLANNER BELONGS TO _____

HOMEROOM _____

ART FOCUS _____



Student/Parent Handbook

2025- 2026

GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Arts Academy Charter Middle School
1610 E. Emmaus Avenue
Allentown, PA 18103

Telephone: 610-351-0234

Fax: 610-351-0307

Website: www.aacms.org

Main Office: mainoffice@aacms.org

Facebook: Arts Academy Charter Middle School

Instagram: @artsacademycms

School Closings/Delays

Announcements regarding school closings due to inclement weather or other emergencies will be posted on social media and reported on WFMZ television and online broadcast, as well as through our text message alert system (Caller Id #956-64).

Quick References

Executive Director: Karl Eisenhart
keisenhart@aacms.org ext. 506

Principal: Jamie Hill
jhill@aacms.org ext. 518

Dean of Students: Jesse Garin
jgarin@aacms.org ext. 516

Guidance Counselor: Acadia Holbert
Aholbert@aacms.org ext. 514

Director of Educational Support Services: Christa Greagori
cgreagori@aacms.org ext. 501

Nurse: Rachel Armellino
rarmellino@aacms.org ext. 517

Business Manager/Registrar: Amy Reid
areid@aacms.org ext. 512

Food Services Director: Susan Ott
sott@aacms.org ext. 504

Main Office Administrative Assistant/Transportation/Enrollment: Angelin Deleon
adeleon@aacms.org ext. 511

ATTENDANCE

It is important to maintain consistent attendance by our students, as it is crucial to your child's success in the classroom. The importance of knowing that you entrust AACMS with your child's care while they are with us is paramount to our procedures concerning attendance. In our effort to keep track of all students, we ask for your cooperation with the following procedures.

Arts Academy Charter Middle School requires that school-age pupils who are enrolled at Charter Arts attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The AACMS community is a collaborative community. Learning and the arts thrive when all are present to participate. In short, we must gather to work together. We expect our students to be present in school and on time to school every day. Charter Arts recognizes the assurance of our students' compulsory attendance as both a legal and a moral obligation. Every parent/guardian of a school-age child (6 to 18) is responsible for the child's school attendance. All persons residing in this Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years of age are entitled to a free and appropriate public education. Failure of a student to attend school has specified legal consequences for parent/guardian(s) and potentially for the student as well.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, a student is considered "truant" if they have incurred three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. A student is considered "habitually truant" if they have incurred six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

Absences from School

- A list of lawful (acceptable) or excused absence reasons appears in the chart below.
- All attendance documentation will be required within three (3) days of return from absence.
- All notes must be handwritten and legible and include a parent/guardian's signature, which is turned into the Main Office or emailed to attendance@aacms.org.
- Any excuse documentation turned in during the 3-day window from the day of the absence that states a lawful (acceptable) reason will be modified to an excused absence in PowerSchool.

- Any absence where an excuse documentation is not turned in within 3 days will be deemed unlawful/unexcused for students and will accumulate. These absences may be subject to truancy procedures as stated in

<https://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Truancy-Fact-Sheet-Compulsory-School-Age-Updated-August-2019-final.pdf>

- All absence excuses must be in writing; we cannot accept phone calls to excuse a student early.

Note: Students absent from school are not permitted to attend any extracurricular activities or school functions.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Absences

1. On days when your child will be absent, please call the school before 8:30 am at 610-351-0234 ext. 1 to inform us. Include your child's first and last name, their grade, and the reason for their absence. Your child will be marked as Absent Unexcused until the school receives an absentee note.
 - Parents/Guardians who have not called their students out of school, will receive an automated phone call informing them that their student is not in school.
2. **Within 3 days** of your child's return to school, a written note which includes your child's name, date(s) of absence, and reason for that absence must be submitted. Without this note, your child's absence will remain "unexcused". If your child was seen by a doctor, submit the doctor's note within 3 days of their return.

Tardy and Early Dismissals

1. If your child is late to school, you must send in a signed note stating why they were late. The note must include their first and last name and date. Students should report to the Main Office upon arrival to turn in the note and be checked into school.
2. If your child will be leaving school early, you must send in a note with your child in the morning stating their first and last name, the date, the time in which they will be leaving,

and the reason. Please include your phone number. They will be called out of class once you arrive.

3. If your child is tardy or leaving school early due to a doctor's appointment, provide the school with a doctor's note when they return to school.

Tardy to School

One of the defining characteristics of AACMS is that our students come from over 15 school districts. ***Due to the distances traveled to school, we understand there will be occasions when students will be late.*** Students should make every effort to arrive on time, accounting for weather and other circumstances that may develop during travel to school.

- Students must report to school by **7:55 AM** or will be considered tardy. They must come to the Main Office to sign in.
- ***Late bus passes are considered excused tardies.***
- ***Students arriving late by bus are not penalized.***
- Students will be given **7 parent/guardian excused tardy notes per year** (with parent/guardian documentation).
- Parents/Guardians will be required to submit notes for excused tardies on the same or the next day.

Interventions for Excessive Tardiness to School

Unexcused School Tardies	Consequence
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance Coordinator will send warning letter and possibly assign 1 lunch detention (will be removed if notes are submitted before detention)
5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Dean of Students or designee will meet with the student to develop a tardiness elimination plan, which will be communicated to the Parent/Guardian and Principal.
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Attendance Coordinator will assign 1 after-school detention and alert Ast Principal. ● SAP / SAIP referral

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possible loss of privileges and/or extracurricular activities.
15 (and each subsequent tardy at admin discretion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance Coordinator will assign 3-hour detention and alert administration. ● SAP referral ● Loss of privileges. ● Loss of performance opportunities at the Administrator's discretion ● Other consequences at the Administrator's discretion. ● Letter sent home to parent/guardian.

Late to Class/Unexcused Tardy

A student must arrive to class on time. Teachers will mark classroom attendance at the start of the period. If a student arrives late to class without a pass, they will be marked as tardy or unexcused. The administration will maintain daily reports on student tardiness and attendance to class. Consistent tardiness will result in detentions and further disciplinary actions.

Planned Vacations, Trips, Auditions, etc.

1. Applications for educational trips, vacations, and auditions must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the time requested off. The application can be found at the Main Office or the school's website and will be reviewed by the principal and/or the Executive Director and returned to you. It is your child's responsibility to get the work that they will miss during their absence.

DEFINITIONS OF ABSENCES

(AACS 2.4)

Cumulative Excused Absences

- Preapproved family vacation while school is in session per school board policy.
- Any absence as defined by the [PA School Code](#) in which a written excuse is submitted within three school days of a student's return.

Cumulative Unexcused Absences

- Any day for which a written excuse is not submitted within three days of a student's return from an absence including notes from physicians.
- Any absence not excused by a physician's note after 10 absences verified by parental excuses.

Examples of Noncumulative Absences

- Illness verified by a physician's note submitted within three days of a student's return. Any absence in which a physician's note is submitted is not included in the seven days permitted for parental excuses in middle and high school.
- Death in the family from date of death until two days after the funeral unless otherwise authorized by the building principal, supported by a parent note.
- Proof of required court appearance.
- Religious holidays.
- School-sponsored activities.

Unexcused Absence Notifications

- Parents/Guardians will receive communications at the following intervals when a student accumulates **3, 5, 7, and 10 total unexcused absences**.

3rd Unexcused Absence

- A **warning letter (email)** will be sent home requesting proper excuse documentation.

5th Unexcused Absence

- **Phone call** from the Attendance Coordinator.
- **Warning letter (email)** sent home.

7th–10th Unexcused Absence

- **Phone call** from the Dean of Students or Principal.
- **Letter** sent home (via email and USPS).
- **Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP)** meeting requested if proper documentation is not provided.
- Possible **referral to the SAP team, lunch and/or after-school detention, and/or loss of extracurricular privileges** at the discretion of administration.

After the 10th Unexcused Absence

(And for additional unexcused absences, per administrative discretion)

- **Administrative letter** sent to family (email and USPS).
- Possible **referral to Child & Youth Services and/or Truancy Elimination Services**.
- **Physician's notes** required for all illness-related absences.
- Possible **after-school and/or weekend detentions**.
- **Loss of extracurricular privileges** and potential **loss of performance opportunities**, at administrative discretion.
- **Meeting with administrators and/or Executive Director**.

Absence Reason	Required Documentation	Number Permitted
Parent/Guardian Excused Absences	Parent/Guardian notes are required to be submitted to the Main Office PRIOR to vacations or immediately following absence for any other reason, for Extended Absences call the Main office.	10 permitted per school year with a Parent/Guardian note
Absence Reason	Required Documentation	Number Permitted
Medical Appointments	Physician Note	With proper documentation
Court Hearing	Documentation from Court	With proper documentation
Field Trips	Teacher Documentation	With proper documentation
Bereavement	Parent/Guardian note	With proper documentation (limited to 5 days. Exceptions may be granted by the Principal)
Religious Observances	Parent/Guardian note	With proper documentation

Early Dismissals

To accommodate early dismissal requests, students must be picked up **NO LATER THAN 1:30 p.m.** If a student or students are not picked up by 1:30 p.m., students will be released with Parent Pickup at the normal dismissal time. We cannot guarantee a speedy departure from school grounds if a student is picked up after 1:00 p.m.

Parent notes must be provided for any change in transportation due to early dismissals. The Main Office will issue an early dismissal pass in the morning to be given to the appropriate teacher.

- If a student leaves school early more than 3 times without a parent note, administrative action may take place and discipline may be issued.
- Students will be given 10 parent notes for early dismissal. After all 10 have been used, proper documentation will be needed. If not, administrative action may take place.

Parent/Guardian Pick-Up Procedure

When a student is going to be picked up early, please send a note with the student to be handed into the Main Office in the morning or email attendance at attendance@aacms.org.

- If someone other than a Parent/Guardian is picking the student up, please include the person's name in the note.
- Please include the pick-up time, reason and a parent/guardian signature.
- Anyone picking up a student must present an ID and sign the student out in our Main Office. This is required for safety purposes and is non-negotiable.
- Documentation is required for official appointments and can be presented the following day.

Truancy Policy and Procedures

A student shall be considered truant after they have accrued three unexcused absences. Once a student is considered truant, the school may schedule a Truancy Improvement Plan meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to identify the cause(s) of the unexcused absences and create a plan to improve attendance. For more information on the Arts Academy Charter School's Truancy, refer to [Policy 2.4.2](#) on the school's website.

GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Arrival/Dismissal

School doors will open for students at 7:30am. Classes begin with period one at 7:55am. A student will be considered late to school if he/she is not in period one class by 7:55am.

Dismissal is at 2:00pm. Students are not permitted in the building after 2:30pm, unless in a school-supervised activity. Students must go directly to bus or parent-pickup area once the announcement for dismissal is made. Bathroom, water fountain, and/or locker visits must be completed during P.M. homeroom prior to dismissal.

Art Choices

1. Students will remain in their focus art for the entire school year.
2. At the time of re-enrollment for the next school year (January), students/parents may request an audition to switch to another art form for the next school year. Request for Focus Art changes after Intent to Reenroll forms are due will not be accepted.

Back Parking Lot

The back parking lot is for AACMS staff only. No parents or visitors may park in the back parking lot without prior permission from the Principal or Executive Director.

Change of Address

Parents must complete change of address paperwork when they are moving or have moved. You must also provide proof of address. The AACMS Transportation Coordinator will then contact **the school districts** providing busing with the address change information. This process must be completed through our office, and **the school districts** require some lead time to make the adjustment.

Classroom Materials

Each student must have appropriate books, pencils, pens, and other materials required by the teacher in each class session. When a pattern of not being prepared exists, parents may be contacted, and reduction of grade may result.

Communicating with Faculty and Staff

If a student or parent/guardian has a question or concern about a school policy or an employee, the following procedure should be followed in order to address the concern as quickly as possible. Note: Communication should be clear and professional in nature. ***Inappropriate communication is not productive and will be addressed by the administration.***

1. Contact the teacher/staff member about whom you have a question or concern to discuss the concern. Faculty and Staff may be contacted via e-mail addresses. The format for e-mail addresses is first initial last name@aacms.org; e.g., jsmith@aacms.org.
2. Messages may also be left via the main office utilizing the **Parent Concern** form that can be found on the school website and at the Main Office. Parent Concern forms are given to the Principal or Dean of Students.

Daily Attendance Phone Calls Home

We send out a daily phone call if your child is marked absent and we were not notified. If you receive this phone call and your child SHOULD be in school, please call us so we can verify that they are here. In many cases, it is that your child made it to class after attendance was taken and did not stop at the Main Office to check in, or was simply human error on our part.

Family Contact and Emergency Information

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform the office of any changes related to phone numbers, email address, home address and emergency contacts. This can be done by contacting the Main Office, mainoffice@aacms.org.

Forgot Something?

Teach your child to take care of his/her belongings, pack own book bag, and give you papers that require your attention. The truest test will come when your child forgets something. Allow him/her to suffer the consequences of the action. Our aim is to keep the learning environment interruption-free.

Guidance

Guidance services are available for every student at AACMS. These services include assistance with educational planning, interpretation of test scores, career information, study help, help with home, school, and/or social concerns, attendance problems, emotional concerns, or any question the student may feel he/she needs to discuss with appropriate school personnel. Counseling opportunities are available to all students by appointment.

Suicide Prevention Policy

The Arts Academy Charter Middle School is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its students and school community. This policy supports federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempts; and to promote access to suicide awareness and prevention resources.

For more information, please visit our website and review [board policy 2.16](#).

Lockers/Locker Searches

All students will be assigned lockers. It is always the responsibility of the student(s) to maintain the locker in a state of cleanliness. Lockers are school property and are entrusted to student use and care; students should have no expectation of privacy in their locker. AACMS is not responsible for lost or stolen items out of lockers.

1. Students in grades 6 and 7 must bring in a lock to be used on their assigned locker. ➤ Students will not be allowed to use a locker without a lock.
2. Students MAY NOT use lockers that are not assigned to them.
3. AACMS is not responsible for the content of a student's locker.
4. Lockers may be inspected at any time throughout the school year at the discretion of the administrator in charge without permission from or notification of parents.
5. Materials found in locker searches may be used in disciplinary proceedings against the student.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria. Students can access the lost and found throughout the school year. Items which remain unclaimed at the end of the year will be turned over to a charitable organization.

Lunch

1. AACMS offers breakfast and lunch for the benefit of the student body. All students are eligible to get free breakfast and lunch every school day. We participate in the National School Lunch Program, thus providing students with nutritious meals for free. **Students may not call/text from the cafeteria.**

Lunchroom procedures

All meals are pre-ordered; students must pack a lunch if they are choosing not to eat the free lunch provided by the school. **The following are not permitted in school/lunchroom: Fast food, Meal Delivery Services, or soda of any kind.** The Code of Conduct still applies during all school lunches.

Respect of School Property

Students must respect school property. It is costly to replace this property; therefore, students will be held accountable for damages. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Textbooks are issued to students for their use and must be paid for if lost or damaged beyond being usable. Charges will be assessed for more than normal wear and tear of books and materials.
2. All equipment loaned (long-term or daily) to students must be returned. If items are lost, stolen, or damaged, the student is responsible for replacement costs.
3. Graffiti and other defacing or destruction of school property will result in disciplinary action, restitution, and/or notification to the police.

Bus Transportation

Students may only ride a bus if it is assigned to them by their school district. AAMCS does not assign buses. No student is permitted to ride home on a bus from any other school district regardless of parental consent. In the event you must alter your child's typical method of transportation for the end of the school day, the main office must receive written notification either by note or email. The preferred method of contact is a written note to be handed into the teacher during period one.

- **Reminder: The Code of Conduct is still in place while on a bus to and from school.**
 - AACMS has the right to suspend a student from the bus for misbehavior.
 - Repeated infractions or infractions that exceed level III or IV in the Code of Conduct may result in removal from the bus entirely. In which case, the parents or guardians will be required to take their child to and from school, every day.

All visitors, including parents/guardians must enter through the front door of the building, sign in, and receive a visitor's pass. **Parents/Guardians who wish to meet with faculty or staff must make an appointment. AACMS reserves the right to refuse any visitors that will cause a disruption to the learning environment and/or the tranquility of the school day.**

School Nurse

The school nurse is available for students who become ill in school or require medical assistance.

2. Students must have a pass from a teacher if they need to visit the nurse. During the change of classes, students must report to their next class and obtain a pass from that teacher.
3. Students experiencing illness must receive dismissal consent from the school nurse and will be sent home upon parent permission.
4. Parents will be contacted by the school nurse, or a designated staff member should a student need to be dismissed from school due to illness or injury during the school day.
5. **Students may not call/text from their cell phone for pick up. This is a cell phone violation and discipline action may be taken.**

Medication

Parents are not permitted to send medication, including both over the counter and prescription, with their child to be administered during school hours. An "Authorization for Medication" form must be filled out and signed by both the family physician and the parent of the child requiring medication during school hours. This and other medical forms can be found on the school's website.

1. All medication must be kept in the Health Room.
2. It must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the amount to be taken, and the time the child is to take the medication.
3. This includes all over the counter medication including cough drops, allergy medication, cough syrup, cold medication, herbal remedies, and topical ointments.

Screenings

All screenings (hearing, vision, height, weight, BMI and Scoliosis) are done annually, and all results may be obtained from the health room.

Wellness

In accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, unopened store-bought is permitted, but not homemade are to be brought into school, even for parties or celebrations. If a student wants to share a treat for an occasion, the following are suggested: fruit cups, granola bars, low-fat tortilla chips, low-fat yogurt, or other nonfood items such as pencils or pens.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ARTS & ACADEMICS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Arts Academy Charter School recognizes that excellence in both the arts and academics are critical to educational success; all students should strive to achieve both academically and artistically. For that reason, the following extra-curricular policy is in place.

- Each student must maintain a 70% in all classes to be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities. The advisor of the activity and administration will review special circumstances.
- Students must be in school by 10:00 am to participate in that day's extra-curricular activities. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis with preapproval from the advisor and/or administration.
- Participation in extra-curricular activities is a privilege. Failure to comply with school rules, including school attendance, may result in the inability to participate in extra-curricular activities.

PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal is a web-based application that allows parents/guardians to examine student academic and registration data. Items that may be viewed include: Student class schedules, student grades, student and guardian address information, student attendance, and student report cards.

Contact School Counselor, Acadia Holbert at aholbert@aacms.org with any questions or concerns.

GRADING AND PROMOTION POLICIES

Grading Scale

A=Excellent	90-100%
B= Very Good.....	80-89%
C= Satisfactory.....	70-79%
F= Failure.....	69% and below

PROMOTION (AACS 3.1.1)

- A student who has failed Math or English at the end of the school year must complete the required course recovery in the summer immediately after the school year ends and prior to the new school year beginning. Summer course recovery classes must be paid for by the student and family and is offered in an online version by eLearn21 through the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21. The student's report card will not be released until the school receives proof of completion of the required course(s).
- Concerns regarding a student's promotion to the next grade level must be discussed between the student's teachers and the family starting by the end of the 2nd quarter of the school year. The Grade Level Team, family and student will discuss methods of intervention towards progressing the student through the grade level curriculum with the goal of promotion at the end of the school year. Each student's situation will be addressed individually.

Ovations Courses

OVATIONS courses are academically rigorous in nature and fast-paced, requiring a heightened level of commitment and responsibility from all parties involved. There is only a limited number of seats available for Ovations classes. Each requirement below earns points that are totaled. Students are selected through the total of points earned, starting from highest points down until the class number is filled.

English/Language Arts (7th and 8th grade)

- Earn appropriate teacher recommendation from the current content teacher
- Earn a year average of A in the current content course (B if it is already an Ovations course)
- Be proficient or advanced on the PSSA in ELA from the previous school year
- Have a positive recommendation from the principal.

Math (7th grade)

- Earn appropriate teacher recommendation from the 6th grade math class
- Earn a year average of A in the 6th grade math course
- Be proficient or advanced on the PSSA in math from the previous school year
- Have a positive recommendation from the principal.

Math 8th grade (Algebra 1)

- Earn appropriate teacher recommendation from the 7th grade math teacher
- Earn a year average of A in the 7th grade math course
 - (B if it is Ovations Math 7th grade)
- Be proficient or advanced on the PSSA in math from the previous school year
- Complete an Algebra 1 placement test
- Have a positive recommendation from the principal.

Science (7th grade)

- Earn appropriate teacher recommendation from the 6th grade science teacher and the 6th grade humanities teacher
- Earn a year average of A in the 6th grade science course
- Have a positive recommendation from the principal.

Science (8th grade)

- Earn appropriate teacher recommendation from the 7th grade science teacher and 7th grade ELA teacher
- Earn a year average of A in the 7th grade science course (B if it is already an Ovations course)
- Have a positive recommendation from the principal.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program is designed to help identify students experiencing barriers to learning for any of a variety of observable reasons, including those who may be at risk due to experimentation or involvement with alcohol or other drugs. Students who are experiencing significant mental health problems may also be identified in cooperation with the school counselors. Referrals, with parental collaboration, are made to appropriate community-based agencies for evaluation and treatment. Parents, students, and teachers may make an SAP referral by contacting one of the SAP team members.

SAP Procedures

Teachers, staff members, parents, or students may initiate a referral to an SAP team member. A parent or guardian is notified by phone of the referral made. Observation forms are given to teachers. Data is collected and discussed at an SAP team meeting. The case is assigned to an SAP team member, who follows up with the parent or guardian. Pending the outcome of the meeting a parent permission slip is sent home for a drug and alcohol or mental health assessment. State and federal confidentiality laws apply to SAP procedures.

SAP referral boxes and forms are centrally located and easily accessible on each floor of the school. An [electronic SAP referral](#) may also be completed on the school's website. The AACMS SAP Coordinator is Clarissa Kauffman-Leinbach. She can be reached at cleinbach@aacms.org.

Code of Conduct

The Arts Academy Charter Middle School's Code of Conduct is broken down into four levels of infractions. Behaviors that result in Code of Conduct infractions will be referred to the Dean of Students and Principal for review. The Code of Conduct is based on progressive discipline. **Repetition of infractions may result in increased severity of consequences as described by the below information.** It is important to understand that the descriptions and discipline below serve only as a guide for disciplinary actions. All behavioral infractions will be reviewed and investigated by the Dean of Students, and or the building Principal to determine the effect that the behaviors had on the learning environment. The results of these reviews will determine the severity and length of the consequences.

All suspensions will require a parent or guardian to accompany the student back into the building for a brief re-entry meeting with administration. Students will NOT be allowed back in the school or at any school events until the meeting occurs. If a student shows up, they will be asked to wait in the main lobby until a parent or guardian arrives.

Level I Infractions – Attendance

<u>Infraction:</u>	<u>Description:</u>	<u>Consequences:</u>
Late to Class	Arrival to class after the bell rings	1 st -4 th – Classroom Management Plan 5 th , 8 th , 11 th , etc. – administrative referral
Late to School	Arrival to period one class after announcements have begun	1 st -3 rd – warning 4 th , 7 th , 10 th , etc. – administrative referral

Level II Infractions

<u>Consequences</u>		
<u>Infraction 1</u> 0-2 sessions	<u>Infraction 2</u> 1-3 sessions and or detention	<u>Infraction 3</u> 2-4 sessions and or detention

All consequences are subject to administrative discretion, as deemed most appropriate for the individual incident.

After 5 or more level II infractions a student may be suspended.

<u>Infractions:</u>	<u>Description:</u>
Arrival/Dismissal Misconduct	The inability to follow requests by school personnel. Students should not be walking, or loitering, between buses/cars. School ends at 2:00pm. Students must immediately leave the building, unless given permission by an adult.
Bus Misconduct	Behavior that may result in harm or injury to another individual. This includes behavior that is disruptive to the driver as he/she is operating the bus. School ends at 2:00pm. Students must immediately leave the

	building, unless given permission by an adult. Behavior while at the bus stop may be addressed through the AACMS Code of Conduct.
Cafeteria Misconduct	Continual refusal to listen to adult requests/redirections while entering, leaving, or in the cafeteria. These requests may be coming from school personnel, and/or dining staff
Continued Classroom Misconduct	Ongoing behavior deemed by the teacher to be an interruption to the educational process within the classroom.
Defiance	Failure to follow directions/redirections within the school building. An excess number of attendance issues may be moved up to the Level II infraction Defiance.
Dress Code Violation	<p>Any attire, which the administration considers to be an impediment to the quality of instruction or the welfare of the student or school building, will not be permitted.</p> <p>Some examples of dress code violations (see a more extensive list in the Student Handbook):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hats, do-rags, hoods/hoodies, and sunglasses worn within the building • Low riding pants or shorts that expose undergarments • Low cut shirts, bare midriffs, muscle shirts, and half shirts
Hallway/Lavatory Misconduct	<p>Behavior that may injure or infringe on the movement of others, including running and horseplay.</p> <p>Excessive noise, foul language, or inappropriate physical interactions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Congregating in the lavatory ▪ Inappropriate use of lockers ▪ Failure to follow directions/redirections given by a school employee
School Activity Misconduct	The AACMS Code of Conduct is in effect not only on school grounds, but also in <u>ALL</u> activities in which the student is representing AACMS.
Unauthorized Items	Items that are deemed to interfere with the learning or wellbeing of other students. The use of acceptable items (ex. Apple Watches) for inappropriate actions such as answering calls, texting, taking photographs of others, etc.
Other	Some incidents are deemed to be a Level II infraction, but do not fit into any other Level II infractions.

Level III Infractions

Consequences

<u>Infraction 1</u>	<u>Infraction 2</u>	<u>Infraction 3</u>	<u>Infraction 4</u>
1-2 Detentions and/or suspension	1-3 days suspension	1-3 days suspension	1-3 days suspension

All consequences are subject to administrative discretion, as deemed most appropriate for the individual incident.

Academic Dishonesty	Cheating on a test or school assignment. The sharing of information by the copying or taking photos of graded materials. Fraud - the altering of materials such as, but not limited to, passes and report cards.
Activating False Fire Alarm	The willful pulling of the fire alarm when not warranted. In addition to school consequences, law enforcement may become involved.
Damage/Destruction of school/personal property	Willful behavior which damages or destroys property belonging to the school, other students, or any school employee. If deemed appropriate by school administration or law enforcement, the full cost of materials and labor to repair or replace the damaged/destroyed property may be the responsibility of the student(s) causing the damage/destruction.
Disrespect	The use of foul language directed toward a school employee. The deliberate attempt to insult, belittle, lessen the reputation of, or infringe the public opinion of a school employee.
Endangerment	Improper behavior that may cause physical injury or harm to another individual. Propping doors or opening school doors for other students/nonstudents from outside of school.
Fighting	When two or more students are involved in a physical altercation. Involvement of law enforcement may be included in the consequences given to the students. Their actions are separate from the consequences given by the administration.
Inappropriate Use of School Technology, Internet, and the School Network	Violation of AACS Acceptable Use Policies (AACS BD POL 9.1.1 & 9.1.2)
Insubordination	Excessive Level II infractions. Not attending Saturday detention.
Physical Assault	Any behavior that could cause physical harm or injury to another student. Generally, when one student is the aggressor, while the other is the recipient.
Profanity/Obscenity	Any behavior that visually and/or verbally is considered offensive and/or inappropriate for maintaining an effective school environment.

Theft	The taking of another's possessions without their consent or knowledge. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.
Threats/Harassment/Bullying	Any action that conveys the intent to cause bodily harm to an individual. May include verbal, physical or emotional injury to another student. The deliberate attempt to insult, belittle, lessen the reputation of, or infringe the public opinion of another student. This may also include electronic communication or actions on social media. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.
Tobacco/Vaping Violation	Possession, sale, distribution of tobacco or vapes on school property, buses, or at a school function off campus. Vapes with either flavoring or nicotine are a Level III infraction.
Unauthorized Area	Students found outside or leaving school property during school hours without permission from a school employee.
Other	Some incidents are deemed to be a Level III infraction, but do not fit into any other Level III infractions.

Level IV Infractions – Possibly Expellable Offenses

In the case of a Level IV infraction. The student will be suspended for up to 10 days, with a possible recommendation for an expulsion hearing.

Alcohol/Drug Violation	The use, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal, controlled substances. Violation of AACCS Policy 2.3.2. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.
Assault of a District Employee	Intentionally hitting, pushing, or touching in anyway an employee that is deemed to be an assault. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.
Dangerous Weapons/Objects	Including, but not limited to, any firearm, explosive, knife/cutting instrument. Possession of a replica of a weapon and/or look alike object may be classified as a Level IV infraction. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.
Exceeding Level III Consequences	Exceeding three separate suspensions for a specific Level III infraction. Exceeding five separate suspensions for any combination of Level III infractions.
Terroristic Threats	Actions or verbal actions that, as deemed valid by administration, threaten to harm the school building or persons of AACMS. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.

Other

Due to the severity of an incident, some incidents are deemed to be a Level IV infraction, but do not fit into any other Level IV infraction. Law enforcement actions are separate from school consequences.

PHONE POLICY

- Cell phones must be silenced and not on person (e.g., placed in backpacks, lockers, or designated classroom areas) from the start of the school day until the final dismissal. AACMS is not responsible for lost or stolen items out of lockers. If a student refuses to place their phone in the holder, then administration will become involved.
- Students will not be permitted to use their cell phones during instructional periods, lunch, recess, or transition times.
- We understand the need for communication. In case of an emergency or if you need to reach your child, please contact the school office, and we will ensure your message is delivered promptly.
- If a student needs to contact a parent or guardian, they may do so from the Main Office. If a parent or guardian needs to contact their child, they may do so at any time through the Main Office, and your child will be immediately notified.

DETENTIONS

- Staff and Faculty have the right to assign after school or Saturday Detentions for misbehavior if deemed appropriate by the teacher and administration.
 - Parents will be given 24 hour notice of detention.
 - Failure to attend a detention without proper documentation may result in further administrative action.
 - **Transportation will not be provided for after school or Saturday Detentions. Failure to pick up your child on time may result in further administrative action.**
-
- **After School Detention: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM**
 - **Saturday Detention: 9:00AM – 12:00PM**

AACMS participates in the OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program

We expect our students to subscribe to the following:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will help students who are bullied.
3. We will include students who are left out.

4. If we know that somebody being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Any behaviors deemed by administration as bullying may be dealt with as a Level III infraction, and offenders will be disciplined accordingly.

*False reports of bullying may result in discipline action.

Cyberbullying is not tolerated whatsoever at Arts Academy Charter Middle School.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students in violation of the dress code may be required to wear clothing provided by the school until their parents provide appropriate clothing.

Any form of dress that is deemed by administration as unsafe, disrupts school, or detracts from the learning process is not acceptable. Clothing must allow students a full range of motion – sitting, bending, reaching, running – without requiring perpetual readjustment. Appropriateness of student dress, including the display of anything that may appear gang related.

Examples of inappropriate dress include, but are *not limited to* the following:

- Hats, do-rags and caps, Hoods/hoodies worn over the head, Sunglasses worn inside,
- Articles of clothing that reference drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, weapons, obscenities, sexual connotations, or that contain derogatory statements regarding gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation
- Low riding baggy jeans and shorts, Pants so low as to expose undergarments
- Chains hanging from pants, heavy chains, dog chains, choker collars
- Clothing or insignia depicting or related to violence, gangs, or hate levels
- Tank tops with a strap of less than 2 inches (3-finger width), halter tops, tube tops, cutoff shirts, crop shirts, sheer tops, mesh tops, low-cut tops, bare midriffs, bare backs, muscle shirts, half-shirts
- Undershirts and under-shorts as outer garments.
- No excessively short shorts, skirts, or dresses.
- Garments worn in such a manner as to expose underwear (undergarments must not be seen – pants are to be pulled up to the waist)
- See-through clothing
- Excessively ripped, torn or frayed garments
- Footwear must be always worn; Sneakers must be worn for PE

Special Circumstances

For the safety and welfare of everyone, teachers may limit the kind of clothing that may be worn by students during Physical Education, science labs, and arts classes and recess.

Students have the ability to wear hair ornaments or covers as part of protective or cultural hairstyles.

Jewelry/Decorations/Accessories

Students may not wear anything considered unsafe, disruptive, or inflammatory.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

To qualify for Special Education Services at AACMS, the child must meet eligibility criteria for one or more physical or mental disabilities, as set forth in Pennsylvania State Regulations. AACMS engages in identification procedures to ensure that eligible students receive an appropriate educational program consisting of special education and related services, individualized to meet student needs. Parents may obtain additional information regarding special education services and programs and parental due process rights by contacting Director of Educational Support Services at 610-351-0234.

Confidentiality of Student Records (FERPA)

AACMS protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information for all students in accordance with state and federal law.

Student Records

School records are confidential and privileged. You have the right to inspect your child's records within forty-five (45) days from the date of a written request. You may make a written request for copies of your child's records.

Release of Information

Your child's records cannot be released without your written consent except for directory information, incidents specified in the policy, or as otherwise stated herein. If you do not want directory information about your child transferred, you may prevent its release by contacting AACMS in writing. Please address such requests to the building principal.

Disclosure Exceptions

Your child's records may be moved to another school or school system in which you plan to enroll your child, or in which your child is already enrolled, if you notify the responsible staff person at AACMS, or if the enrolling school system submits written notification of enrollment and the disclosure of information requested is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

Maintenance of Records

Records will be retained for six (6) years. Records may be transferred to a student when he or she reaches the age of eighteen (18) or attends an institution of post-secondary education.

Protected Handicapped Students (Chapter 15):

In compliance with state and federal law, AACMS will provide to each protected handicapped student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

Student Computer Usage Guidelines

- Respect the equipment. Report any damage to a teacher immediately!
- Internet use is limited to teacher-assigned activities or classwork. Personal internet use is prohibited
- Do not download or install any programs, games, or music.
- Do not personalize the computer settings. Multimedia equipment is for schoolwork only
- Chewing gum, food, or drinks are not allowed anywhere near a computer.
- Do not run programs that continue to execute after you log off.
- Avoiding School Filters – Students may not attempt to or use any software, utilities or other means to access Internet sites or content blocked by the school filters.

Students

- Must **save to student drive (network drive marked Student Data W)**, *not* to the hard drive. *Saving to the hard drive will cause the student to lose all work*
- May not access, submit, post, publish, forward, download, scan or display defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexual in nature, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying and/or illegal materials or messages.
- May not use AACMS computers, network, or Internet services for any illegal activity or in violation of any policy/procedure or school rules.
- Will adhere to federal copyright laws. When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher and web site must be identified.

General Student Safety

- Do NOT reveal your full name, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information on the Internet.
- NEVER agree to meet people you have contacted through the Internet.
- Inform teacher/parent if you access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate, or make you uncomfortable in any way!

****All Acceptable Use of Technology and the Internet Policy Guidelines can be found on the AACMS website. www.arts-cs.org***