



Palmetto Achievement Center for Excellence Academy

Parent/Student Handbook

2023-2024

6015 North Main Street
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PACE does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, or immigrant status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle the nondiscrimination policies. For questions pertaining to Section 504, contact Melissa Rabon, and for questions pertaining to Title IX, contact Dr. Melanie Vaughn.

General Overview

The information contained in this handbook sets forth information, principles, and guidelines for student and parent involvement, participation, and conduct at Palmetto Achievement Center for Excellence (PACE) Academy. The materials included are not all inclusive, and the administration realizes that events may arise that are not specifically addressed in this document. The administration and the Board of Directors reserve the right and the obligation to amend, add, or delete rules and regulations when deemed necessary to facilitate the smooth operation of both campuses.

The purpose of this Parent and Student Handbook is to inform parents and students of our rules and procedures. This handbook is up-to-date as of July 17, 2023 and applies to the 2023/2024 school year.

I have read the 2023/2024 PACE Student & Parent handbook in its entirety and agree to adhere to its requirements.

Parent Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Student Name

Teacher

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WELCOME!

Welcome to a new school year! I am so glad you have chosen our school for your child's educational needs. We are a tuition-free public charter school, under the South Carolina Public Charter School District, designed specifically with the purpose of helping your child build foundational reading skills necessary to master the art of reading.

I believe a partnership between students, parents, and the school is necessary to ensure every child succeeds, and I am excited to bring a new educational experience to your family.

Please take the time to read through and discuss the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook with your student(s). If you have questions about any of the items included, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

My team and I look forward to serving you this school year.

Warm Regards,
Melissa Rabon, Executive Director

OUR MISSION, VISION, BELIEFS AND CORE VALUES

The **Mission** of PACE Academy is to ensure all students master foundational reading skills along with South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards to reach their full potential both in and out of the classroom.

PACE Academy is **Committed** to ensuring all teachers and classroom assistants are trained in multisensory, structured pedagogy with the Orton-Gillingham Approach.

It is our **Philosophy** that students with dyslexia are capable of achieving academic success. PACE Academy believes that by providing our students with this multisensory, sequential language instruction based on the science of reading, we can ensure all students, with or without dyslexia, master foundational reading skills necessary for academic success and life outside the classroom.

Despite the difficulties people with dyslexia face academically, research has shown there is no connection between their overall intelligence and their ability to read. In fact, PACE Academy **Believes** there are many advantages to having dyslexia. Many famous dyslexics, like Steve Jobs, Walt Disney, Albert Einstein, George Washington, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and many more are celebrated for their intelligence and have shaped the world we live in today. PACE Academy firmly believes dyslexia is a gift, and if given the proper tools for success, every child with dyslexia will agree!

GOVERNING STRUCTURE

PACE Academy is a tuition-free public charter school authorized under the South Carolina Public Charter School District. PACE is also a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation through the South Carolina Secretary of State's office, and as such, is governed by a Board of Directors. The PACE Board of Directors is elected annually by the parent body and employees of the School each May with new members taking their seats in July in compliance with Section 59-40-50 of the South Carolina Charter Schools Act (1996).

PACE Academy's Board of Directors is responsible for governing, not managing, the school. Board members ensure that PACE's academic programs are consistent with the school's mission and are successful in educating all students, and that school funds are properly managed and accounted for. Board members also develop and evaluate school policies to ensure that they are lawful, fair, and provide appropriate protection and opportunity for everyone involved with the school.

PACE Academy's Executive Director and Leadership Team are responsible for inspiring, leading, guiding, and directing every member of the instructional and support services team and for achieving the highest standards of excellence, so that each individual student enrolled in the school may have a complete, valuable, and meaningful education.

The Executive Director is responsible directly to the Board of Directors for operating the school. The Board will delegate its authority to the school Executive Director to execute approved policies and manage the day-to-day activities of the school.

PACE BOARD MEETINGS

School board meetings are open to the public, and subject to executive sessions permitted by the SC Freedom of Information Act. Regular meeting dates are scheduled for the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm and can be found publicly posted in advance on our website. Parents and members of the community can learn valuable information about our school policies and other pertinent information by attending a board meeting. Board meetings are structured to allow for a Public Comment Section per board policy.

ENROLLMENT

PACE is an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) and as such will give priority, as per state law, to students who fit the mission of the school. Class sizes are limited to 16 students per class; grade levels are limited to 2 classes per grade level for a total of 32 students in each grade. In the event that more than 32 students apply for a specific grade level, PACE will hold a weighted lottery as permitted under Section 50-40-50. "In the case of a charter school designated as an Alternative Education Campus, pursuant to Section 59-40-111, that is serving educationally disadvantaged students, if the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building, students may be accepted by weighted lot as allowed by ESSA with mission-aligned preference and the process clearly described in their charter and charter contract approved by their sponsor, and there is no appeal to the sponsor."

To be eligible for the PACE lottery, parents must be able to provide documentation of a demonstrated need as per 59-40-50. "Demonstrated need may include, but not be limited to, as documented in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 plan, a medical or psychological diagnosis, or documentation that the student is not meeting grade-specific standards in literacy as documented by the student's school.

See the school's lottery policies and procedures for more information.

RE-ENROLLMENT

For current students, "re-enrollment" forms must be completed each March 1st to secure the student's spot at PACE Academy for the following school year. **If a parent decides to not complete the re-enrollment form by March 1st of each year, they relinquish their child's seat for the upcoming school year.** If, after completing enrollment paperwork, the family decides to withdraw, written

notification from the Parent/Guardian is required in order to relinquish their seat to another student.

Open enrollment will be opened on January 1st for new student applications for the following school year and will be closed on March 15th. All applications, regardless of method of submission, will be collected, printed, and dated to confirm submission is prior to the published deadline. The deadline for submission will be published on the school website, as well as on the printed version of the enrollment application. Parents will be notified that the application has been received. Any applications received after the published deadline will be considered on a first-come/first-serve, space-available basis. The lottery, if needed, will be held on the first business day of April each year.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

If you are withdrawing your child from PACE Academy for any reason, please contact the Front Office for a withdrawal form so your child's records may be sent to the receiving school in a timely manner. The withdrawal form provides us with the name and address of the new school your child will be attending. Student records will be forwarded upon receipt of the request from the new school. All fines must be cleared, and all school property must be returned before withdrawal. If a student is absent for ten (10) consecutive days without the school being notified, the student will be withdrawn, and his or her spot will be filled. Additionally, withdrawal can be triggered by a parent/student failure to adhere to school discipline policies and procedures as stipulated in the discipline section.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FAMILY

Children learn best when there is a positive partnership between the School and the Family. In an effort to send a consistent message to students regarding the importance of education, and in support of the mission and values of PACE Academy we ask that families:

Model attitudes and behaviors that support the PACE Academy mission by:

- Showing respect to the teachers and PACE Academy staff by work and deed, both at school and away from.
- Modeling effective conflict resolution by handling concerns appropriately, directly, and honestly, only with those involved.

Show respect for the importance of school by having students:

- Arriving on time and remaining the full length of the school day.

- Complying with the school calendar regarding vacations.
- Attending to everyday health and nutritional needs.
- Balancing activities outside of school with school responsibilities.

Enhance learning by:

- Staying informed by reading, discussing and signing communications from the school, thereby demonstrating to your child that you are interested in his/her progress and learning.
- Monitoring the completion of class work, homework, and projects.
- Assisting with remedial assignments.
- Making a plan to obtain make-up assignments and monitoring their completion when necessary.
- Working with the Academic Director, or designee, and teachers to plan for absences other than those due to illness.
- Establishing a time, place, and routine for study at home.
- Giving positive reinforcement for appropriate attitudes and behaviors.
- Encouraging your child and praising him/her for doing his/her best.
- Attending Teacher/Parent/Student conferences to obtain detailed information about your child's strengths, weaknesses and progress and fulfilling agreements made at those conferences.
- Ensuring that your child has proper rest, nutrition and recreation to promote well-being and readiness to learn.
- Providing home consequences for inappropriate behaviors that interfere with learning or the well-being of all students.
- Spending time with your child so that his/her emotional needs are met and he/she can focus on learning.
- Cooperating with specific requests of the school to ensure appropriate student behavior and/or an appropriate academic program for your child.

Supporting the overall school program by:

- Attending PACE Academy parent meetings and school functions regularly.
- Volunteering/assisting with various events throughout the school year.

VOLUNTEERING IN/VISITING THE SCHOOL

Volunteers in the classroom are cherished and appreciated at PACE Academy. To sign-up as a volunteer, please complete the background check on the school website at: <https://choosepace.org/resources/volunteering>

Please note: Any parent or visitor must present valid ID to enter the building. This includes coming on campus for early dismissals/sick child pick up.

SCHOOL FEES

Parents are asked to pay a supply fee of \$30.00 and a technology insurance fee of \$30 per child. **Both fees are due by July 24, 2023.** The supply fee will cover the student's basic school supplies for the year (notebooks, glue, pencils, erasers, scissors, etc.). The fees are tax deductible. Parents who are eligible for free and reduced lunch and are not able to pay the fee should contact the Executive Director to discuss payment plans. School fees may be paid online or by check, money order or cashiers' check made payable to PACE Academy.

ADDITIONAL FEES

The following additional expenses may occur throughout the school year based on the needs and interests of your child:

- Class field trips: One to three per year per grade; trips vary in cost and are optional.
- School t-shirts: The PTO sells t-shirts. A school t-shirt is preferred for field trips.
- Yearbook: Cost approx. \$35; delivered in May.
- Fall and spring school pictures: G Photography offers individual and class pictures. Fall is for yearbook. Spring is for fun. All optional.
- Events admission tickets (Harvest Festival, Talent Show, etc.)

FEE AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

At PACE, we have a certain procedure which must be followed for receiving and accounting for any incoming money. Please help us by doing your part and acting in accordance with the following fee payment procedure:

All payments must be documented upon receipt on the appropriate form.

Parents have been instructed the following:

1. Parents are encouraged to utilize online payments as much as possible to minimize handling of cash or checks.
2. Money has to be brought in by 8 a.m. each morning, contained in a labeled, sealed envelope and the following information should be written on the outside of the sealed envelope: Student Name, Grade, Teacher, Amount, Reason for Money (i.e. Lunch Account, Donation, Fee, Field Trip, etc.).
3. Payments must be in exact change. The office cannot keep cash on hand and change is NOT guaranteed. Money is deposited daily.
4. If multiple payments for different purposes are being made, each item must be listed on the envelope.

5. Checks should be made to PACE Academy unless noted by a fundraiser event.
6. DO NOT ENCLOSE A SIGNED PERMISSION SLIP in a field trip payment envelope.
7. Deadlines for fee payment should be honored as this directly impacts our ability to move forward in securing the services for which you are paying.

CHECK RETURN POLICY

All returned checks are subject to a \$25.00 fee plus the price of the returned check.

Families/Staff will be sent a written notice of the returned check by the administration, along with a copy of the returned item and a note explaining the returned check fee. The note will serve as an invoice for the total amount due including the returned check fee. PACE Academy will accept another check or money order to cover the invoice balance.

Families/Staff who have two (2) returned checks must make all future payments by cash, money order, or via debit or credit card online. Additional checks cannot be accepted.

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular school hours are from 8:00 am – 3:15 pm every day except Wednesdays. Wednesday hours are from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm.

Half days or Early Dismissal days will follow the regular Wednesday schedule.

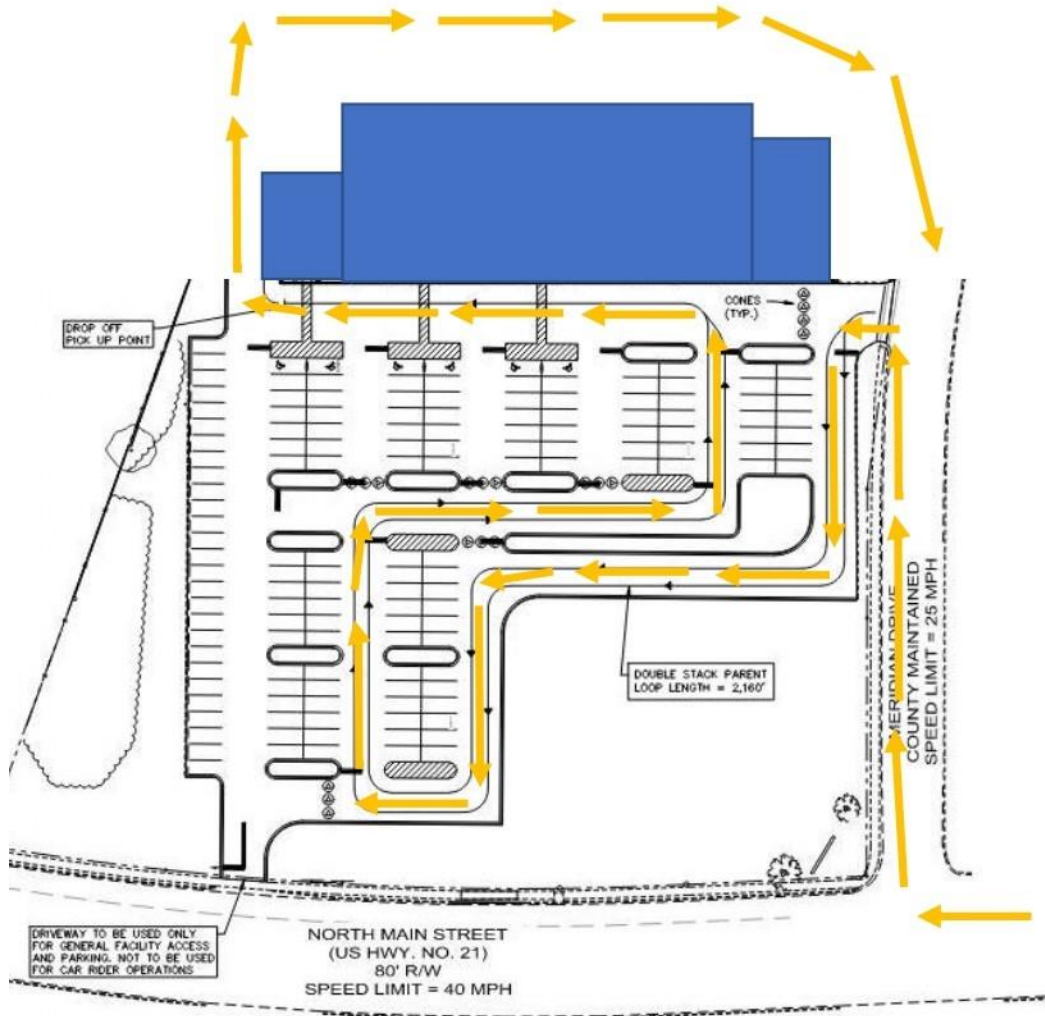
GENERAL ARRIVAL

Homeroom begins at 8:00 am for all students; students are tardy at 8:01 am. Regular student drop-off runs from 7:30am to 7:55am. For the health, safety and well-being of children, please do not arrive before 7:30am as personnel are not available to supervise students. Please have all students remain in the car until PACE Academy Faculty and Staff greet students at their car in the Student Loading Zone at 7:30am. The Front Doors of the school are locked until this time. Additionally, visitor parking is limited and should be reserved for parents who are parking to volunteer, chaperone a field trip, attend a school meeting, etc. Lastly, REFRAIN from using your cellphone or speeding while driving on school grounds. Again, the school parking lot is a busy place –safety is our top priority.

Parents may elect to participate in early drop off, which runs from 7:00am – 7:30am. The cost is \$3 per day or \$10 per week.

DISMISSAL

At the end of class each day, students will be dismissed from their classrooms at 3:15 and exit the building through the front Student Entrance doors. See the carline map below for the appropriate carline pick-up places for your child(ren).



LATE PICK-UP PROCEDURES

School carline ends at 3:45pm. Students remaining after 3:45pm will be sent to Be Great Academy and the parents will be charged for a full day.

Daily Schedules

Everyday, except Wednesdays:

7:30 am – Doors Open – Students may go to cafeteria

7:45 am – Students allowed to go to Homeroom

8:00 am – Homeroom officially begins

8:15 am – ACE Time

9:03 – 9:53 am – 1st Block

9:56 – 10:46 am – 2nd Block

10:49 – 11:39 am – 3rd Block

11:42 – 12:32 pm – 4th Block

12:35 – 1:25 pm – 5th Block

1:28 – 2:18 pm – 6th Block

2:21 – 3:11 pm – 7th Block

3:15 pm – Dismissal

Wednesday Schedule:

7:30 am – Doors Open – Students may go to cafeteria

7:45 am – Students allowed to go to Homeroom

8:00 am – Homeroom officially begins

8:12 am – ACE Time

8:45 – 9:15 am – 1st Block

9:18 – 9:48 am – 2nd Block

9:51 – 10:21 am – 3rd Block

10:24 – 10:54 am – 4th Block

10:57 – 11:27 am – 5th Block

11:30 – 12:00 pm – 6th Block

12:03 pm – Dismissal

LUNCH PROGRAM

PACE Academy will not be participating in the National School Lunch Program. However, parents will have the option to order a bag lunch from PACE.

PB&J OR Lunchable, chips, fruitsnacks, applesauce, & bottled water – \$4.00

Money can be loaded onto the student's EZSchoolApp Account via ezschoolapps.com.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

PACE Academy is partnering with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Midlands to provide after-school care until 6:30pm each day. The cost is \$59 per week, but a sliding scale is available for families who qualify.

UPDATED EMERGENCY AND PICKUP INFORMATION

It is very important that your emergency contact and carpool information is complete and up-to-date. Students can only be released to adults listed on the Student Information form completed during enrollment. If you wish to have another adult listed, please send the request, in writing, to the Front Office. If your request for a particular adult is just for one day, please send a note to the classroom. Children must have a permission note from their parent to go with a person not designated on the enrollment form. All changes to dismissal plans are to be called in to the Front Office by 1:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

Important - **By law**, all students in Grades K-12 must attend class a minimum of **170 days** of the 180-day school year. In accordance with state law, it is the policy of PACE Academy that the first 10 absences will only be excused absences due to the following reasons: illness or tardiness due to an appointment with a physician (medical excuse must be provided); a death in family; observance of a recognized religious holiday, or other health services that must be scheduled during school hours (medical excuse must be provided).

Any absences after the first 10 absences will be considered unexcused unless a medical note is provided. Personal vacations are unexcused absences.

For any absences, a parent note or medical excuse must be turned in to the school within 5 days of the absence. If the excuse is not turned in within 5 days of the absence, the absences will be unexcused. Please make sure that your child turns in the excuse notes. Sometimes students leave them in their book bags and forget to turn them in.

Make sure each note has the following information:

- Student's name
- Parent's signature
- Date(s) of absence
- Date note is written
- Daytime phone number

- Reason for absence

Should you have questions or concerns about attendance, please contact the front office. Family compliance with the attendance policy is crucial to the progress of each student and for the smooth functioning of each classroom. It is extremely important that each student be present every possible day. Missing a whole day or signing in/out disrupts student instructional time. Missed instruction can create gaps in learning which may cause a student to fall behind.

The Administration of PACE Academy reserves the right to excuse absences for students pending all schoolwork is completed during the student's absence.

Parents are encouraged to utilize the Wednesday early dismissal days to schedule appointments to minimize loss of classroom instructional time.

IMPORTANT - SPECIAL NOTES REGARDING ABSENCES:

Upon written request from the Parent/Guardian, the school Director may approve pre-arranged absences. Approval will be granted when the absence is of significant educational benefit to the student. All schoolwork that is assigned during the absence must be completed satisfactorily.

Excessive medical absences may result in the student being retained at the discretion of the school Executive Director. If a student has a chronic or extended medical issue, the parent should speak to an administrator about the possibility of medical homebound services.

Parent/family illness does NOT count as an excused absence except in emergency cases, or due to special circumstances. These must be approved by the school.

According to state law, **either three consecutive or five total unexcused absences** makes a student truant, and truancy intervention steps must be implemented at that point.

To support the goal of the Compulsory School Attendance Law and decrease a possible referral to the Family Court, PACE shall implement the following actions:

- Upon 3rd unlawful Absence: 1st Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 5th unlawful Absence: 2nd Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 7th unlawful Absence: Truancy Plan with Chief Business Officer

- Upon 10th unlawful Absence: Final Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 11th unlawful Absence: Referral to SC DSS and/or Family Court

The parent and/or student may be referred to the Department of Social Services due to concerns of educational neglect or to the Family Court System. The Family Court judge may issue a court attendance order against the parent and/or child. Failure to follow the court order may result in contempt of court in which the judge can fine and/or jail a parent for non-compliance with the court order.

Absences (*Bereavement*)

Due to unfortunate circumstances, students may experience the loss of a family member or relative. The school understands the need for students to be present for the family and might need to miss school. The student will be responsible for the work missed during these absences. As a school we can approve following absences as "*bereavement*" if the student or parent submits a copy of the obituary or funeral program. PACE can approve *up to 3* Bereavement days if the funeral is local and *up to 5* Bereavement days for out of state.

UNEXCUSED TARDIES & EARLY DISMISSALS

Attendance is taken in homeroom each morning at 8:00 am for all students and students who arrive after this time are tardy.

Any student who arrives after start time must be accompanied by a parent to the office to sign-in and receive a Tardy Pass before proceeding to class.

Consequences for repeated tardiness and/or unexcused early dismissals include the following:

- Upon 3rd unlawful Tardy/Early Dismissal: 1st Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 5th unlawful Tardy/Early Dismissal: 2nd Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 7th unlawful Tardy/Early Dismissal: Truancy Plan with Chief Business Officer
- Upon 10th unlawful Tardy/Early Dismissal: Final Truancy Notification Letter
- Upon 11th unlawful Tardy/Early Dismissal: Referral to SC DSS and/or Family Court

Maximizing instructional time is a priority at PACE Academy. To protect valuable time, early dismissals will not be allowed after 2:40 pm. Should your child have a need to be dismissed early from school, please make sure that

your child is signed out prior to the 2:40 pm deadline. Classes will not be interrupted after 2:40 pm.

Medical notes or other documentation will be required for any sign-outs to be excused. Unexcused absences may lead to referral to the truancy office. It is not a valid reason to sign out your child to avoid car rider line. Repetitive sign-outs will be referred for administrative action.

SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO WEATHER

If, for any reason, there is a change in the school schedule, a notice will be posted immediately on the school website, robocall, and other communication methods. Please listen to local radio and television stations for updates.

Typically, PACE will follow what Richland School District 1 does regarding closings due to weather. However, the ultimate decision will be left up to the Executive Director.

HEALTH/SAFETY GUIDELINES

A child who has been ill should return to school only when well enough to participate fully in all activities.

If your child has had a temperature above 100 degrees F, diarrhea, vomiting, a rash, or a contagious illness including pink eye, strep, etc. within the last 24 hours, please keep your child at home.

Remember, your child must be fever free (without fever reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please notify the Front Office before school starts on the day that your child is ill. Parents must notify the school nurse immediately if the child contracts or comes in contact with a contagious disease so that parents of children who may have been exposed can be alerted. These include but are not limited to: strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, chickenpox, flu, and COVID-19. Remember to notify the office for each subsequent day the child will be absent. A message may always be left on voicemail.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be contacted. It is expected that a parent/ guardian will pick up the child as soon as possible. If this

is not possible, one of the adults listed on your child's emergency form will be contacted to pick up your child.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has designated immunization (shot) requirements for school-age children. Children entering kindergarten and first grade are required to have a four-dose minimum of the DPT. Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or positive history of the disease is required for all students entering kindergarten through fifth grade. Tdap vaccine or positive history of the disease is required for all student entering 7th grade. Additionally, all school-age children are required to fulfill immunization requirements as stipulated by DHEC. Please visit www.scdhec.gov for details.

NURSING SERVICES

The school has a registered nurse on staff. Parents need to inform the school nurse whenever a child has a chronic medical condition and/or will need prescribed medicines or treatments during the school day.

Students at PACE Academy may not keep medicines in their cubbies/lockers or carry them in school or on school trips unless pre-approved by school nurse and student's physician.

Only the school nurse or his/ her trained designee may administer medication or prescribed treatments during the school day. *If a child is prescribed a medication or a prescribed medication is changed, parents **MUST** notify the school nurse in order to ensure the best possible care of your child.* If a child takes a daily medication prior to school but the parent fails to administer the medication from time to time, this may have an adverse effect on the child's learning. In these cases, the parent will be called to either come in to administer the medication at school, or to remove the child from school for the remainder of the day.

Head lice is a common childhood problem. If signs of head lice are spotted (see DHEC link <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-010752.pdf>), the child will be sent home for treatment.)

The nurse must re- examine and give clearance to the child before that child may return to class. If your child or a sibling has a case of lice, please inform the school nurse.

Medical records and emergency contact forms for new and returning students must be on file in the school office by the first week in August each year. ***It is imperative for the school to have up-to-date contact information for parents and guardians at all times in case of a medical emergency.***

SCHOOL EXCLUSION

For all communicable diseases/conditions such as but not limited to, Chickenpox, Fifth Disease, Influenza, Head Lice, Hepatitis A, B, and C, HIV/AIDS, Impetigo, Measles, Meningitis, Mononucleosis, Mumps, Conjunctivitis, Ringworm, Scabies, Strep throat, Tuberculosis, and Whooping cough, the school staff will follow the recommendations made by South Carolina DHEC (<http://www.scdhec.gov/Library/CR-010752.pdf>) in regard to returning to school after a communicable disease has been diagnosed by a physician.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

In an effort to establish a safe and effective system for providing medications to students during the school day and at school-sponsored functions, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control has outlined General Standards of Medication Administration in a school setting. Below are just a few of the important items regarding the regulation of medications at PACE Academy.

Medications should be brought to the school by a responsible adult and delivered to the school nurse or, in the absence of the nurse, the Front Office personnel.

Parents/guardians must provide medications to the school in original containers with all labeling from the pharmacy and/or manufacturer intact and readable. Each medication must be labeled with the student's name.

Over-the-counter medications that a parent/guardian may provide for short-term (1 to 2 weeks) or episodic use require written permission of the student's legal guardian and will only be given per the manufacturer's guidelines.

The following require a written order from a healthcare practitioner who is recognized by South Carolina's Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation as authorized to prescribe medications and written permission from the parent/guardian:

- Prescribed medications.

- Experimental medications.
- Medications being used off-label (including over-the-counter medications to be given in dosages or for reasons that are not consistent with the medication label or package insert).

Herbal/alternative medicinal products will not be administered at school.

At the time of purchase, if requested, pharmacists may assist parents/guardians by preparing separate containers for doses of medications to be given during school hours and field trips.

Medications that have expired or are not currently being used by a student will not be stored at the school. Parents will be notified and given an opportunity to pick up their child's medications. Medications that are not picked up will be disposed of in a manner that respects security as well as environmental concerns.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the administration of medications at PACE Academy, please contact the School Nurse.

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Integrity is one of PACE Academy's core values and it has a significant role in academic pursuits. An academic community must be able to rely on the honesty and integrity of all its members. Using or copying of another's words, ideas, thoughts, or arguments without giving credit is intellectually dishonest and will result in a zero in the gradebook.

HOMEWORK

Structured, graded homework for grades 2 – 7 should not be assigned. However, teachers may send home practice assignments for students to review and study at home.

Special projects will be assigned throughout the year as extensions of classroom instruction. However, teachers should provide classroom time to complete such assignments.

Regular homework assignments will be given for 8th grade students.

MAKE-UP Work

When students are absent, particularly for an extended period, it is their responsibility (parents need to assist elementary school children) to communicate with their teachers to find out what work and tests were missed so that make-up arrangements can be made in a timely fashion. Assignments that can be completed at home may be sent via email or picked up in the main office. Teachers will send makeup work at the request of the student/parent. Teachers must be granted 24 hours from the date of the request to gather make-up work. In the case of extended absences due to illness, the teachers and a member of the leadership team will work with the returning student to schedule make-up arrangements and tests within a reasonable time frame, ensuring no undue pressure. As a general rule, students should have the same number of days to make up work as the number of days that they were absent.

Students may be assigned Lunch N' Learn if a reasonable effort is not made to complete missing assignments. Students in grades 2-5 may not miss recess to complete missing/incomplete assignments. Recess is not required by law for middle school students. Therefore, teachers may assign recess detention/work time for these students if necessary.

RETENTION

Retention is the practice of requiring a student who has been in a given grade level for a full year to remain at that level for a subsequent school year. PACE is committed to differentiation in instruction and provides support for meeting the instructional needs of each child. Faculty members or a Parent/Guardian may refer a student for consideration of retention. Each student will receive individual consideration and a decision will be made only after a careful study of facts relating to phases of the child's growth and development. The child's academic achievement level, mental ability, physical and social characteristics are all important factors. All decisions are to be based upon sufficient data, collected over a period of time, and motivated by the desire to place the child in the school program where he or she will be the most successful. In addition, such decisions, when applied to students enrolled in special education, shall be on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the individualized education plan. The Executive Director has final authority regarding the retention of students.

DISABILITY SERVICES

SECTION 504 OF THE 1973 REHABILITATION ACT

Section 504 is an act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. It assures that persons with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. The act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- (1) has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);
- (2) has a record of such impairment; or
- (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

As a public school, PACE Academy has obligations under IDEA and Section 504 which include identifying, evaluating and, if the child is determined to be eligible under IDEA or Section 504, affording access to appropriate educational accommodations or specially designed instruction.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Special Education means specially designed instruction (34 C.F.R. § 300.39(a)(1)), to address the unique needs of a child that result from the child's disability to ensure the child has access to the general education. Special Education supports the student in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) through the implementation of specially designed instruction, accommodations/modifications, materials, and curriculum, as appropriate.

In order for a student to qualify for Special Education services, a student must meet eligibility as a student with a disability **and** the child must have specific needs which are so unique that they require specially designed instruction to access the general education curriculum (34 C.F.R. § 300.8).

Please contact the Disabilities Services Director with specific questions.

TUTORING POLICY

PACE Academy faculty and staff may NOT tutor students for pay without prior written approval by the Executive Director. This policy is in place to avoid conflicts of interest, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approved tutoring sessions must take place outside of normal contracted hours (after 3:45 PM).

CONFERENCES & REPORT CARDS

Teachers are responsible for keeping parents informed about student progress. Therefore, our teachers ensure that students are regularly issued progress reports that must be signed and returned. Check with your child's teacher for when progress reports are issued.

Several teacher conference days are also scheduled throughout the school year to discuss student progress with families. Parents are encouraged to have their students attend these meetings so students can learn to become an active participant in this process.

GRADING, PROGRESS REPORTS, & REPORT CARDS

All teachers should keep an accurate record of each student's progress toward mastery of the concepts during the school year. Each teacher is responsible for placing grades in both a paper grade book and the electronic grade book through PowerSchool. Training will be provided at the annual orientation. Because we have an electronic gradebook that has parent access, it is imperative that grades are current and kept updated weekly.

Report cards and progress reports will be generated through PowerSchool. The PowerSchool coordinator will provide teachers with the reporting schedule. All teachers must comply with the schedule.

Student grades should reflect their mastery/proficiency of the academic standards. When appropriate, rubrics should be used to set goals for students. Grades should not be based on student behavior.

Teachers are to enter grades into PowerTeacher no later than 10 days following an assignment's due date.

PACE Academy will follow the SC State adopted 10-point grading scale for number grades. Kindergarten students will receive a standards-based report card.

90%-100% = A

80%-89% = B

70%-79% = C

60%-69% = D

Below 60% = F

The purpose of grading is to assess a student's progress and mastery of skills and concepts. Teachers are expected to teach and reteach for mastery. Teachers are not allowed to grade students on nonacademic items (i.e., parent signature on a syllabus, classroom behavior, etc.) or items not covered in their state standards (i.e. reducing a grade for grammar mistakes on a math assessment, etc.).

CLASS PARTIES

Your child's teacher may plan class parties and special events throughout the year and ask for your assistance in covering the necessary materials/costs. Please be mindful of any classroom allergies when contributing to class parties. **Outside food must be store-bought and individually wrapped.**

BIRTHDAYS

Celebrating birthdays can be an exciting and important event in a child's life. Students are allowed to bring in a special birthday treat on their birthday provided there is enough for each child in the class, the items are prepackaged (no homemade items), and any class allergies are avoided. Parents must speak with teachers prior to sending items to school for planning and safety purposes. Parents may not bring in birthday snacks that require preparation which can take away from class time. **If a child is having a birthday party, parents may send invitations to school with your child to be placed in Communication Folders only if ALL students are invited.**

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of PACE Academy's discipline policy is to ensure a learning environment that respects and protects the health, safety, wellbeing, and learning of all students.

PACE Academy expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner. This expectation applies to a student's actions toward other students and teachers, their language, their dress, and their manners. We believe self-discipline is an interpersonal goal of education. Students have a responsibility to know and respect PACE Academy's policies, rules, and regulations. Violations of such policies, rules, and regulations will result in a disciplinary consequence(s).

Teachers and staff members must keep records of all Level-1 offenses.

Upon the accumulation of the 5th level 1 offense, the teacher/staff member will document in Educator Handbook as “accumulation of level 1s” which will result in a level 2 disciplinary action.

Level 1 Incidents – Handled by Teacher or Staff Member		
Misbehavior	Procedures	Interventions/ Disciplinary Action
<p>Definition:</p> <p>Student behavior that disrupts orderly classroom/school procedures or violates classroom or school rules but is not directed at himself/herself, another person, or property.</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking during instruction • Lying • Failure/Refusal to do work (automatic lunch & learn session) • Sleeping in class • Being out of seat • Using headphones and/or chromebooks during undesignated time • Cellphone use in class • Doing work for someone else • Cursing or using profanity (not directed at a specific person) • Being in unauthorized area • Minor Personal Displays of Affection (hand-holding, hugging, etc) 	<p>Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff member will take immediate action to address the misconduct. 2. Parent/Guardian will be informed of misconduct. 3. A record of interventions and disciplinary action will be maintained by the teacher/staff member. 	<p>Interventions/disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student conference • Parent/Guardian conference • Isolated work time • Time-out • Isolated lunch or recess time • Lunch or Recess detention • Temporary loss of privilege, equipment, items, or activities

Level 1 offenses start over each 9-weeks.

Level 2 Incidents – Handled Discipline Coordinator or Designee

Misbehavior	Procedures	Interventions/ Disciplinary Action
<p>Definition:</p> <p>Student behavior that is disruptive and/or aggressive and is directed at himself/herself, another person, or property.</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruptive behavior directed at a specific person or property Defacing/damaging school property under \$25 worth of damage Theft and/or possession of stolen property under \$25 Refusal to give up cellphone Refusal to obey personnel Walking out of class without teacher permission Personal Displays of Affection (more than minor incidents) Being in an unauthorized area/Cutting class Aggressive behavior toward or threatening another student Being blatantly disrespectful or disobedient to a staff member Forgery Inappropriate use (not obscene) of chromebooks Teasing or mean comments directed toward a person (not racial or sexual in nature) Aggressive horseplaying Cursing or using profanity (directed at a specific person) 	<p>Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff member will take immediate action to address the misconduct. 2. Staff member will use classroom walkie-talkie to radio front office for assistance with level 2 offense. 3. If necessary, student will be escorted to front office by an adult (no student escorts). 4. Teacher/Staff member will record level 2 incident in Educator Handbook. 5. Discipline Coordinator or designee will contact Parent/Guardian to inform of misconduct and issue intervention/disciplinary action. 6. Interventions/disciplinary actions will be maintained in Educator Handbook. 	<p>Interventions/disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student conference Parent/Guardian conference Lunch and Recess detention Temporary loss of privilege, equipment, items, or activities Work detail (if approved by parent. Ex: threw food in cafeteria = clean up mess) In-School Suspension 1-3 days Out-of-School Suspension 1-3 days After School Detention <p>**Accumulation of 3 level 2s = referral to administrator for level 3 intervention/disciplinary action.**</p>

Accumulation of 3 level 2s = referral to administrator for level 3 intervention/disciplinary action.

Level 3 Incidents – Handled School Administrator

Misbehavior	Procedures	Interventions/ Disciplinary Action
<p>Definition:</p> <p>Student behavior that is extremely disruptive, aggressive, and/or illegal. (Law enforcement will be contacted if appropriate.)</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of Tobacco • Bullying (3 or more incidents directed at the same person to qualify as bullying) • Fighting • Defacing/damaging school property over \$50 worth of damage • Theft and/or possession of stolen property valued more than \$50 • Committing sexual harassment • Using Racial Slurs • Obscene use of chromebook • Gross disrespect or disobedience to a staff member, using profane or disrespectful language or gestures • Possessing a look-a-like weapon that does not violate state law • Extorting and/or blackmailing a student or staff member • Aiding, abetting, or concealing any of the above behaviors 	<p>Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff member will take immediate action to address the misconduct/request assistance. (Staff member will use classroom walkie-talkie to radio front office for assistance with level 3 offense.) 2. If necessary, student will be escorted to front office by an adult (no student escorts). 3. School Administrator will confer with staff member and take immediate action to address the misconduct. 4. School Administrator will record level 3 incident in Educator Handbook along with a record of interventions and disciplinary actions taken. 5. School Administrator will contact Parent/Guardian to inform of misconduct and issue intervention/disciplinary action. 6. Due process procedures will be followed. 	<p>Interventions/disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior contract • In-School Suspension 1-3 days • Out-of-School Suspension 1-3 days • After School Detention

Level 4 Incidents – Handled by School Administrator

Misbehavior	Procedures	Interventions/ Disciplinary Action
<p>Definition:</p> <p>Criminal Behavior (Aggravated)</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackmailing, threatening, harassing/hazing, or intimidating a student or staff member by one or more students Making a bomb threat, pulling a fire alarms, or making false 911 call Possession, consumption, use, or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, controlled substance, or a copy-cat substance Committing gross immorality Committing malicious vandalism more than \$75 to any piece of school property Committing theft and/or possession of stolen property valued greater than \$75 Possessing a knife or look-a-like weapon that does not violate state law (not directed towards any person) Flagrant refusal to follow an administrative directive, such as to leave campus, submit to a search, or comply with an oral command Aiding, abetting, or concealing any of the above behaviors 	<p>Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff member will take immediate action to address the misconduct/request assistance. (Staff member will use classroom walkie-talkie to radio front office for assistance with level 4 offense.) 2. If necessary, student will be escorted to front office by an adult (no student escorts). 3. School Administrator will confer with staff member and take immediate action to address the misconduct. 4. School Administrator will record level 3 incident in Educator Handbook along with a record of interventions and disciplinary actions taken. 5. School Administrator will contact Parent/Guardian to inform of misconduct and issue intervention/disciplinary action. 6. Due process procedures will be followed. (If appropriate, law enforcement will be contacted.) 7. Student will make restitution in all cases for which it is appropriate. 	<p>Interventions/disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out-of-School Suspension 3-10 days Expulsion recommendation <p>Board of Directors and/or district office personnel must be notified</p>

Level 5 Incidents – Handled by School Administrator

Misbehavior	Procedures	Interventions/ Disciplinary Action
<p>Definition:</p> <p>Criminal Behavior (Flagrant)</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributing alcohol, drugs, and unauthorized controlled substances, or a copy-cat substance as defined by law or board policy Possessing, brandishing, pointing, or discharging a firearm, pellet gun, or any other projectile-type weapon on school property to include the school’s physical address, virtual learning environments, and/or school-sponsored events Setting a fire or attempting to set a fire to school property Committing assault and/or battery of an aggravated nature Sexual assault Possession of, brandishing, and directing a knife, brass knuckles, or other object that violates state law at another person Aiding, abetting, or concealing any of the above behaviors 	<p>Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff member will take immediate action to address the misconduct/request assistance. (Staff member will use classroom walkie-talkie to radio front office for assistance with level 5 offense.) 2. School administrator will confer with staff member and take immediate action to address the misconduct. 3. Student will be removed from school immediately and Parent/Guardian will be notified. 4. Administrator will confer with parents and district office personnel. 5. Due process procedures will be followed. (If appropriate, law enforcement will be contacted.) 6. A record of interventions and disciplinary action will be maintained. 	<p>Interventions/disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out-of-School Suspension 10 days and recommendation for expulsion Board of Directors and/or district office personnel must be notified <p>Possession of any firearm, explosive, or similar device and/or possession with the intent to distribute alcohol, drugs, unauthorized controlled substances, or a copy-cat substance, will result in automatic expulsion and law enforcement will notified.</p>

NOTE ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL INCIDENTS: The PACE Board of Directors expect the school administrators to take appropriate action when information becomes available about student misconduct away from school grounds or school activities that may have a direct and detrimental effort on or seriously threaten the discipline, educational environment, safety or general welfare of students, faculty, staff, and/or administrators of the school. When assessing the impact of out-of-school behavior on the school, the administrator should take into consideration the seriousness of the alleged out-of-school offense and the protection of students, faculty, staff, and administrators from the effects of violence, drugs, and/or disruptions.

Administrators are directed to evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, administrators should meet with the student upon his/her arrival to school, give the student notice of the concerns based on the reported out-of-school behavior and allow the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story. Based upon all of the circumstances, including a finding that the alleged conduct will have a direct and immediate effect on the school or threatens the discipline, educational environment, safety or general welfare of students, faculty, staff and/or administrators of the school, the administration may either permit the student to attend classes as usual or may take appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension in order to conduct an investigation into the matter. The parents/legal guardians of students will be notified of any action taken by the administration and offered the opportunity for a conference with the administration.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO USE POLICY

Drug-Free Schools

The school is committed to providing a drug and alcohol-free learning environment and workplace. Drug and alcohol abuse at school or in connection with school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds threatens the health

and safety of our students and our employees and adversely affects the educational mission of the school. Disciplinary action including dismissal and referral to law enforcement will be taken as needed by the Executive Director or designee.

Tobacco-Free Schools/Staff Smoking/No-Smoking Policy

Tobacco use, including vapes, is prohibited always in all buildings and grounds. This prohibition is applicable to all employees, students, visitors, and those people providing services for which the school contracts.

If a visitor refuses to comply after being warned, he or she will be required to leave the property and forfeit any fee charged for admission. Failure to leave school buildings and grounds may result in prosecution for disorderly conduct.

DRESS CODE

State educational authorities and court decisions have determined that style of dress and hair should not disrupt classes, interfere with learning, prevent instruction, and should comply with state health and safety standards. Requiring neatness, cleanliness, and appropriateness in clothing encourages an atmosphere conducive to learning, work, and discipline. Students are required to dress in a way that is appropriate for school. Students will not wear any article of clothing or display any insignia or sign that shows disrespect for any person, creed, race, color, sex, religion, or nationality. Parents/guardians are expected to monitor students' dress. Specific dress code rules are:

1. Clothing that displays antisocial, immoral, or illegal behavior is not allowed. Any article of clothing, jewelry, or haircut depicting gangs, satanic, occult, violence, sex, drugs, alcohol, mutilation, or language that could be considered obscene or vulgar will not be allowed.
2. Jewelry that could be used as a weapon is not allowed.
3. All shorts/skorts, skirts and dresses must be at least finger-tip length. Slits in skirts and dresses must not be extreme or revealing and must be no higher than finger-tip length.
4. Except for religious purposes, hats and head coverings may not be worn in school buildings. Requests for exceptions for religious purposes must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director for approval. (Does not apply to designated hat days)
5. Sunglasses, gloves, bandanas, and house slippers may not be worn in school buildings.

6. Bib overalls and/or suspenders must be snapped, hooked and/or buttoned and kept on shoulders. Belts must be buckled.
7. Pants may not be oversized, too tight, or allowed to sag. Undergarments must not be exposed.
8. Revealing tops, spandex, or clinging garments are not permitted.
9. For Middle School Students (Grades 6-8): Leggings are permitted but must accompany a top that completely covers the student's bottom. (Longer shirts/tops not required for elementary students.)
10. Tank-tops, spaghetti strap, razor-back shirts, and muscle shirts are prohibited. Sleeveless shirts must come to the edge of the shoulder and may no reveal any undergarments.

Any student in violation of the dress code will be required to change. Time missed from classes will be unexcused (students must make-up missed work). Disregard for the dress code will lead to disciplinary action. The final decision regarding dress will rest with the Executive Director or designee.

STUDENT CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

PACE Academy provides a grievance procedure as a formal method for the resolution of any grievances concerning the treatment of students by PACE Academy personnel. These grievances may arise from allegations of violations of student legal rights or school policy. In addition, the Board recognizes that there may be conditions that PACE Academy could improve, and that students should have some means by which they can effectively express their concerns. PACE Academy will resolve student complaints and grievances through orderly processes and at the lowest possible level.

A teacher will provide any student or parent the opportunity to discuss a decision or situation that the student considers unjust or unfair. If the incident remains unresolved, the student, parent or teacher may bring the matter to the Academic Director or designee for consideration and action.

PACE Academy Student Grievance Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and efficient process for reviewing and resolving student grievances, which may be filed and pursued by a student, a student's parent or guardian. Coastal Leadership Academy will keep all grievance proceedings confidential to the extent permitted by law.

The PACE student grievance process may be used by PACE students or their parents/ legal guardians as follows:

1. To address an alleged violation of applicable law, regulation or school policy that directly affects the student.
2. To address alleged discrimination or harassment against the student.

A student/parent/legal guardian who files a grievance has the right to be represented by legal counsel at their own expense, but timely notice must be given to the school to ensure the school can also have legal counsel present at any meeting. Meetings will not be held with only one party having legal counsel present.

If the timelines set forth herein are not met, the grievance may be deemed waived by the PACE official(s) charged with investigating and deciding the grievance.

The PACE official(s) charged with investigating and deciding grievances are entitled to extend the timelines herein for investigating and issuing decisions if necessary to conduct a thorough and complete investigation into a grievance or appeal.

Students and Families should follow a 3-step process to file a grievance with the school:

Step One: Informal Discussion

Subject to the following paragraph, the aggrieved student must first initiate an informal discussion with the other person(s) involved in the incident giving rise to the grievance within ten (10) calendar days of the incident or when the aggrieved student learned of the incident for the purpose of attempting to resolve the grievance.

If the grievance includes allegations of discrimination or harassment against the student, the student is not required to initiate an informal discussion with the person(s) allegedly discriminating against or harassing the student, and the student may proceed immediately to Step Two.

Step Two: Submit a Written Grievance to the Executive Director

If the informal discussion does not resolve the student's concerns, the student may within ten (10) days after the informal discussion submit a written Grievance Form to the Building Executive Director.

The student must include in the Grievance Form a description of the grievance, the actions already taken by the student to attempt to resolve the grievance, and the relief requested. A Grievance Form that does not contain such information will be deemed incomplete and returned to the student to complete within the required timeline. Submission of an incomplete Grievance Form does not extend the required timeline. Only the issues set forth in the written Grievance Form shall be considered thereafter.

Upon the Executive Director's receipt of the Grievance Form, within ten (10) days the Executive Director shall hold a conference with the student/parent/guardian and any other individual(s) deemed necessary by the Executive Director to discuss the allegations. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision to the student within five (5) school days of the conclusion of the conference(s).

If the grievance includes allegations of discrimination or harassment concerning the Building Executive Director, the student shall skip Step Two and submit a written Grievance Form within ten (10) days of the incident or when the student learned of the incident to the PACE Management Services Provider.

Step Three: Final Appeal to the PACE Governing Board

If a student/parent/guardian is not satisfied with the Executive Director's written decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the PACE Governing Board within ten (10) days of receiving the decision. The written appeal should be submitted to the PACE Board Chair. The written appeal must include a copy of the original written Grievance Form, a copy of the Executive Director's, and a written description of why the student was not satisfied with the decision. An appeal that does not contain such information will be deemed incomplete and returned to the student to complete within the required timeline. Submission of an incomplete appeal does not extend the required timeline.

Within ten (10) school days of receipt of a written appeal (or the original Grievance Form if the grievance involves allegations of discrimination or harassment against the Executive Director and is filed directly with the Board), the PACE Governing Board will hold a hearing. The Board will provide the student with notice of the hearing date and the procedures for the hearing in a timely manner. All hearings conducted pursuant to this Grievance Policy are

considered non-adversarial. After the hearing, the PACE Governing Board will issue a written decision within ten (10) days, which will be final and binding. The PACE Governing Board is entitled to extend these timelines if necessary for the purpose of conducting a thorough and complete investigation.

Adopted February 2021

Legal Reference(s): S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended:

Section 59-4-60(F)(13) – Charter School Grievance Procedure

Title IX complaints: Parents of students who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their gender have the right to appeal to the school's Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Melanie Vaughn at 803-251-9138, or designee. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the school Title IX Coordinator, he/she may take his/her concern to the school Executive Director. If the parent is not satisfied with the response of the Executive Director, the parent may then take their concerns to the Board of Directors.

Section 504 complaints: Parents of students who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their disabling condition have the right to appeal to the school Executive Director. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the school Executive Director, he/she may appeal to the Board of Directors. The school Executive Director will schedule appeals to the Board.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

SCHOOL IMPROVMENT COUNCIL

The purpose of the PACE School Improvement Council is to assist the school in deliberation of policies and to create an environment that helps meet the goals of the charter. Participants in the councils will include a parent and teacher from each grade band (2-4 and 5-8). The council is an important group that shares information and communicates with the school, parents, and community. As with all volunteers that come to the school to work with children, council members must present a clean SLED check or, if new to South Carolina, an FBI check in addition to a sex offender check. The primary objective of the council is to give the Executive Director feedback on the programs, climate, and culture of the school and provide suggestions for improvement.

The council's responsibilities are as follows:

- Provide a venue for feedback among all partners and give a voice to the community
- Agree upon community-related goals for the school program
- Make constructive recommendations for school improvement

- Establish relationships with members of the broader community and recognize their value
- Provide information to the community about the purpose and mission of PACE

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

PACE Academy PTO (*Parent Teacher Organization*) exists to coordinate events, volunteers, and to raise funds to improve and benefit the school. The PTO strives to enrich each student's educational experience at PACE Academy by providing additional resources for our teachers and students, as well as sponsoring a variety of school activities and events. They will meet once a month on the 3rd Thursday of the month prior to the PACE Board Meeting, and all parents are encouraged to participate.

TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

The value of student, teacher, parent, and community interaction is strongly recognized. Collaboration, resource and information sharing, online tutoring, and other instructional applications can be facilitated by the judicious use of Internet tools. Employees may communicate through electronic media with current PACE students or parents for educational purposes only.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Students are not permitted to bring iPods, radios, portable CD/DVD players, MP3 players, etc. to school unless the equipment is part of a classroom presentation. In addition, laser light pointers and electronic games, such as Nintendo Switch, PSP's and Nabi tablets are not permitted in school.

Middle Students are permitted to bring cellular devices to school; however, **students must turn them off once they arrive on campus and place them in bookbags or lockers for the entire school day.** Students are not allowed to wear smartwatches that are voice or text capable.

Teachers will confiscate cellphones if they are out during the school day.

1st offense – teacher may return to the student at the end of the day

2nd offense – teacher must turn into the front office; the Academic Director or designee will contact the parent to pick up the phone

3rd offense – phone may be returned to the parent at the end of the next day

4th offense – student will no longer be allowed to have a cellphone on school property

STUDENT RULES FOR ONLINE SAFETY

- I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.
- I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
- I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
- I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the service provider.
- I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.
- I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even my best friends).
- I will give my Internet password to my parents.
- I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.
- I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Student Internet access and a variety of technological equipment as tools for learning are available to students. Any parent who would prefer not to have his/her child access the Internet or certain technology should notify the executive director in writing.

Students are responsible for good behavior while using school owned or issued technology equipment and resources. Also, the school has employed software for Internet content filtering. This allows students to explore the Internet in relative safety while at school.

The system coordinator and network administrators may review files and communications on the school's network to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should have no expectations of privacy in their electronic files stored on school computers, network and other electronic equipment. Students using school electronic equipment are not permitted to do the following:

- Access offensive messages or pictures
- Use obscene or defamatory language
- Harass, insult, defame or attack others
- Damage computers or other technology equipment
- Alter computer systems or computer networks
- Violate copyright laws
- Use another's password or change a password
- Give out his/her name, address or phone number on the Internet
- Trespass in another's folders, work or files
- Intentionally waste limited resources
- Install software or apps on school devices

INAPPROPRIATE INTERNET USE

Schools are **REQUIRED** by law to report possible victims of sex offenses. What might start as a prank by a student (even those under age 18) can result in charges involving child exploitation and/or child pornography, as well as harassment or voyeurism. A conviction of these charges can result in a student (even those under age 18) being placed on the national sex-offender registry.

There are a number of ways students can violate the law by sending sexually explicit text messages and/or sending nude photographs of themselves or others. It is vital that parents make their children aware of the potential outcome of sending these types of messages and photographs.

CYBER BULLYING

"Cyber-bullying" is a form of bullying when a child, preteen or teen is embarrassed, humiliated, threatened, harassed, tormented or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. This behavior will not be tolerated.

Rules and discipline for bullying apply when a student is on school grounds immediately before school or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off

school grounds at a school activity, function or event; or using property or equipment provided by the school.

SUGGESTED INTERNET SAFETY TIPS

Open communication with your child is vital. Your child needs to feel he or she can come to you if frightening or offensive communications or images are viewed on the Internet.

Teach Your Child(ren) the Following Rules:

- Never accept files or downloads from unknown sources; this includes familiar sources if received unexpectedly. Accepting files or downloads from unknown sources can bring a virus that could harm the computer.
- Choose an email address/screen name that DOES NOT contain any part of your name, age, gender, interest or favorite activities.
- Do Not fill out a profile without parent review and approval.
- Never give out real name, telephone or cell phone number(s), mailing address, or passwords. Giving away personal information can lead to identity theft or worse.
- Do not enter chat rooms. People may not be who they say they are online—predators roam cyberspace
- Do not post photographs in publicly accessible sites.
- The settings for ANY social networking profiles should be PRIVATE and new friends are accepted only if they are known to the child AND the parent.
- Do not allow children to use a webcam unless an adult is present. Posting pictures online or sending images can have dangerous consequences.
- Report Cyber bullying to an adult.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Schools are required by law to make parents aware of certain information regarding student behavior while using technology and the Internet at school. Each year this information is included with school forms and requires the signature of a parent or guardian acknowledging receipt of this information.

During their educational experience, students will use many different technology tools, including the Internet, in support of research and education. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. Families should be aware, however, that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are inaccurate, illegal, defamatory, or potentially offensive to some people. Teachers

will supervise and guide students toward appropriate materials.

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. It is the joint responsibility of school personnel and parents to set and convey appropriate standards for students to follow when using school owned property, technology, and the Internet. Federal law requires that schools monitor student Internet activities during the school day to ensure that students are not accessing inappropriate sites. For this reason, students may not access the Internet during school hours via personal property (i.e. cell phone, personal air card or other means that circumvent the school networks).

Users should not expect that files stored on school computers, networks or other school storage space will be private.

Directors and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

Students are responsible for good behavior with school owned technology tools and on school networks and the Internet, just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. School rules for behavior and communications apply, as well as all applicable district policies and guidelines.

The following are examples of network or Internet behaviors that are NOT permitted:

- deviating from teacher directed procedures
- cyber bullying
- visiting chat rooms and/or accessing email from a site other than school
- accessing or transmitting offensive, abusive or obscene messages or images
- damaging or attempting to damage hardware, software or networks or modifying or attempting to modify system files and settings
- violating copyright laws and plagiarism
- using another's password or giving another user your password
- trespassing in another's folders, work or files: "hacking"
- intentionally wasting limited resources, such as bandwidth and hard drive space
- employing the network for commercial purposes
- downloading any form of media for other than classroom/educational use
- accessing the Internet via personal property during school

- violation of any local, state, or federal statute.

Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails personal responsibility.

Violations of this policy may result in a loss of technology privileges (including access to the school’s network and Internet), law enforcement referral, and/or other disciplinary action. If the violation involves use of personal property, that property may be confiscated and held at the school.

No warranty of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, is given for Internet access provided by the school. The school will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including – but not limited to – loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service. The school will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature or quality of information stored on school hard drives, servers, or other storage devices; nor for the accuracy, nature or quality of information gathered through school provided Internet access. The school will not be responsible for personal property used to access school computers or networks. The school will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from school provided access to the Internet.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND STUDENT WORK ON THE INTERNET

The school, classroom, and district websites highlight many aspects of student life and can feature news items and online school news. Full student names may be used, independent of photographs, for student listings such as honor rolls and team rosters, and in news articles. Students may be included in photographs and/or audio and video recordings on our websites and we may also include examples of students’ creative work. Only the first name will be used to identify students in online photographs.

Parents will be asked to complete a media release form for their child(ren) while at PACE. Parents may request that school and district websites exclude their student’s name, photographs, and/or creative work. Media release forms will be kept on file with the school the entire time a student attends PACE Academy. Parents may change their preferences at any point by contacting the front office.

FACILITIES USE POLICY

As a means for fostering community involvement, the Board of Directors wishes to make PACE Academy’s facilities reasonably available to the community in a way that does not take away from its primary responsibility; does not jeopardize

the person or property of the School, the user or any invitee, and does not materially burden the School with additional costs or risk of liability.

This policy does not apply to school-sponsored organizations. Individuals interested in using PACE Academy's facility for an event should contact the school office for further information.