



CENTER ACADEMY

Pinellas Park

2024-2025 PARENT – STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Center Academy believes students need a consistent behavior management system so that maximum time can be spent on time-on-task and learning. Inappropriate behaviors that interfere with the learning process can be reduced and extinguished through consistent, best-practice behavior management techniques. Behavior management based on a positive reward/point system will be in place in all classrooms.

This Code of Student Conduct sets forth the expectations for student behavior and the consequences for infractions of the rules.

SEXUAL AND VERBAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Center Academy is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Accordingly, the school prohibits such conduct by its students on school premises and off school premises at school-sponsored activities, including transportation to and from such activities.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Physical contact of a sexual nature includes touching, patting, grabbing, poking, or brushing up against another individual.
- sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, comments, or propositions.
- display of sexually oriented pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, or publications; and
- any other conduct that is inappropriate.

Verbal harassment consists of unwelcome verbal communication that includes, but not limited to, the following:

- name-calling
- humiliation
- offensive jokes
- threats
- slurs

Any student who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual or verbal harassment should immediately report the incident to the administration.

STATE OF FLORIDA REQUIRED BATHROOM POLICIES

Students may not willfully enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex (as defined in Florida Statute 553.865) and must depart when asked by school staff.

Exceptions:

A student may only enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex under the following circumstances:

- (a) For the purpose of rendering emergency medical assistance or to intervene in any other emergency situation where the health or safety of another person is at risk;
- (b) If the appropriate designated restroom or changing facility is out of order or under repair and the restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex contains no person of the opposite sex.

EXPECTATIONS

For effective instruction to occur, there must be cooperation between student, parent and school. This relationship may be described as follows:

Parents who:

- keep in regular communication with the school concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- ensure that their child attends daily and is punctual.
- promptly reports and explains an absence or tardiness to school.
- provide their child with resources needed to complete class work.
- assist their child in being healthy, neat, and clean.
- bring to the attention of the Director any problem or condition which affect their child or other children in the school
- discuss report cards and work assignments with their child.
- maintain up to date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school (including doctor and hospital preferences) and report any changes in medication.
- fully cooperate with the school to maintain a safe, drug free learning environment.

Students who:

- attend all classes daily and are punctual. Multiple unexcused tardiness may result in the need to make up lost academic instructional time.
- are prepared with appropriate working materials.
- are respectful to all individuals and property.
- refrain from profane or inflammatory statements.
- behave safely and responsibly.
- are clean and neat.
- are responsible for their own work.
- abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.

Schools that:

- maintain an atmosphere conducive to good behavior.
- exhibit an attitude of respect for students.
- plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- promote effective training or discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students.
- develop a good working relationship between staff and students.
- encourage parents to communicate regularly with the school.
- encourage parental participation in school affairs.
- maintain a safe, drug free learning environment.

SPECIFIC GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Each classroom teacher will attempt to deal with general classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is sufficiently severe, should the student be referred to the Director. In dealing with the following violations of the Conduct Code, the Director shall hear the student's explanation, and consult further with the teacher, if necessary, before determining disciplinary action. If the immediate suspension of a student is necessary due to a serious breach of conduct, the necessary notice and conference will follow as soon as practical.

The following categories of misconduct are violations of Center Academy policy and are subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the school. These categories are not all inclusive.

- Violent acts or threats of violent acts.
- Disruption in any way of school procedures.
- Defiance of any school employee.
- Theft, vandalism, or destruction of property.
- Possession or use of any drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
- Obscene, sexual acts, or harassment.

- Possession of a weapon
- “No-Touch” policy – The policy prohibits any touching as all on school grounds—including “hugging” and “horseplay.”

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior:

LOSS OF Privileges

- Time out
- Isolated lunch
- Loss of activity period
- Loss of Fun Friday

Other Consequences

- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Behavior contract
- Dismissal

DRESS CODE POLICY

1. Students must wear Center Academy Shirts

- a. Navy Blue, Royal Blue or Red Center Academy Polo shirt with collar (short or long sleeve) or pull-over sweatshirt with Center Academy logo.
- b. All shirts must be buttoned from at least the second button to the last.

2. Students must wear casual dress pants or shorts:

- a. Pants and shorts must be black, blue or khaki
- b. Skirts may be worn, but must be knee-length

3. Students may wear jeans or appropriate length shorts on designated dress down days.

4. On days designated as a non-uniform day, students must still wear school appropriate approved attire.

All clothing must be in clean serviceable condition (**no rips, tears, frays, and holes**) and must be to size, covering midriff and no undergarments exposed at any time. Shorts must be long enough to fit mid-thigh or longer (Bermuda style). No form-fitting pants, such as yoga pants, jeggings, leggings, spandex, or stretchy material. **Sweatshirts and jackets worn as a shirt during the day must have a Center Academy logo.** Flip flops, crocs, sliders, wheelie shoes, open back shoes, high- heeled shoes, slippers are not permitted.

Jewelry Standards: No visible permanent or temporary tattoos are permitted No visible body piercing including eyebrows, lips, nose, etc., Ears ONLY! Jewelry must not be excessive in length, number, or size. Chains are not acceptable jewelry and may not be worn. No other visible body art may be worn when on school property or at any school sponsored events. No hats, sunglasses, glitter, face, or body paint.

Make-up Standards: Only light, subtle, and neutral-colored makeup (foundation and mascara) is permitted.

Hair Standards: All hair and make-up must be in good taste. Hair may not be bleached or dyed an odd (non-natural) color and must be styled out of the eyes. No patterns or shaved heads. No facial hair, “porkchop” or long sideburns. Hair styles as “extreme” by staff are not acceptable.

Purse and Book Bag Standards: Backpacks are not permitted on campus. Females are permitted to bring a small purse (no larger than 4” x 6”). Center Academy reserves the right to search any student backpack/purse for security purposes.

Failure to comply with the dress code will result in disciplinary consequences.

Consequences for student being out of uniform

1. **First Violation:** Student will be given notice of inappropriate dress, isolated in “re-focus” area and given opportunity to change into clothing provided, if available.
2. **Second Violation:** Student is sent to office. Parent will be called and informed of dress code violations. Student will remain in office until parents bring appropriate clothing.
3. **Third Violation:** Student will serve in-school suspension and student will be required to bring change of clothing that will be kept in the office for future violations.

CELL PHONE POLICY

- Ideally, cell phones should not be brought to school; cell phones should be left at home or in the car, so the daily focus is on academic excellence.
- If a cell phone is brought to school, the following procedure will apply. As the student arrives at school, the cell phone must be turned off and given to the teacher. This is an expectation of every student.
- Student cell phones may be turned back on when leaving campus for the day.
- If any student needs to make a phone call during the day, the school office phone will be used, under the supervision of school staff.

Consequences for Cell Phone Violations

- **First Violation:** Student cell phone will be confiscated and remain in the office until the end of the day. At that time student may pick up the cell phone.
- **Second Violation:** Student cell phone will be confiscated and remain in the Director’s office until the parent meets with the Director. Upon conclusion of the meeting, the parent may pick up the cell phone.
- **Third Violation:** The cell phone will be confiscated and remain in the Director’s office until the parent picks up the phone. The student will no longer be permitted to have a cell phone on school property for the remainder of the school year.

STUDENT CARRELS

Student carrels should contain an appropriately sized desk and chair as well as school appropriate materials including name, folders, textbooks, and materials that re necessary for the school day. Items that are distracting or are not relevant to the learning environment shall be removed. Students may not write or draw in the carrel walls.

WATER BOTTLE POLICY

Students are only permitted to bring transparent plastic bottles. Content of bottle must only contain water and is subject to review.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Center Academy has 176 school days/1056 Instructional Hours

Students have the responsibility to:

- Attend classes daily and on time unless prohibited by circumstances beyond their control.
- There are 176 actual school days in the 2024-25 school calendar. This equals 1,056 actual net instructional hours for Grades 5 – 12.
- Request make-up work from their teachers after being absent.

Parents have the responsibility to:

- Notify school about their child's absence from school on the morning of the absence.
- Notify the school of any change of address, phone numbers and emergency contact numbers.

- Be aware of the academic calendar and coordinate trips, vacations, and personal business to support attendance on school days.
- As much as possible, make all doctor, dental or other appointments after school hours so students do not sign out early.

ATTENDANCE ALERT TO PARENTS

- When a student accumulates more than five (5) **excused** absences during a semester, a letter shall be sent to the parent or guardian.
- When a student accumulates more than (5) **unexcused** absences during a semester, the student shall be placed on an attendance contract.
- When a student accumulates ten (10) absences whether excused or unexcused (not including suspensions) within a ninety (90) day period, the student shall be placed on an attendance contract. A conference may be required to discuss potential remedies.
- Students who display a pattern of non-attendance may be required to present medical or other evidence of absences.

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to report and explain a student's absence to the school office. Parents are expected to notify the morning of each absence unless an absence is originally known to be for a certain period of time and was reported in advance. Parents may call or send an email to the school. Additional documentation may be required upon a student's return to school. Parents will be notified at 8:45 a.m. when a student has not arrived at school and no prior notice was given.

EXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

- An illness of the student or a medical or dental appointment (Note: Five (5) or more absences within a nine- week grading period may require a doctor's statement upon return.)
- A required court appearance.
- An automobile accident involving the student.
- A death in the family.
- An emergency for a reason acceptable to the director.
- An observance of a religious holiday.
- Pre-planned absence for a personal reason that is acceptable to, and approved by, the director in advance.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Any absence not covered under the EXCUSED ABSENCES.
- Any absence that has not been reported by the parent or guardian.
- Not attending class or school-wide field trips, community service projects indicated on the calendar.
- Failure to provide a doctor's note upon return to school when such documentation was required.
- Truancy (skipping) by the student.
- Out of school suspension.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE SANCTIONS

- A student who receives an unexcused absence may be allowed to make up tests and/or graded work missed during the absence.
- The student is responsible for arranging with the teacher within three (3) days of his/her return to school, and make-up work must be submitted within the deadline(s) set by teacher(s).
- A student suspended out of school will need to make up all work missed during the absence. Whenever possible, the work should be given to the student to complete during the suspension period.
- Students who are found to be truant (skipping school) will receive a "zero" grade for all tests and/or graded work.

TARDY POLICY

- Students who are tardy to school must sign in at the front desk. Students who fail to sign in shall be considered absent.

SIGN-IN PROCEDURES

Any student arriving at school after the school day has started (8:30am) must sign in at the school office. The student will be given a pass to class indicating if the lateness was excused or unexcused. For a student to receive an excused sign-in, a parent or guardian must accompany the student to the school office and provide an excusable reason.

Excused tardy/sign-ins include but are not limited to the following:

- Illness.
- Medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required.)
- An automobile accident involving a student.
- Deaths, funerals, or emergency situations acceptable to the director.
- Required court appearance (subpoena required.)
- Established religious observance.
- Severe weather.

Unexcused tardy/sign-ins include but are not limited to the following:

- Car problems (ex: flat tire, no gas, car won't start.)
- Heavy traffic.
- Overslept.
- Returned home for forgotten item(s) (i.e., books, homework, project, lunch, money.)
- Non-educational appointments.
- Parent or guardian out of town and child cannot get to school.

Consequences of Unexcused Tardiness

- Verbal Warning
- Student remain in refocus room for break and/or lunch
- Loss of extracurricular activities or casual Friday dress down

SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES (PRE-APPROVED AND EMERGENCY)

Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave without permission from the director. Students who must leave school during school hours should have a parent request this release by phone or in person to the school office or director. Students will only be released to the parent/guardian or other designated adult listed on the student information document in the school office.

Excused sign-outs include but are not limited to the following:

- Medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required.)
- Deaths or funerals.
- Emergency situations acceptable to the director.
- Court appearances (subpoena required.)
- Personal reasons acceptable to the director

Unexcused sign-outs include but are not limited to the following:

- Forgotten items (i.e., books, lunch, money, homework, projects.)
- Non-educational appointments.

At the end of the school day, students are released at 2:30 p.m. and are expected to go directly home. Car riders should be picked up immediately using the car line. The school office should be notified if pickup will occur later than 2:45 p.m. Students who drive to school are expected to leave school immediately.

GRADING POLICY

Assignments are to be finished and submitted by the end of the school day. All assignments will be graded and returned for corrections if needed. Students who score below 70 percent will need to redo the assignment and make corrections to the items missed. The original and corrected grade will be averaged to create a final grade for the assignment. Exams may be returned for corrections if it is deemed necessary.

Any assignment not turned in the day it is due is to be taken home for homework and turned in the next day by 8:30am. Assignments that have not been turned in by 8:30am the following day are considered "incomplete" and will be marked as such in Gradelink.

For every day that an assignment is late, after it has been marked "incomplete," a 2-point deduction will be made from the grade, for up to a maximum of 10 points or 5 school days. An assignment that has not been turned in after 7 days from the date it was assigned will be a zero.

Example: An assignment given on Tuesday and not turned in by 8:30am on Wednesday will be marked 'incomplete. If the assignment is turned in later Wednesday, a 2-point deduction will be made from the grade earned. If it is not turned in by Friday, a 6-point deduction will be made from the grade earned. If the assignment is turned in the following Tuesday (7 days after it was assigned) a 10-point deduction is taken off the grade earned. If the assignment is not turned in by the end of school on the following Tuesday, a zero will be given.

Students who have missed days because of illness or excused absence will be permitted to make up their work. Students who have missed days because of unexcused absences may be permitted to make up work/tests after a discussion between the teacher(s), parent or guardian, and director.

Grading Scale:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: Below 60