

EARLY CHILDHOOD ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK  
& PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY



2011 - 2012

*Preparing young children for a bright future.*

# ECA Parent Calendar 2011-2012

August 2011						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	<u>22*</u>	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September 2011						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

October 2011						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	<u>31*</u>					

November 2011						
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27	28	29	30			

December 2011						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 2012						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	<u>23*</u>	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2012						
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26	27	28	29			

March 2012						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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April 2012						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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29	30					

May 2012						
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27	28	29	30	31		

June 2012						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

KEY						
BLACK BLOCK – no school for students; school holiday or staff training						

\*Underlined numbers indicate the first day of the new advisory.

## Parent Conference Days

November 4<sup>th</sup>

February 3<sup>rd</sup>

May 4<sup>th</sup>

# Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School

## Information at a Glance

### **Mission Statement**

It is the mission of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School to foster the academic and social/emotional growth and development of each student in a safe and holistic learning environment that will equip all students with the knowledge and tools to become high achievers, proficient readers, and critical thinkers, who will thrive for a lifetime as productive and caring citizens.

**[www.ecapcs.org](http://www.ecapcs.org)**

(202) 373-0035 Phone

(202) 373-5586 Fax

### **Johenning Campus (Main Campus)**

4025 9<sup>th</sup> Street, SE Washington, DC 20032

### **Walter Washington Campus**

4301 9<sup>th</sup> Street, SE Washington, DC 20032

### **Administration**

Wendy S. Edwards, Executive Director: [wedwards@ecapcs.org](mailto:wedwards@ecapcs.org)

Thann Ingraham, Principal: [tingraham@ecapcs.org](mailto:tingraham@ecapcs.org)

Pamela G. Faulcon, Director of Curriculum & Instruction: [pfaulcon@ecapcs.org](mailto:pfaulcon@ecapcs.org)

Rebecca Schultz, Special Education Coordinator: [rschultz@ecapcs.org](mailto:rschultz@ecapcs.org)

La'Kea Edwards, Response to Intervention Coordinator: [ledwards@ecapcs.org](mailto:ledwards@ecapcs.org)

Debra Robinson-Foster, Financial Manager: [dfoster@ecapcs.org](mailto:dfoster@ecapcs.org)

Yesenia Menjivar, Program Administrator: [ymenjivar@ecapcs.org](mailto:ymenjivar@ecapcs.org)

### **Officers of the ECA Board of Trustees**

Dennis M. Sawyers, President: [dennis\\_sawyers@yahoo.com](mailto:dennis_sawyers@yahoo.com)

David A. DeSchryver, Secretary

Eric Bellamy, Treasurer

### **DC Public Charter School Board**

3333 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Suite 210

Washington, DC 20010

(202) 328-2660

**INSTRUCTION BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 8:30 A.M.**

**STUDENTS MUST ARRIVE AT 8:05 A.M. IF THEY ARE HAVING BREAKFAST AT ECA.**

# **Policy for Complaint Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Education Act Programs And Competitive Grants**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the administrative procedures of the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for handling and resolving complaints about the operations of programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other applicable District laws in a fair and timely manner.

Parents, teachers, individuals, private schools, local education agencies, and other organizations may file a complaint alleging that a federal statute or regulation has been violated in the administration of ESEA programs at Early Childhood Academy PCS. OSSE shall investigate all allegations of non-compliance with state or federal law, rules or regulations.

This policy serves as the grievance procedures for all ESEA programs and state administered competitive grants, excluding the complaints and hearing process under Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq. administered pursuant to Title 5, Chapter E-30 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations available at <http://www.dcregs.org>.

This policy replaces all previously issued complaint procedures for ESEA programs. This policy is not intended to be a substitute for any federal statutes, regulations or non-regulatory guidance.

## **Authority**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education has the authority to hear complaints and appeals regarding programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) pursuant to: EDGAR Sec. 76.401, 76.783; Title IX, Sec. 9304 (20 USC 7844); Title IX, Sec. 9503 (20 USC 7883). This policy shall serve as the grievance procedure for all ESEA programs and state administered competitive grants, excluding the complaints and hearing process under Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq. administered pursuant to Title 5, Chapter E-30 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations available at <http://www.dcregs.org>.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this guidance is to describe the administrative procedures of the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for handling and resolving complaints regarding the operations of programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other applicable District laws in a fair and timely manner. These procedures describe:

How individuals or organizations may register a complaint that the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA), or other grant recipient has violated laws and/or regulations governing state-administered programs funded under ESEA;

- When private schools may register a complaint with OSSE against the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCSPS); and
- When eligible applicants and subgrantees may request a hearing on an action taken by the state education agency.

The following procedures govern the receipt and resolution of a complaint alleging that the OSSE as the SEA, a District of Columbia LEA or other grant recipient is in violation of any federal statute or regulation that applies to a state-administered ESEA funded program listed in section III, Complaints.

Guidance for subgrantees requesting a hearing and the reasons for requesting a hearing are described in section V, Subgrantee Complaints and Hearings.

**If you believe that Early Childhood Academy PCS has failed to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) or with a requirement of District of Columbia law regarding special education under Part B of IDEA or a public agency or private service provider with regard to early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, you may file a complaint to initiate an investigation of the matter in accordance with the IDEA complaint policy. A copy of this policy can be found at:**

<http://osse.dc.gov/seo/cwp/view,a,1222,q,561179.asp>Issued: 3/18/2010 4

### **Complaints**

OSSE shall investigate all allegations of non-compliance with state or federal law, rules or regulations. When appropriate, every effort should be made to resolve the issue at the local level before filing a formal complaint with OSSE. This can include meeting with the principal, school head, or central office staff to address the alleged violation. Only once all local remedies have been exhausted should a formal complaint be submitted to OSSE.

### **Complaints from the Public**

Parents, teachers, other individuals or organizations may file a complaint alleging the SEA or LEA is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to any of the programs administered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended. These programs include, but are not limited to:

Title I, Part A, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged;

Title I, Part B, Subpart 3, Even Start Family Literacy;

Title I, Part D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk;

Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund

Title II, Part B, Mathematics and Science Partnerships;

Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education through Technology; Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement;

Title IV, Part A, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities;

Title IV, Part B, 21st Century Community Learning Centers;

Title V, Part D, Subpart 6, Gifted and Talented Students; and

Competitive grants administered with local funds.

### **Process for Submitting Complaints**

1. Complaints must be in writing and should contain:

A statement that Early Childhood Academy PCS has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that concerns a covered program; the facts on which the statement is based; a recommendation on how OSSE would resolve the complaint; the specific requirement of law or regulation allegedly violated, if possible; and be signed and dated by the complainant.

2. Complaints must be mailed or hand-delivered to:

**Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education  
810 First Street, NE – 9th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002**

OSSE may, at its own discretion, redirect a complaint which should have been properly filed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) complaint policy.

A copy of this complaint policy can be found online at:  
<http://osse.dc.gov/seo/cwp/view,a,1222,q,561179.asp>

**Complaint Resolution Process**

OSSE shall issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant within fifteen (15 ) business days of receipt of a complaint. If the complaint involves an LEA, OSSE shall send a copy of the Letter of Acknowledgement to the DCPS Chancellor, or corresponding administrator of the LEA.

The letter will include the following information:

- the date the office received the complaint;
- how the complainant may provide additional information;
- the name and contact information of the assigned complaint investigator; and
- timelines for the resolution of the complaint.

OSSE shall investigate the complaint, reviewing the facts and circumstances of the complaint and may request further information from the complainant.

OSSE in its discretion may conduct an onsite monitoring visit.

Once OSSE has determined whether a violation of law or regulation has occurred, the complaint investigator shall develop a Letter of Findings to address whether or not the program in question is in compliance. The Letter of Findings, stating either the need for corrective action or that OSSE does not sustain the complaint, shall be sent to the complainant and DCPS or other subject of the complaint. Each party shall have the right to respond in writing to the Letter of Findings within ten (10) business days from the date of issuance. A party filing a response shall deliver a copy to OSSE as well as each party subject to the complaint.

OSSE shall issue a Final Agency Decision based upon its Letter of Findings and any additional information provided in the responses, as deemed appropriate within sixty (60) business days after the date of issuance of its Letter of Findings.

If OSSE determines a violation has occurred, the subject of the complaint shall submit a corrective action plan. The plan and timelines for its completion must be approved by OSSE.

The Final Agency Decision issued by OSSE may be appealed in accordance with the appeals process.

Dear Parent:

We welcome you and your child to Early Childhood Academy for the 2011-2012 school year. We are eager to begin another successful school year and are happy that you have entrusted us with the growth and development of your child. We feel confident that you have made the best decision in enrolling your child here and commit ourselves to providing your child with a rich and rewarding educational experience.

**Attendance is critical for optimal learning. We expect all students to arrive on time, in uniform, and come to school every day, unless they are ill. Please remember that students must arrive at 8:05 a.m. if they would like to have breakfast at the school. Instruction begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.**

**Your school involvement is key to your child's success at ECA. There are many ways in which parents can partner with ECA in support of your child's growth and development. Please carefully review the [Title I Parental Involvement Policy](#) beginning on page 19 for a comprehensive description of our expectations for your participation at ECA.**

In addition to its mission statement, ECA believes in ten core values, which include: *honesty, kindness, self-control, respect, responsibility, peaceful resolution, hard work, helpfulness, empathy, and forgiveness*. These values will be infused throughout the teaching and learning process.

Students are expected to adhere to five school rules:

1. Come to school every day, on time, and in uniform.
2. Follow the directions of all adults in the building.
3. Treat others as you want to be treated.
4. Keep all body parts to yourself.
5. Respect the school, school property, and the property of others.

**It is important that all parents update phone numbers as needed to ensure that the school is able to reach you in an emergency situation. Please be sure to update numbers both with the classroom teacher and with the main office.** This handbook contains additional important information that you will need regarding ECA's beliefs, policies, and procedures. We ask that you take a few moments to review it.

We look forward to working with our students and parents throughout this school year. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's educational program, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or a school administrator. Our doors are always open and we welcome the opportunity to hear from you.

Please contact Thann Ingraham or me in person, by phone, or by email if you have any questions about our school.

Thank you for being a part of the ECA family!

*Wendy S. Edwards*

Executive Director

## ATTENDANCE

The school day for students is from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The before care program begins at 7:00 a.m. and the aftercare program end at 6:00 p.m. Students may arrive as early as 8:05 a.m. to participate in the school breakfast program.

Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. are considered late and will be marked tardy.

One of the most important responsibilities of parents in the home/school connection is ensuring your child's excellent school attendance. Good student attendance positively impacts students' acquisition of new concepts and skills and their rate of growth and development. It is important that students come to school every day, on time, and remain until the end of the day in order to achieve the most success. Often, tardy and chronically absent students do not make sufficient progress to move on to the next grade level. It is crucial that parents send children to school each school day, even when weather is less than perfect.

**Please note that DC law requires that children five years old and older attend school regularly. Students in kindergarten through grade three who are frequently late or absent or show a pattern of absences will be reported to the DC Office of Child and Family Services.**

On occasion, children must miss a day of school. A school absence is considered excused if the child is sick, attending a funeral, required for a court appearance, or because of a family emergency. Parents are required to provide a doctor's certification or other written note explaining the absence. If a student has a sudden rash or is suspected of having a communicable illness, the parent must provide a doctor's note clearing him/her to return to school.

Vacations, out of town travel, overnight stays at others' houses, bad weather, oversleeping, lack of clean clothing, etc. are considered unexcused absences and will be marked as such.

Your child should not be in school if he/she has a fever, is vomiting, is experiencing excessive coughing or runny nose, or is lethargic because of illness. If a child is suspected of having conjunctivitis, ringworm, or any other communicable illness he/she may not attend school. Parents will be contacted to pick up students who are at school and exhibiting these symptoms. The child will be required to submit a doctor's note clearing him/her to return to school before re-admittance.

### BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

The before and aftercare program is available to all ECA students. Before care is provided at both the Walter Washington and Johnenning campuses. Before care hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 8:05 a.m. After care begins at 3:00 p.m. and ends promptly at 6:00 p.m.

ECA has worked diligently to provide a before and aftercare program that is affordable for parents. The fee for participation in the before and aftercare program is \$120 per month for the first child and an additional \$20 per month for each additional sibling who lives in the same home. December and June payments are reduced to \$60 for each month. There is no discount for cousins or other relatives living together. The \$120 fee applies to students who attend before and aftercare and students who attend after care only. If you are interested in before care only, the fee is \$50 for the first child and \$20 for each additional sibling who lives in the same home.

Before and aftercare payments must be made before the month begins, by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. A late fee of \$10 will be charged for payments made after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. If payment is not received by the first day of the new month, the student may not attend for that month.

After one grace period, a late fee will be charged for late pick up: \$10 for the first five to fifteen minutes late and an additional \$10 for each fifteen minute increment thereafter. Students whose parents are chronically late for pick up may be excluded from the aftercare program.

### BREAKFAST, LUNCH, & SNACK

All students will be provided breakfast from 8:05 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. daily in the school multipurpose room or in the classrooms. Lunch will be served daily between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Students who participate in the ECA aftercare program will also receive a snack. Although all students will receive free meals, it is required by law that all ECA students have a signed lunch application on file in order to participate in the free breakfast and lunch program.

### CURRICULUM

ECA adheres to the National Common Core Standards for reading and mathematics. To view the standards, please go to the website at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>.

ECA uses the Pearson Opening the World of Learning (OWL) and MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Math Connects series for preschool and prekindergarten. For students in grades kindergarten through three, ECA uses Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Reading, Social Studies, and Science and MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Math Connects.

All students also participate in weekly Spanish, physical education, and general music classes. Violin, viola, cello, drum, and xylophone classes are offered to students admitted into the instrumental music program. Additional services are provided to students with Individualized Education Programs based on their identified needs.

If you have any curriculum or instruction related concerns, please speak with your child's teacher or a member of the administrative team.

### CLASSROOM PARTIES

Parents and grandparents of students often request that birthday parties be held at the school for their children. In planning school birthday parties for students, parents/guardians are asked to adhere to the following procedures:

- Parents must notify the child's teacher at least one day in advance to request a classroom birthday party for their child.
- All birthday parties must be held at 2:30 p.m. and must not extend beyond 3:00 p.m.
- To ensure the safety of all students, birthday treats must be purchased from a store and in the original, unopened store packaging when brought to the school. This includes cakes, cupcakes, cookies, juices etc. Home cooked and home baked goods may not be served.
- Sugar and salt-filled foods must be strictly limited. Students may be served one slice of cake or cupcake and one serving of ice cream as well as any nutritious foods, such as fruits or 100% juices.
- Take-home goody bags may not be distributed.

Parents are asked to notify the teacher if religious beliefs or allergies prohibit your child from participating in school parties or celebrations.

## COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

On-going communication with your child's teacher is essential to the home/school connection. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with their children's teachers whenever a question or concern arises. Please contact your child's teacher by e-mail or on the school telephone at (202-373-0035). A message will be taken and teachers will be asked to return your call during non-instructional time. Staff email addresses may be found on the school website at [www.ecapcs.org](http://www.ecapcs.org).

If you have a question or concern that should be addressed to a school administrator, please contact the principal by phone or by e-mail at [tingraham@ecapcs.org](mailto:tingraham@ecapcs.org).

## BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

All staff persons will use the ECA Unified Behavior Support Plan (UBSP) as a guide for maintaining a positive classroom climate. The UBSP provides the basis for the development of a safe, orderly, and productive school environment. Teachers and teacher assistants will work collaboratively to design procedures and routines, rules, and logical consequences for student behavior that will be implemented consistently. The values of self-control, respect, honesty, empathy, helpfulness, responsibility, forgiveness, hard work, kindness, and peaceful resolution guide ECA's beliefs. The school also maintains five school-wide rules that will be discussed with students and posted in the classrooms and throughout the building:

1. Come to school every day, on time, and in uniform.
2. Follow the directions of all adults in the building.
3. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
4. Keep all body parts to yourself.
5. Respect the school, school property, and the property of others.

In addition, all teachers will post a three-colored (red, yellow, green) traffic signal as a visual cue to support students' positive behavior. All students begin the morning on the green light, signifying that they are ready for the day and prepared to follow school rules. Students are expected to remain on green throughout the school day by following the directions of all adults, adhering to school rules and values, and correcting minor behavior challenges. If a student displays inappropriate behavior that he or she does not correct when given ample opportunity, the child's name will be moved to the yellow light. Students on yellow have the opportunity to improve behavior during the day and return to the green light. Students who demonstrate extremely inappropriate or malicious behavior and are unable to correct behavior when given ample opportunities will be moved to the red level. Students on the red

level may not be moved back to green during the day. A parent or guardian will be contacted for any student whose name has been moved to the red level.

All students will receive a personal two-week calendar on which to record their daily behavior. At about 2:50 p.m. daily, students will color their calendar circles green, yellow, or red according to their traffic light placement at the end of the day. Calendars will be maintained in students' files and shared with parents during conferences. At the end of a designated number of days, students who have achieved a prescribed number of green circles will receive special recognition.

Serious offenses may warrant school suspension. Please see the "Suspension" section of this booklet for specific information on the ECA suspension policy. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used by ECA staff for any reason.

#### DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. We ask that you allow children to remain at school until 3:00 p.m. each day, but also ensure that your child is picked up promptly at 3:00 p.m.

We understand that emergencies sometimes arise, however, please note that we do not have staff available to supervise students who are not picked up at 3:00 p.m. unless they are a part of the aftercare program. Parents are permitted three late pick-ups per school year and afterward will be assessed a fee of \$20 for each day that the child is not picked up on time. All fees must be paid in full in order for parents to receive any documents from the school, including student report cards, DC housing verification forms, or verification of student enrollment.

Students may only be picked up by an adult listed by the parent on the official roster for pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that all adults whom you may ask to pick up your child are listed on the official pick-up list. Under no conditions may a student be picked-up by a minor before the official 3:00 p.m. dismissal time. A parent who wishes to pick up a child before the 3:00 p.m. dismissal time must first report to the main office to sign-out the child.

#### DRESS CODE

All ECA students are required to wear the official school uniform every day, Monday through Friday, unless parents have been notified in writing of a special non-uniform day. The ECA uniform consists of navy blue slacks, shorts (to the knee), skirt, or jumper, and a plain yellow button-front or polo shirt (with

no words or graphics on the shirt). Plain navy blue sweaters or plain navy blue hoodies may also be worn. However, no clothing displaying writing, drawings, or graphics may be worn. Students who are not in uniform will be required to wear uniform attire from the school clothing bank.

#### DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School intends to maintain a safe, healthy, and drug-free environment for its students, staff, and visitors. It is the policy of Early Childhood Academy to immediately notify law enforcement and pursue charges against any person or persons suspected of using, distributing, or selling illegal or controlled substances while on school grounds.

#### ENROLLMENT: RANDOM SELECTION PROCESS

ECA is a public school for preschool through grade three and is open to all students who reside in the District of Columbia. As mandated by the DC Public Charter School Board, ECA will enroll students each year through the random selection process. Each year in the early spring, the enrollment period is announced through telephone alerts, newspaper advertisements, banners, direct mailers, and flyers. All parents who are interested in enrollment for the coming school year, including the parents of both new and current ECA students, must register each school year.

A maximum enrollment number is established each school year. If that number has not been met by the enrollment deadline date, all enrolled students will be accepted. Thereafter, additional students will be accepted in the order of receipt of completed enrollment packages until the school reaches its capacity for that school year.

If the school is over-subscribed by the enrollment deadline date, all applications will be included in a random selection process. Parents/guardians will be notified of the lottery date for random selection. It is not necessary for parents to be present for the lottery selection. Student acceptance will be based on the lottery selection order. Those students who are chosen through the lottery after maximum capacity has been reached will be placed on a waiting list in the order of their lottery selection.

#### FIELD TRIPS

The vast resources of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area will be utilized to extend teaching and learning beyond the walls of the school. Teachers will plan field trips that are directly related to goals and objectives being taught in the classrooms.

ECA will assume the costs for private bus transportation to and from most trips. If the event charges an admission fee, parents will be responsible for the payment by the deadline indicated on the field trip permission form.

Students must have a permission slip that is signed by the parent/guardian in order to participate in a field trip. Verbal consent will not be accepted in lieu of a signed permission slip.

***Only children of the class involved, the teachers, and designated adult chaperones are eligible to attend.*** Children who are not members of the class, including those of chaperones and faculty members, are not eligible to attend. Chaperones are expected to ride the bus when supervising field trips.

For safety, all students will wear clean ECA t-shirts on all field trips, which contain the school name and phone number.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Student safety is our number one priority at ECA. In an emergency medical situation, we will address the immediate needs of the child first, and then contact parents or guardians. It is important that all parents update phone numbers as needed to ensure that the school is able to reach you in an emergency situation. Please be sure to update numbers both with the classroom teacher and with the main office.

Your child should not be in school if he/she has a fever, is vomiting, is experiencing excessive coughing or runny nose, or is lethargic because of illness. If a child is suspected of having conjunctivitis (“pink eye”), ringworm, or any other communicable illness he/she may not attend school. Parents will be contacted to pick up students who are at school and exhibiting these symptoms. Students with suspected flu, ringworm, conjunctivitis, or any other communicable illness may not return to school without a written clearance from the child’s doctor.

Medications may not be administered to students by staff members unless ECA has received the required consent forms signed by both the parent and the child’s doctor along with a complete and unused container of the medication. When these circumstances are satisfied, certified staff persons will be able to administer medications as prescribed.

Without this completed written authorization, medications may not be administered. This includes all oral medications including cough drops, cough syrup, aspirin and Tylenol, and all topical medications

including medicated creams and ointments, and antiseptic wipes. Students may not carry medications or have them in their backpacks. If your child requires medication during the school day, please contact the principal immediately.

Many students have food or other allergies. It is important that parents alert teachers of all known allergies. This information must be included when completing your child's enrollment form.

### HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned as an extension of classroom learning. Therefore, homework for students in grades kindergarten through three will be designed so that the student has the ability and prior knowledge that will enable him/her to complete assignments independently. Although parents are encouraged to actively facilitate homework completion, ECA asks that parents not complete assignments for their children.

Students who participate in the aftercare program may start their homework at school. However, since homework is designed to give parents and their children an opportunity to review learning at home, homework will not necessarily be completed in aftercare. Parents of children in the aftercare program are asked to carefully review homework assignments with students each night and ensure that it is completed.

Homework will be assigned based on the following completion times:

- Kindergarten & Grade One – no more than 15 minutes daily
- Grade Two – no more than 20 minutes daily
- Grade Three – no more than 30 minutes daily

Preschool and prekindergarten homework assignments will include family projects such as reading aloud with your child, exploring family history and the world around us, counting and number games, and identifying and sorting objects according to attributes.

### MANDATORY REPORTING OF ABUSE/NEGLECT & RESPONSE TO DC AUTHORITIES

All ECA personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. If child abuse or neglect, including educational neglect (failure to send child to school regularly) is suspected, ECA

personnel are required to contact DC Child and Family Services. As required by law, the parent will not be contacted by the school in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

Additionally, ECA is often contacted for information by the DC Office of Child and Family Services, the DC Courts, and sometimes by the Metropolitan Police Department. Please be advised that ECA is required to cooperate fully with all local and federal authorities.

#### LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is located in the lobby area of the Johenning building. Each year many items, particularly clothing, are turned in to the office. Parents are encouraged to go through these items occasionally. To reduce the incidents of lost items, please write your child's name on every article or personal belonging that is brought to school. This should be done with indelible, non-washable ink so that all articles are easily identified. It is especially important that you write your child's name on sweaters, coats and jackets.

#### NUTRITION

ECA believes in encouraging student behavior that will result in the students maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Daily physical activity and nutrition education are important components of the early childhood program.

Parents are asked not to send students to school with snacks; the school meal program will provide students with adequate food throughout the day. If children are running late for school and are in danger of missing the school breakfast program, please send them with a healthy breakfast, such as fruit, yogurt, or a cereal bar. Please do not purchase junk food (chips, candy, sodas or sugary drinks) for your child to eat for breakfast.

#### PROGRESS REPORTS & QUARTERLY CONFERENCES

Parents will receive progress reports detailing their children's achievement four times per year. Progress reports provide a description of the student's areas of strength and weakness as well as recommendations for parents to support their children's growth and development. In addition, mid-advisory reports will be sent home quarterly. Mid-advisory reports will be issued to every student and must be signed by the parent and returned to the teacher.

Parent conferences are scheduled three times per year to provide parents with an opportunity to speak with teachers about their children's academic and social/emotional growth and development and review progress reports. Those parents who do not pick up progress reports during conference times

may pick up their children's reports after the conference date. Progress reports will not be issued to students or older siblings. Please refer to the ECA school calendar for parent conference dates. You will be notified of the parent conference schedule.

Parents will be notified in writing by the start of the third advisory if a student is in danger of retention. This notification will be written on the child's progress report.

#### SCHOOL CLOSURE FOR WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

Severe weather or other emergencies may occasionally necessitate school closure or delay. You will be notified of school closings and delays in three ways:

- 1) Local television weather stations will list Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School as closed or delayed.
- 2) ECA will send out AlertNow messages to parents from our automated system. We will do our best to ensure that you receive information by 6:30 a.m.
- 3) You may call the school at (202) 373-0035 to listen for a weather closing message, prompt 300.

#### RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Sometimes students are identified as needing additional support in one or more academic areas or in behavior management. Struggling students are identified through poor performance on class wide or school wide screenings intended to indicate which students may be at risk of academic or behavioral problems. A student may also be identified through other means, such as teacher observation and assessments. Once a student has been identified, a team comprised of RTI coordinator, director of curriculum and instruction, teacher and other ECA staff will meet to discuss a plan of support. ECA provides the student with tiered instruction of increasing intensity while the student is still in the general education environment and closely monitors the student's progress (or response to the interventions), and makes adjustments to instruction, given the student's progress. Students who continue to struggle after more intense instruction may be referred for special education evaluation and the data from the RTI process can be used in the eligibility determination. RTI is not a pre-referral system. RTI is simply a method of academic and/or behavioral intervention used to provide early, effective assistance to students so that they will have the best opportunities to succeed in school.

## SUSPENSION / EXPULSION POLICY

It is the intent of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School to maintain a safe and nurturing school climate in which students feel well cared for and academically challenged. The school's goal is to create an environment that promotes mutual respect, cooperation, and teaches appropriate conflict resolution. However, the egregious disregard for school rules and the safety of others warrants disciplinary action for the offending student. Attempts will be made to modify behavior through the implementation of classroom consequences and/or in-school suspension. Students who repeatedly commit serious infractions for which discipline is warranted will receive out of school suspension if attempts to modify behavior through in-school consequences have proven ineffective.

Parents will be notified verbally and in writing within 24 hours of the student offense and in advance of the commencement of any suspension period for the child. Notification to parents will include a description of the infraction, resolutions attempted at the local school level, and outcomes. Students will be provided with appropriate instructional activities to be completed at home during the suspension period. Parents will be required to attend a school conference with the principal and other pertinent staff members before the student's re-admittance to the school at the conclusion of the suspension period.

Students with disabilities may be suspended for infractions and periods that are consistent with suspension guidelines for non-disabled students. However, students with disabilities are not to be suspended for infractions that can be directly linked as a manifestation of the disability, unless it is evident that the student has a clear understanding that his/her actions were inappropriate and subject to disciplinary action. A meeting of the special education coordinator, principal, vice principal, classroom teacher, and special education teacher will be convened within 24 hours of the student offense to review the infraction and determine the appropriateness of suspension.

Students with disabilities may be suspended for a period of less than ten days for a single infraction. Students with disabilities are not to be suspended for a cumulative period of ten days or more within a school year.

Offenses that greatly compromise the health and safety of the staff and students of Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School may result in the expulsion of the student. Expulsion may be recommended to the Early Childhood Academy School Board of Trustees by the principal. Parents will be notified verbally and in writing of the nature of the infraction and the recommendation for expulsion.

The parents are entitled to a meeting with the principal and school board representative, after which a final decision will be made by the Early Childhood Academy Board of Trustees.

All out of school suspensions will be administered for a minimum of one day and a maximum of twenty-five days. The following infractions may result in suspension of 1 to 10 days:

Acts that destroy, deface, or cause damage to school property.
The documented, repeated failure* to comply with the directions of a school staff member acting within the scope of his/her employment, when said non-compliance results in disruption of the school program or injury to another student or staff person. *Repeated failure is defined as the failure of the student to comply during a third or more incident of the same nature.
The possession of profane material, or illegal or controlled substances while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Trespassing on school grounds during a period of suspension or expulsion.
Causing disruption or being otherwise disorderly on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Participating or promoting gambling on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
The unauthorized possession of electronic communication devices such as pagers and cell phones on school grounds or at school sponsored activities. (Authorization for the possession of such devices must be obtained in advance from the principal.)
Any theft or attempted theft of property belonging to the school, employees of the school, or visitors to the school.
The possession of weapons, tools that could reasonably be used as weapons, or items that give the appearance of being a weapon, such as toy guns, water pistols, etc. on school grounds or at school sponsored activities.
The use of profanity on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Physical or sexual harassment of employees or students on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Any malicious act that could cause injury to an employee, school visitor or another student while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.

The following infractions may result in suspension of 11 to 25 days or in expulsion from Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School:

The use of any weapon capable of inflicting lethal injury to one or more individuals while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Weapons include but are not limited to firearms, knives, and razor blades.
The use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, controlled substances, or illegal substances while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
Any malicious act that could potentially result in lethal injury to one or more individuals while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.

For additional information about the ECA suspension policy, please feel free to contact the principal.

# **Early Childhood Academy**

## **Public Charter School**

### **Title I**

## **Parental Involvement Policy**

## **2011-2012**

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School (ECA) receives Title I, Part A federal funding through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). As part of the school's Title I plan, this parental involvement policy has been developed in collaboration with ECA's Parent School Organization. Please review this parental involvement policy and contact the school if you have any questions or concerns about its content.

#### **Mission**

Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School's mission is to foster the academic and social/emotional growth and development of each student in a safe and holistic learning environment that will equip all students with the knowledge and tools to become high achievers, proficient readers, and critical thinkers who will thrive for a lifetime as productive and caring citizens.

Founded in 2005, Early Childhood Academy Public Charter School (ECA) was chartered to provide early childhood students with a strong language and literacy base on which to become well prepared for the rigor of middle and high school. Our instructors are highly effective in their craft and understand and embrace our mission and our vision.

#### **Highly Qualified Teaching Staff**

Under the federal No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), all parents have the right to know teachers' statuses as qualified instructors. 100% of the ECA teaching staff (teachers and associate teachers) is Highly Qualified under NCLB. Of the twelve classroom teachers at ECA, all hold a bachelor's degree in an education-related field and over one-third hold a master's degree. Four teachers are currently working toward a master's degree. Of the eleven associate teachers working at ECA, over one-third hold a bachelor's degree, one-third hold over 60 credit hours, and one-third have passed the ParaPro assessment. One associate teacher holds a master's degree.

## Adequate Yearly Progress on the State Assessment

ECA's third graders completed the state assessment, the DC Comprehensive Assessment System, in the spring of 2011. 2011 was ECA's second year participating in the DC CAS. Results are as follows:

REPORT CARD										MET AYP?				
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACADEMY PCS - JOHENNING CAMPUS										Reading	Math	Attendance		
Year : 2011										YES	YES	-		
Category : ELEMENTARY														
Group	Year	Number in Group	Reading						Math					
			# Tested	% Tested	% BB (1)	% Basic	% Prof.	% Adv.	# Tested	% Tested	% BB (1)	% Basic	% Prof.	% Adv.
<b>Ethnicity</b>														
Black/Non-hispanic	2011	38	38	100.00%	13.16%	31.58%	55.26%	0.00%	38	100.00%	13.16%	42.11%	28.95%	15.79%
	2010	31	31	100.00%	9.68%	54.84%	35.48%	0.00%	31	100.00%	12.90%	67.74%	19.35%	0.00%
Female	2011	19	19	100.00%	15.79%	31.58%	52.63%	0.00%	19	100.00%	21.05%	47.37%	26.32%	5.26%
	2010	20	20	100.00%	5.00%	65.00%	30.00%	0.00%	20	100.00%	15.00%	70.00%	15.00%	0.00%
Male	2011	19	19	100.00%	10.53%	31.58%	57.89%	0.00%	19	100.00%	5.26%	36.84%	31.58%	26.32%
	2010	11	11	100.00%	18.18%	36.36%	45.45%	0.00%	11	100.00%	9.09%	63.64%	27.27%	0.00%
<b>Special Education</b>														
Disabled*	2011	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2010	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-disabled	2011	32	32	100.00%	6.25%	28.13%	65.63%	0.00%	32	100.00%	9.38%	40.63%	31.25%	18.75%
	2010	30	30	100.00%	10.00%	53.33%	36.67%	0.00%	30	100.00%	13.33%	66.67%	20.00%	0.00%
Lep/Nep*														
Non-Lep/Nep														
<b>Economic Status</b>														
Econ. Disadvantaged	2011	32	32	100.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%	32	100.00%	9.38%	40.63%	31.25%	18.75%
	2010	31	31	100.00%	9.68%	54.84%	35.48%	0.00%	31	100.00%	12.90%	67.74%	19.35%	0.00%
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged*	2011	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2010	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Migrant Status</b>														
Non-Migrant	2011	38	38	100.00%	13.16%	31.58%	55.26%	0.00%	38	100.00%	13.16%	42.11%	28.95%	15.79%
	2010	31	31	100.00%	9.68%	54.84%	35.48%	0.00%	31	100.00%	12.90%	67.74%	19.35%	0.00%
<b>School Total:</b>	2011	38	38	100.00%	13.16%	31.58%	55.26%	0.00%	38	100.00%	13.16%	42.11%	28.95%	15.79%
	2010	31	31	100.00%	9.68%	54.84%	35.48%	0.00%	31	100.00%	12.90%	67.74%	19.35%	0.00%
<b>LEA Total:</b>	2011	38	38	100.00%	13.16%	31.58%	55.26%	0.00%	38	100.00%	13.16%	42.11%	28.95%	15.79%
	2010	31	31	100.00%	9.68%	54.84%	35.48%	0.00%	31	100.00%	12.90%	67.74%	19.35%	0.00%
<b>STATE Total: (3)</b>	2011	18,349	18,125	98.78%	17.53%	38.69%	36.71%	7.07%	18,230	99.35%	18.72%	38.32%	31.83%	11.13%
	2010	18,279	18,040	98.69%	17.45%	38.41%	37.36%	6.78%	18,124	99.15%	19.45%	37.71%	33.42%	9.42%

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires schools and districts to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year based on targets determined by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

Schools must meet AYP in three ways:

- 1) Proficiency in reading and math
- 2) Participation in the reading and math assessments
- 3) Average daily attendance (elementary and middle schools) or graduation rates (high schools)

A school that fails to meet AYP for two consecutive years becomes a School in Need of Improvement. A school that fails to meet AYP for five consecutive years may be Restructured.

The percent proficient as shown in the above chart, is compared with proficiency targets of 73.69 in reading and 70.14 in math. If a school meets the academic target for the whole school and all subgroups, and meets the indicators as stated in (1), (2) and (3), the school has meet AYP.

If a school does not achieve AYP through academic targets, The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) then determines whether the school has achieved AYP through "Safe Harbor". Safe Harbor is met when the school meets attendance and participation indicators. In addition, the school must have reduced the percent of students scoring non-proficient by 10% from the previous. As indicated in the above chart, ECA's third graders have reduced the percentage of students scoring non-proficient by more than 10%. ECA has achieved AYP through Safe Harbor.

Parental involvement is key to ECA's success. Parents are more than our partners, they guide us in our decisions about appropriate offerings for their children. ECA maintains an open door policy; parents are free to visit classrooms at any time during the school day without prior notice and encouraged to contact the principal or vice principal at any time during the day with any questions or concerns. If a conference with the teacher is desired, however, we ask parents to schedule a conference time so as not to disrupt students' instructional time.

Several structured organizations, programs, and initiatives ensure the involvement of and on-going communication with parents.

### **Parent School Association & Parent Leadership Team**

All parents are expected to be a part of the ECA Parent School Association (PSA). The PSA is responsible for planning and implementing activities in support of the students and is led by the Parent Leadership Team, a parent body elected by the PSA. Parents will be notified by email and by the ECA Alert Now automated phone system whenever PSA meetings or events are scheduled. The Parent Leadership Team meets monthly to plan PSA meetings and events. One of the most important jobs of the Parent Leadership Team is to meet with the school leadership each spring to provide input in the development of school programs, policies, and initiatives for the coming school year.

The first PSA Meeting for this school year will be held on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. Subsequent meetings will be held during Family Fun Night, on the third Friday of each month.

### **Quarterly Parent Conferences**

All parents are expected to participate in quarterly individual parent conferences with their children's teachers. These conferences are held to give parents the opportunity to privately confer with teachers about their children's progress. Parents will receive their children's quarterly Progress Report at the conference and grades will be discussed. It is important for parents to make every effort to attend quarterly conferences. Please contact your child's teacher to reschedule the meeting, if necessary.

Conferences for the 2011-2012 school year are scheduled for:

November 4<sup>th</sup> • February 3<sup>rd</sup> • May 4<sup>th</sup> •

### **Family Involvement Activities**

ECA will hold a monthly PSA/family event, for all parents, students, and ECA staff. The goals of the activities are: to provide ECA parents with information and training to better equip them to support their children at home; to provide PSA updates and information to parents; to distribute new books to students to help build their home libraries; and to encourage communication between parents and school staff in a relaxed atmosphere. Dinner will be held for all in attendance and all students will be permitted to select one new book to take home.

### **ECA Open House**

ECA sponsors an Open House in the winter of each school year to allow parents and other visitors the opportunity to observe and/or participate in classroom activities. Parents may visit their children's classrooms and work alongside their own children in morning language, reading, and math activities.

This year's Open House will be held on Thursday, December 1, 2011.

### **Three @ Three**

To extend upon classroom learning, ECA has implemented an afterschool program for students. The Three @ Three program provides afterschool extended learning opportunities at 3:00 pm for three grade levels – grades one, two, and three. Students are provided with afterschool instruction by the same teaching staff who works with the students during the school day. All first through third grade students are encouraged to participate. Parents are asked to join these afterschool sessions for a firsthand understanding of the types of instructional strategies that are implemented by the teachers and the responses expected from the students.

### **Field Trips**

ECA believes that authentic learning includes exposing students to experiences outside the classroom environment. All ECA students will participate in five to seven field trips each year, as an extension of classroom learning. Transportation is provided on private, chartered buses unless otherwise specified. All transportation costs are paid for by ECA. Parents are always encouraged to join their children on field trips and are expected to participate in at least one field trip each school year.

### **Monthly Newsletters**

Each classroom teacher will send home a monthly newsletter informing parents of grade level standards and skills to be taught, planned field trips, and other special activities for the month. The newsletter will provide parents with important tips and strategies to help them support their children at home. Parents are asked to read the newsletter monthly and encouraged to contact their child's teacher with any questions or concerns about planned events and instruction.

### **Email Communication**

If parents wish to speak with a teacher or administrator, they may contact the school at 202-373-0035. In addition, each teacher, teacher assistant, and administrator has an email address that includes his/her first initial and last name @ecapcs.org. Teachers and staff will respond to your email within 24 hours. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers and administrators by email as an expedient alternative to leaving a phone message in the main office.

## **Parent Resources**

**Education News Parents Can Use**, a television series about ways to ensure children’s educational success. The third Tuesday of each month during the school year, **Education News** provides parents with the tools and information they need to be effectively involved in their children’s learning. [For information on how to register visit the following URL and go to FAQs: <http://www.ed.gov/news/av/video/edtv/index.html>.]

**EDPubs**, the Department’s Publication Center has a multitude of free materials and resources that can assist SEAs, LEAs, schools, parents, communities, and organizations in encouraging and maximizing parental involvement. [EDPubs can be reached directly by calling 1-877-4ED-PUBS (433-7827). Order documents on-line at [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov).]

**The Achiever**, a biweekly electronic newsletter that provides information, events and announcements about *No Child Left Behind*. For other newsletters and journals from ED visit: <http://www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/index.html>

The **No Child Left Behind website** at: <http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>

The “**What Works Clearinghouse**” (WWC), a project to help education decision-makers answer such questions as *how do we create better schools and how can we make sure that all children can read?* A part of the Department’s Institute of Education Sciences, the WWC has been established to put solid evidence from high-quality scientific research into the hands of educators, policy-makers and the public so they may make better choices about programs and practices. To receive e-mail updates, subscribe to *WWCUpdate* on the Web at [www.w-w-c.org](http://www.w-w-c.org). or call 1-866-WWC-9799.

**National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools**, funded through the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory (SEDL) by the Department’s Institute of Education Sciences, bridges research and practice to remove barriers to student achievement. The Center links people with research-based information and resources that they can use to effectively connect schools, families, and communities. The Center reviews emerging findings and research to develop an online database, annual conferences and annual reports to help advance procedural knowledge and provides training and networking across the regional educational laboratory system to link research findings to practice. [For more information visit <http://www.sedl.org/connections/about.html>.]

**The Parental Information and Resource Center** (PIRC) program is a discretionary grant program funded by the US Department of Education, [Office of Innovation and Improvement](#). In 2006 PIRCs were awarded to serve statewide needs. PIRCs now provide both regional and statewide services and disseminate information to parents on a statewide basis. PIRCs help implement successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and that strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children. DC PIRC has been working with parents and communities in Wards 1, 7 and 8 and on a citywide basis over the last two years on parental involvement. For more information, visit [www.mcsdc.org](http://www.mcsdc.org).