



Esperanza Cyber Charter School

EDUCATOR HANDBOOK 2021-2022

Contents	
Teacher Expectations	4
Mission Statement	5
Planning and Preparation	6
Preparation Periods	6
Student Files and Access	6
Supplies	6
Teacher Computer Use	6
Textbooks	7
Understanding, Following, & Processing Special Education Documents	7
Virtual Classroom Environment	7
Classroom Procedures	7
Dealing with Student Discipline Issues	9
E-mail	9
Student Behavior	10
Virtual Bulletin Board Displays	11
Instruction	11
Grading Scales	11
Grading for 6-12	11
Board Approved 2021-2022	

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

Grading for Kindergarten - Five	12
Grading for Class Assignments and Live Lesson Participation	12
Grading for a Transfer Student	13
Grading for Exam (Keystone) Proficiency	13
Lesson Plans	13
Student Attendance	14
Teacher/Parent Communication	14
Creating Log Entries	15
Use of Video as Instructional Aids	15
Professional Responsibilities	16
School-Sponsored Activities	16
Copy Machine	16
Dress Guidelines	16
External Correspondence	16
Field Trips	16
Fund Raising and the Handling of Money	17
Lesson Plans for Absences	17
Protocol for SAP Referrals	18
Work From Home	20
Paid Time Off (PTO)	
Summer Pay	18
Purchasing Procedure	19
Reporting Child Abuse and Training	19
Reimbursement for Purchases	19
Self-Inflicted Harm and Suicide	19
Smoking	19
Staff Discipline Issues	19
Staff Meetings	20
Student At-Risk Program	20
Teacher Evaluation and Professional Improvement Plan	20
Teacher Mentoring Program and Induction Plan	21
Travel and Lodging Expenses	21
Report of Incomplete Grade Form	22

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

EDUCATOR HANDBOOK

2021-2022

Teacher Expectations

All teachers and staff will comply with the school Personnel Policy Handbook and the expectations as put forth in the Faculty/Staff Handbook.

Protocols set forth in this handbook will govern some operational issues, but mostly will focus on curriculum and instruction.

1. Please be prompt in your attendance, reporting to work on time.
2. Complete Paylocity timesheets accurately and timely.
3. Lessons are developed to align with the school's approved curriculum maps and PA Common Core and Academic Standards.
4. Course design and lessons should also align to best practices in online teaching and learning through the standards developed by iNACOL.
5. Teachers should immediately report to school administration any awareness of a student carrying a weapon and/or illegal substances or engaging in at-risk behaviors or discussions such as self-harm.
6. Demonstrate professionalism always, refraining from the use of profanity or offensive language when communicating with others during school hours or sponsored events.

I read and understand my obligations as a teacher at Esperanza Cyber Charter School.

Teacher Name: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Copy this page and submit to your direct supervisor.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

Mission Statement

The mission of Esperanza Cyber Charter School (“Cyber”) is as follows:

Esperanza Cyber Charter School (ECCS) prepares students in grades Kindergarten through 12 to meet the challenges of living creatively and productively in an increasingly technologically sophisticated and interconnected world.

This mission was established by the founding entity, Esperanza, Inc. (“EI”), formerly Nueva Esperanza, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to creating Latino owned and operated institutions that lead to the familial, economic, and spiritual development of our community. After more than ten years of working with Latino families in North Philadelphia, EI is keenly aware that unemployment and inadequate education are major problems. To break this cycle, Latino youth must be provided the skills, knowledge, and self-confidence to succeed in a high-tech 21st Century society. For these reasons, and in response to repeated pleas from Latino parents for accessible schools that would better meet the educational needs of children and teenagers, EI has embarked upon the establishment of the Cyber.

The Cyber will set high standards and ambitious goals for all students. Nevertheless, the Cyber School’s founders are acutely aware that many students will be below grade level and lacking basic skills when they enroll. It will be an enormous undertaking to keep these students from dropping out, let alone build and reinforce their self-esteem and help them learn how to do work that meets high school standards. The Cyber will provide or arrange for various support services needed by students and their families. We believe in the fundamental ability of all students to learn, and we have designed the school with this in mind.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

Planning and Preparation

Preparation Periods

Prep periods are to be used to help you prepare for classroom instruction. They are not intended to be free periods of time in which to deal with personal matters. However, in the event of an emergency or pressing matter, if you need to step away from work you must seek proper authorization from an administrator. Extra duty compensation cannot be approved for time worked during the school day or completed during prep periods.

This period may be used for:

- ❖ Being available to work with students
- ❖ Preparation of academic instruction
- ❖ Supervisor or peer teacher observations and pre/post-observation meetings
- ❖ Mentor/Partner teacher meetings
- ❖ Maintenance of student files/student work displays
- ❖ Preparation of all instructional materials
- ❖ Grading
- ❖ Preparing required reports, documentation, etc.
- ❖ Student support and tutoring
- ❖ Occasionally, teachers will be asked to cover another person's duties
- ❖ Parent contact
- ❖ Lesson planning – individually and interdisciplinary

Student Files and Access

Student files and their contents are confidential materials. Files are kept in the main office area or in student support services offices. There is a wealth of invaluable information in the student files. Teachers are strongly encouraged to review all their student files to gain as much information and perspective on their students as possible.

Staff must request a particular student's file from one of the office staff. Files may be reviewed in the office area. **Under no circumstances are student files to be removed from the office area.**

Supplies

Supplies will be distributed to all teachers at the beginning of each semester. Each teacher will be provided with the supplies necessary for a given semester. Please see the front office staff prior to assuming a supply is not available in the school. Any purchase(s) not authorized by an administrator may not be reimbursed. It is important that you monitor your supplies carefully. Please refrain from helping yourself to office supplies; ask the office staff for assistance.

Teacher Computer Use

Teachers will ~~not use a laptop except for the one to which they have been assigned and~~ abide by the Summary of Acceptable Use Policy and Summary of Internet Safety Policy

Textbooks

When applicable, students will be assigned textbooks and/or paperback reading/literature books. Each text is to be numbered and recorded when given to students. The student must sign a book contract for all materials

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

provided by the school and the teacher must keep contracts on file. The teacher will note at the end of the term any replacement and/or reimbursement of any book rendered unsalvageable or lost.

Understanding, Following, & Processing Special Education Documents

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher and all other instructional staff working with students with exceptionalities to be familiar with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and to design instruction that accommodates and/or differentiates the general education content according to the IEP goals. It is imperative that all teachers understand the significance of IEP and its contents, since the document defines the child's level of support(s), resource(s) and/or related service(s) aligned to his/her academic, developmental and/or behavioral needs to participate in the general curriculum. All teachers are required to review all IEP documents for indicated students rostered to the course. Completion of this requirement will be an aspect of the teacher evaluation process.

The Special Education Coordinator will work collaboratively with teachers to ensure that all IEP documents are filed in a timely manner, especially with local and state agencies. With this in mind, the Special Education Coordinator may direct teachers to complete and submit specific documents to the Special Education Department by a given date. If this is the case, the Special Education Coordinator will provide the teachers with sufficient time to perform the task [a minimum of five school days]; and will ensure there is sufficient time to accommodate for uncontrollable or unforeseeable events (i.e. broken appointments; incomplete data; etc.). Nevertheless, if for any reason, the teacher cannot complete the task within the allotted time, the teacher must communicate with the Special Education Coordinator immediately. In the event of discrepancy or concern, the Director/Coordinator of Instruction will be invited by the Special Education Coordinator to facilitate the process.

Virtual Classroom Environment

Classroom Procedures

Classroom procedures are divided into those that are school-wide, department wide, and those that are left to individual teacher discretion. School-wide procedures are included below. Departmental and individual teacher procedures are provided as needed.

MLA or APA Citation

Students are required to use a style of citation for all research writing, directed by his or her teacher. Typically, MLA is to be used for literary topics and APA for scientific.

Lesson Structure and Format

All teachers are required to display the information needed to align to the lesson format and structure as outlined.

Learn – Practice – Assess

1. The Learn component can include the Do Now, mini-lesson content, direct instruction.
2. The Practice component can include whole and small group work on skill development as well as individual practice on learning objectives. Note: practice should not be graded as students have yet to show mastery.
3. The Assess component can include formative and summative assessments, such as, exit slips/tickets, quizzes, exams, journaling, as well as the unit performance task.

Teachers use the 5-E model to design lesson activities:

1. Engagement (Learn, Practice)
2. Exploration (Learn, Practice)

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
 2021-2022

3. Explanation (Learn)
4. Elaboration (Practice)
5. Evaluation (Assess)

Phase	Summary
Engagement	The teacher or a curriculum task accesses the learners' prior knowledge and helps them become engaged in a new concept through the use of short activities that promote curiosity and elicit prior knowledge. The activity should make connections between past and present learning experiences, expose prior conceptions, and organize students' thinking toward the learning outcomes of current activities.
Exploration	Exploration experiences provide students with a common base of activities within which current concepts (i.e., misconceptions), processes, and skills are identified and conceptual change is facilitated. Learners may complete lab activities that help them use prior knowledge to generate new ideas, explore questions and possibilities, and design and conduct a preliminary investigation.
Explanation	The explanation phase focuses students' attention on a particular aspect of their engagement and exploration experiences and provides opportunities to demonstrate their conceptual understanding, process skills, or behaviors. This phase also provides opportunities for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill. Learners explain their understanding of the concept. An explanation from the teacher or the curriculum may guide them toward a deeper understanding, which is a critical part of this phase.
Elaboration	Teachers challenge and extend students' conceptual understanding and skills. Through new experiences, the students develop deeper and broader understanding, more information, and adequate skills. Students apply their understanding of the concept by conducting additional activities.
Evaluation	The evaluation phase encourages students to assess their understanding and abilities and provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress toward achieving the educational objectives.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

Daily Agenda

All teachers are required to display the daily agenda in the virtual classroom and within the lesson content pages, including the following:

1. Standards being addressed (in student-friendly language)
2. Objective
3. Lesson Topic
4. Problem of the Day, Do Now, etc.
5. List of activities and assessments to be completed

Class Recordings

All live classes must be recorded and links must be available upon request. **the link must be posted to the appropriate section of the class page in the LMS prior to the end of the day.** This helps to maintain teacher and student safety and serves as a resource for students who missed the class or would like to review the content.

Class Banners

Banners for each class page must be updated at the beginning of each week to outline the lessons to be completed.

Guest Access

The virtual classroom settings must be formatted so that only registered users are permitted into the class. This prevents students from impersonating another student or using a name the teacher does not recognize.

Virtual Classroom Welcome Page

When possible, each virtual classroom must have a default page with class information (class name, name of teacher, time that class start and ends, and meeting schedule) that should be displayed at the end of each class. This page must not allow any student permissions such as chat, whiteboard permissions, etc. to prevent students from inappropriate use when the teacher is not in the room.

LMS Design

All class pages must be designed following the standardized format given as a template during orientation.

Daily assignments

The teacher will design graded assignments in Core Classes that allow students to show mastery or competency on a particular lesson. No more than one graded activity should be assigned in a given class each day.

Virtual Classroom Welcome Page

Each virtual classroom must have a default page with class information (class name, name of teacher, time that class start and ends, and meeting schedule) that should be displayed at the end of each class. This page must not allow any student permissions such as chat, whiteboard permissions, etc. to prevent students from inappropriate use when the teacher is not in the room.

LMS Design

All class pages must be designed following the standardized format given as a template during orientation.

Daily assignments

It is not necessary for students to be given a graded assignment for each lesson. The teacher may find that an Exit Ticket or formative assessment will suffice for a particular lesson. No more than one graded activity should be assigned in a given class each day.

Dealing with Student Discipline Issues

See Student Code of Conduct.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

E-mail

The use of e-mail as a form of communication is an invaluable tool. E-mail should not be used to discuss or resolve conflict, but for informational purposes only. Keep e-mail language professional and grammatically correct, as it may be used as a legal document. Teachers must check their email at least two times a day, in the a.m. and before leaving for the day, but it is recommended that teachers keep their email open throughout the day as it is a primary form of communication within the school. A sender should be able to expect a response in 24 hours, even if just an acknowledgement of receipt.

When discussing confidential information related to a student, please use student initials rather than the full name. Be aware that all written records and written correspondence referencing a student is available to the parent if they request. Keep in mind the school office is an open space and the confidentiality of student discussions should be maintained.

Student Behavior

Teachers must explain their expectations of student behavior when participating in virtual class sessions. All teachers in virtual classrooms should maintain the same school-wide behavior objectives and expectations. If you have particular additional expectations, they must be made clear and posted in the online course as well. Proper conduct applies throughout the school facility (inside and outside) at all events in accordance with the Cyber School's Code of Conduct. **Consistent adherence and enforcement of school-wide behavior objectives is mandatory by all teachers.** In order to create the school-wide culture that is desired, all staff must work together and support one another in implementing the school's positive reinforcement behavior plan and behavioral goals/expectations. The classroom teacher is expected to manage low-level student behavior issues. This can include disruptive behavior, lack of engagement, mild disrespectful attitude, and other Level 1 offenses that do not present immediate harm to the student or others. Any Level 2 or Level 3 offenses, as well as repeated Level 1 offenses, should be immediately reported to the appropriate school administrator and the appropriate documentation and communication completed. Teachers and staff are responsible to contact parents to report behavior and/or academic challenges. Log entries in Power School are required for every contact made about the student.

~~Virtual Bulletin Board Displays~~

~~Virtual bulletin board displays of student work are required by all teachers in all subject areas. Bulletin boards are expected to reflect current student work. It is of great educational and self-esteem value for students to see their work displayed. Furthermore, student academic work on display is indicative of the work produced in an individual classroom as well as the entire school's educational program. All bulletin boards must reflect standards-based education, be clearly labeled, be aesthetically appealing and maintained regularly. If assistance is needed, please see lead teachers or Director of Instruction.~~

Instruction

Grading Scales

Inflating grades or social promotion is not allowed at Esperanza Cyber. Modifications, in compliance with IEP's, are acceptable in adherence to, and in conjunction with, Special Education teachers.

A grade of Insufficient (INS) or Incomplete (INC) may be given only with the approval of administration based on specific student circumstances.

Grading for 6-12

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 59 and below

Incomplete (I)* – awarded at the end of a marking period when all but a portion of the work has been satisfactorily completed. An “I” is given in place of a failing grade as the student is expected to complete the missing work before an agreed upon time with the teacher. An “I” must be changed to the appropriate letter grade for the final report card (at the semester level for semester-long courses, and at the end-of-year for a full-year course).

Insufficient (INS) – used when the student has produced insufficient evidence to determine a specific percentage mark.

Passing (P) – used to indicate student has completed work assigned in a non-graded class. An 83 can be used if a percentage is warranted.

Shows Improvement (S) – (can be used to indicate progress towards a goal)

Needs Improvement (N) – (can be used to indicate progress towards a goal)

No Grade (NG) - used under specific conditions as approved by administration.

Grade Pending (GP) - used under specific conditions as approved by administration.

Grading for Kindergarten - Five

A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F 50-59
No Grade (NG)
Withdraw (W)

Grading for Class Assignments and Live Lesson Participation

Live Lesson participation and learning activity completion is expected at 100% for all scheduled sessions. Students **will not** earn a “participation grade” and in general will only earn grades for completing learning activities to demonstrate competency. The “mastery checks” during class instruction are designed for students to demonstrate their understanding of the content being covered. Any assignment discussed in a live lesson can be completed by students outside the live lesson. For example, students watching a recording of a previous lesson have the same opportunity to complete any work by completing the activity in Schoology.

Re-test: In general, students may request one additional re-test on any major course exams or projects. The student is provided a review assignment, where learning that was not originally understood is presented. The review assignment should be completed before a re-test is offered. The re-test score is the final score reported. There are no penalties for re-testing. (This policy is for ECCS testing only and does not apply to any state-wide testing).

Late work: Students are encouraged to complete assignments on time but will not be penalized for turning in work late. At times a 10% penalty may be applied. Student assignments will close/lock at the end of each

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

quarter and grades calculated on the work submitted at that time. Work will not be accepted after the quarter has passed. Teachers should encourage students to check their grades frequently. When in danger of failing, teachers should contact parents as soon as possible to set up a meeting to discuss a course of action

~~Live Lesson participation is expected at 100% for all scheduled sessions. However, students **will not** earn a grade for his or her participation but can earn a grade for completing any activities discussed or provided during the Live Lesson. Any assignment discussed in a live lesson can be completed by any student regardless of attendance in the live lesson (e.g. students watching a recording have the same opportunity to complete any work discussed).~~

~~*Re-test:* Students may request one additional re-test on any course exams. The student is provided a review assignment, where learning that was not originally understood is presented. The review assignment must be completed before a re-test is offered. The re-test is a new assessment, not the same previously provided. The re-test score is the final score reported. There are no penalties for re-testing. (This policy is for in-house testing only and does not apply to any state testing).~~

~~*Late work:* Students are encouraged to complete assignments on time but should not be grossly penalized for turning in work late. No more than a 10% penalty should be applied. Student assignments will close/lock at the end of each quarter and grades calculated on the work submitted at that time. Work will not be accepted after the quarter has passed. Teachers should encourage students to check their grades frequently. When in danger of failing, teachers should contact parents as soon as possible to set up a meeting to discuss a course of action.~~

Teachers are expected to stay current with grading assignments. All submitted assignments should be graded and reported **posted in the gradebook** within 5 school days.

In special circumstances, an 'Incomplete' may be recorded at the quarter grade. If the student does not complete the work as agreed, the "I" converts to an "F". Teachers change the grade at the end of the next marking period to indicate the student completed work or did not complete work.

**** In general the lowest grade awarded to an active student is 50%. This allows the student to maintain a competitive chance to raise their quarter grade to passing. However for students who are inactive in class and/or are frequently truant, teachers may award 0% in certain cases.**

**** The lowest grade an elementary student can earn in the SIS gradebook is a 50. No zero grades are awarded.**

Grading for a Transfer Student

If the student has earned any grades from a transfer school the Enrollment Specialist will enter the grades in the SIS under Historical Grades upon review of the application and school documents and indicate a transfer grade in the enrollment email to staff.

Teachers should incorporate the transfer grade into their course through the following:

1. Create an assignment through Global Create and enter the grade. Ensure that the assignment also is added to the "classwork" category (worth 50%). The transfer grade should then be averaged along with all the other earned grades for the course in that particular grading time period.

It is at the teacher's discretion (with guidance from the DOI) to exempt class assignments that were given and/or due prior to the student's enrollment.

Grading for Exam (Keystone) Proficiency

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

If it is found a student is proficient or advanced on a state exam, the aligned course grade may be adjusted to reflect this mastery of content in the following:

Advanced on state exam = A (95) in the course
Proficient on the state exam – B (85) in the course
Basic on the state exam – C (75) in the course
Below Basic on the state exam D (65) in the course

Any grade adjustment must be approved by school leadership and should only be made in the event the student needs to earn a course credit towards a graduation requirement.

Lesson Plans

Teachers are to use a Lesson Plan template (developed by each department group) to develop daily lessons that are then developed digitally into the learning management system. Weekly lesson plans are submitted to the Drive* for the upcoming week at the direction of your supervisor. Lesson plans are used to ensure the scope and sequence is being delivered (teacher), for monitoring of instruction and alignment to the unit plan (teacher and administration) and during the evaluation/observation process to further identify areas of enhancement for teaching and learning (administration). All curricular materials developed to support Esperanza Cyber Charter School curriculum remains the property of the school.

Teachers should have three emergency lesson plans saved in the Drive, created as a lesson in the LMS, and shared with their direct supervisor. In the case of an emergency these lessons will be used. As such, the teacher is then to develop additional emergency lessons. See “Lesson Plans for Absences.”

*Use the school year curriculum development Drive folder, shared by the administrator.

ATTENDANCE (aligned with Student/parent handbook)

Esperanza Cyber Charter School believes that good attendance is essential if students are to achieve and reach their potential. Each day is important for learning. Parents are required to ensure their son/daughter maintains good attendance aligned in the school’s Attendance Policy. Absences from classes may impact student performance and disrupt mastery of content. Students and parents should avoid unnecessary absences

ECCS expects all students in all grades to attend school and participate in all scheduled live lessons **from 7:45 - 3:30** during the school day as scheduled.

Attendance is taken each day that the Cyber School is open; though students can continue working on days when the school is not open (weekends, holidays, professional development days, etc.). ECCS does not usually close for snow days; all classes will continue virtually as regularly scheduled and attendance will be taken. A student is counted as ‘present’ for each main period where they record a meaningful participation. Meaningful participation is counted as engaging in daily online lesson activities, communicating with their teacher, participating in class activities (synchronous or asynchronous), or attending other scheduled academic events and is recorded as “meeting” attendance. Failure to log in or record meaningful participation in main classes on all scheduled school days will be counted as a class absence. Failure to attend live lessons while logged into the instructional delivery system may also be counted as a **class absence**. **ECCS will alert parents daily of each missed class by email, text, or phone call.**

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

The student will be marked as a “**daily absence**” for the school day if they do not attend or have meaningful participation in FOUR or more of their classes that day. Parents/Guardians are notified daily when a student is absent for the day. Three unexcused **daily absences** will result in the student being identified as truant. Parents will be notified directly of truancy by the Attendance/Truancy Specialist. Six unexcused **daily absences** or more will result in the student being identified as habitually truant. Parents will be notified directly of habitual truancy by the Attendance/Truancy Specialist. These absences **do not need** to be consecutive. Per state law, the identification of your student as habitually truant will result in referring your student and/or parent to an attendance improvement program or the local child services (Project Go via the District Attorney’s Office). These actions are dependent on the age of the student. In addition, other disciplinary measures may be exercised including a referral to the local truancy court.

A justified absence can be excused for:

- A death in the family.
- An illness, with a provided doctor’s note for an absence longer than three (3) days.
- An observation of a religious holiday not noted on the school calendar.
- A medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled after school hours.
- Authorized school activities.
- Educational travel, up to five (5) days a year, with prior approval.

A parent can provide a written excuse, but the attendance code remains “unexcused” for the following:

- Oversleeping.
- Job hunting.
- Working, if not approved by the School as following the law.
- Cannot login or lost school-loaned device.
- A justified absence not accompanied by an excused note.

As all instructional content is available to students twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (24/7) there are very few times when students should be excused from attending school or completing school assignments. Parents/guardians are requested to notify the school for an absence followed by a written excuse:

- Call the school office before 7:30 a.m. as attendance is taken during the morning. The number is 215-967-9703. If no one answers the phone leave a message with your name, your relationship to the student, the student’s name, and the reason for the absence. Follow up with an email to attendance@esperanzacybercs.net.
- The student or parent/guardian should email all his or her teachers to let them know he or she will be absent. The student is not excused from school assignments and should plan to make up any work missed.
- Provide a written excuse note. You can attach the note to an email sent to attendance@esperanzacybercs.net, you can bring the note in, or you can mail the note to Esperanza Cyber Charter School, Attention: Attendance and Truancy Specialist, 4261 N. 5th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140.
- A written excuse must be received on or before the third (3rd) day after the last day of school missed. Absences reported by phone without a written notice will be marked as “unexcused.”

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

- Doctor's notes are required to excuse an absence for illness longer than three (3) days.

TRUANCY

Aligned with the Pennsylvania State Law regarding truancy (Act 138), the following protocol is used to monitor unexcused absences and track consequences.

A law passed in November 2016 defines "truant" as a child subject to compulsory school laws "having three (3) or more school days of unexcused absence during the current school year." The new law streamlines the definition of "habitual truancy." Under the new law, "habitual truancy" is defined as a child subject to compulsory school laws "having six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year." Therefore, a child is habitually truant once he or she accumulates six unexcused daily absences during the school year. These absences do not need to run consecutively.

An unexcused absence is any absence from school or from any scheduled class without an acceptable reason and not verified by a parent/guardian, physician, court, or other agency within three days of the student's return to logging into courses. A planned absence of three consecutive days or more without prior approval is also considered unexcused. Unexplained absences are recorded as trancies.

The school will notify the parent/guardian in writing within ten (10) days of the child's third unexcused absence. The notice will include a description of the consequences if the child becomes habitually truant in the future (6+ unexcused absences), will be written in the mode and language of communication preferred by the parent/guardian as reported in the Home Language Survey, and may include an offer of an Attendance Improvement Conference (AIC).

A student missing ten (10) consecutive days may be withdrawn from the school.

If the child continues to be truant and incurs additional absences after the written notice is issued, the school will schedule an AIC with the student and parent/guardian. During this meeting the school, student, and parent/guardian will determine the best plan that fosters improved attendance with or without additional services. Other individuals may be invited to participate, such as an individual identified by the parent/guardian who may be a resource (e.g. grandparent, sibling, etc.), appropriate school personnel, and recommended service providers (e.g. case managers, probation officers, etc.). The Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) is approved via parent/guardian and student signature and implemented.

The school must hold the AIC even if the parent declines to participate or fails to attend after the school provides advance written notice and makes attempts to communicate via telephone. There is no legal requirement for either the child or parent to attend an attendance improvement conference. The school must document the outcome of any AIC in a written AIP. The school will not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled AIC has passed.

Esperanza Cyber Charter School will not impose discipline for truant behavior that excludes the student from the classroom. The new law forbids schools from imposing discipline that excludes a student from the classroom for truant behavior. Specifically, the law states that "schools shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior."

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

If the child becomes habitually truant (accumulation of six unexcused absences) the School will implement the following:

- Habitually truant children under fifteen years of age. If a habitually truant child is under fifteen (15), the school will refer the child to either: (1) a community-based attendance improvement program or (2) the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act. Additionally, the school may file a citation against the parent of a habitually truant child under fifteen (15) in a magisterial district court.
- Habitually truant children fifteen years of age and older. If a habitually truant child is fifteen (15) or older, the school will either: (1) refer the child to a community-based attendance improvement program or (2) file a citation against the student or parent in a magisterial district court. If a habitually truant child aged fifteen (15) or older incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program or the child refuses to participate in an attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child. The school will have created an AIP prior to any referral to the courts.

Taking student attendance is a legal requirement. In general, all teachers are required to take attendance in PowerSchool every virtual classroom session within the first 10 minutes of the period.

The following codes are **commonly** used:

- 1st – student attends orientation and is not expected in the virtual class that day
- Present – (system default): students attends the virtual class
- AAS – students attends an asynchronous class
- NC – no credit is given for participation in the live lesson for a student who was Present
- N-A – the virtual class did not meet (only used as directed by school administration)
- NIA – unexcused absence, indicates the student had no internet access at home
- A – unexcused absence
- E8 – temporary excused absence for placement in a treatment of juvenile facility (only used as directed by school administration)
- I2 – unexcused absence, used to identify a student who is non-compliant with immunizations (only used as directed by school administration)
- IS – in school suspension (only used as directed by school administration)
- OS – out of school suspension (only used as directed by school administration)
- RS – reinstated from a suspension (only used as directed by school administration)

Teacher/Parent Communication

If parents have a suggestion, concern or complaint regarding a grade, an assignment or a disciplinary action taken by a teacher, they are instructed to please first contact that teacher directly. Teachers are to be very willing to listen to their questions and concerns and need to work with parents. Out of courtesy for the teaching staff, parents are asked to please address their questions and concerns with them first rather than immediately going to the administration.

If, however, they do not feel that their question or concern has been correctly addressed, then they are instructed to contact the recommended administrator:

- Issues relating to schedules, rosters, personnel, curriculum/instruction, ESL and/or Special Education services

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

- Issues relating to academic and behavioral interventions, guidance, after-school activities, and/or student support services
- Issues relating to Health, Facilities, or Organization.

If the administration is unable to resolve a single issue with a parent, the administration will refer the issue to the CEO for resolution. If after meeting with the CEO the situation continues to be unresolved, the CEO will refer the issue to the Governing Board for resolution.

Note: the above procedural protocol has been established as a guideline to support parents with their concerns that are directly [or indirectly] related to school matters. These guidelines serve to facilitate the process and are not meant in any way to impede the educational process. Subsequently, if the visitor insists he/she wishes to speak with a specific administrator, then every effort should be made to satisfy the parent's request to minimize conflict and to ensure the peace and tranquility of the school learning environment. **Further detail is provided in the Visitation Policy.**

Creating Log Entries

Communication is paramount within the online environment. Students and parents/guardians must be communicated with regularly, and these communications must be logged into the school's Student Information System. This requirement is necessary to ensure student and staff safety and is part of the teacher evaluation process.

Teachers are required to communicate progress with the parent/guardian of each student in their classes at least twice every quarter, and attempts must be made until the parent/guardian is successfully reached. More communication may be necessary based on parent/guardian request, IEP requirements, or student need. Behavioral concerns, attendance issues and lack of academic progress must be communicated with the parent/guardian. It is also recommended that an additional communication is made upon a student's enrollment to serve as an introduction and begin to build school culture and the parent-teacher partnership. All attempts and successful communications must be logged according to the guidelines below.

- Do not use any code preceded by "DNU"
- Use "Parent Contact" as the Log Type for any communication to parent/guardian
- Use "Student Contact" as the Log Type for any communication or contact with a student including tutoring (virtual, on-site, or within Open-Office Hours or the virtual classroom) or conversations with students via email, chat, phone, or in-person which fall outside of basic instructional topics.
- Most log entries created by teachers should be coded as "Parent Contact" or "Student Contact". Discuss any exceptions with the DOI/COI.
- Ensure to select the appropriate Log Subtype
- Ensure the recorded date is correct
- Include an appropriate title
- Within the Log Entry Text include the topics discussed, with whom the information was communicated, and any resolutions agreed upon.
- Log only objective observations. Log entries may be subpoenaed and must be professional, clear, and objective.

Use of Video as Instructional Aids

Teachers are encouraged to include short video clips that appropriately align to content or to use teacher-created videos. Each teacher has a school supported YouTube channel and should use this storage area as a repository of all video clips used during teaching and online course development.

Professional Responsibilities

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

School-Sponsored Activities (post-covid update)

Teachers are encouraged to sponsor “after-school” activities or clubs. More information as to the process of starting an activity can be obtained from the Director of Student Development. Teachers are required to attend all Parent-Teacher Conferences, Professional Development Days, Open House, Fun Zones, graduation ceremonies, and a minimum of two Open Gym Nights each year. Should there be a conflict, this must be discussed with the staff member’s direct supervisor as soon as the staff member is aware.

Copy Machine

Teachers have use of copy machines. Please inform the front office of any repair needed immediately. Please attempt to not make color copies when possible as their cost is much higher than black and white. Scan copies of worksheets to email as PDF to add them to courses. REMEMBER: We work in a virtual environment and paper copies, for the most part, are not needed to support instruction. Students should not be given paper copies of assignments or be permitted to turn in physical copies of assignments that should be submitted online unless required for the purposes of an IEP or prior approval from an administrator has been given.

Dress Guidelines

Both in-person at the school building and on-line in the virtual classroom, all staff will dress in a professional manner at all times. Staff can exercise choice and control over their appearance and wear clothing that is safe, comfortable, and appropriate to the teaching and learning environment and to their gender identity and expression.

External Correspondence

Occasionally, there will be instances when you will send correspondence, on behalf of the school, to external individuals and/or organizations. Prior to sending out any correspondence, please use school letterhead and have your work proofread by another teacher then submitted to the Director of Instruction for approval. When submitting correspondence to the front office for approval, please allow adequate time before the correspondence must be sent out as it may need translation. The best option is to send the correspondence as an attachment to an email. This will result in the most expedient response.

Field Trips

Periodically, field trips and community outings will occur. All field trips must be clearly defined in the course overviews. A field trip request form, addressing the trips educational objective, location, and budgetary and transportation needs must be completed and submitted to the appropriate administrator four weeks prior to the trip’s date. A field trip request will not be considered approved without the proper administrative approval.

Blackout dates for the year will be provided to the staff in the beginning of the academic year. Please do not schedule any field trips during these times.

A field trip permission form **MUST** be signed by a parent/guardian for each field trip. Students will not be permitted to participate in any field trip without written permission from their parent/guardian. All field trip permission forms are to be copied – one copy is to remain in the front office and the other is to be taken with the teacher on the field trip. A final list of students attending the field trip must be submitted to the appropriate administrator at least 2 weeks prior to the trip’s date. Administration will approve all students’ participation and notify the rest of the staff.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

It is the responsibility of the teacher planning/coordinating the field trip to ensure adequate supervision/chaperones, and list them on the field trip request form. All chaperones must be at least 21 years of age, submit appropriate clearances to the front office, and be approved by administration. The general chaperone/student ratio is between 1:8– 1:10 (dependent on the nature and location of the field trip). *A trip without adequate chaperones will not be approved. It is the duty of the teacher to be responsible for all students, at all times, during any field trip experience. At all times, the supervising teacher must know where students are and should coordinate, with students, time limitations, restraints in mobility, and central meeting points. In case of an emergency, school staff should immediately notify school administration and emergency personnel as needed.* When traveling by bus, there must be a minimum of two chaperones on each bus. Chaperones must be present in the front and the back of the bus to adequately monitor student behavior. Chaperones must ride in the bus with students on field trips unless otherwise authorized by administration.

Also, remember that Esperanza Cyber students, while participating in any event represent the school. Proper behavior, appearance and representation are expected at all times. School dress guidelines are to be followed. For special occasions, such as a school picnic, sporting event, etc. exceptions will be discussed and decided by the administration. Students not in compliance with the dress guidelines, will not be permitted to participate in the field trip experience. Some form of culminating project or paper should be generated from most field trips. Photograph displays, with narrative, of these events are strongly encouraged.

Fund Raising and the Handling of Money

Fundraisers occur and are encouraged. However, funds must be handled in an appropriate manner. Please see the appropriate administrator for more information.

All monies accepted must be given a receipt (use the receipt book maintained by the front office staff).

All monies must be accounted for on a daily basis by the appropriate Administrative Assistant.

Lesson Plans for Absences

With illness, professional development and other unexpected absences, emergency lesson plans must be prepared. While it is preferable for teachers to leave regular lesson plans that are in line with the curriculum, we understand emergencies do occur. This is what the emergency lesson plans are for. When preparing them keep the following in mind:

- Create at least three emergency lessons that can be easily published to your online course.
- Lesson plans are added to your class page by adding a page titled “Lesson Plans for Teacher Absence”.
- Leave the page unpublished so students do not have access.
- File and share the lessons on Google Drive in the curriculum folder.

These lessons should be reviewed periodically to bring lesson plans, rosters, and duties up to date.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
 2021-2022

Protocol for SAP Referrals

Teachers are to use the following protocol when referring a student

The teacher will:

1. Define the one [or more] of the following factors being recommended for an intervention:
 - a. Attendance & Tardiness
 - b. Academic (performance-based; grades; etc.)
 - c. Health
 - d. Behavioral
2. Complete a Counselor Referral Form and submit a completed hardcopy and/or an electronic version via email to the Guidance Counselor assigned to the specific grade. In addition, a carbon-copy must be submitted to the appropriate administrator.
3. Include data to support the recommendations for the referral. Keep in mind; the collection of data [or lack of] should not impede the process of making the referral. Nevertheless, the teacher should be able to demonstrate and/or articulate the evidence that supports his/her findings.
4. Receive a receipt from the Guidance Counselor that confirms he/she received the referral in a timely manner.

Work From Home

All staff can be required to be on-site five days a week, especially in cases of performance issues. Work from home is considered a privilege and may be revoked at any time at the discretion of administration. All staff will be required to be available to come on-site for high stakes testing and other mandatory events.

Teachers and Academic Assistants can expect to have the option to work remotely three to four days a week - delivering instruction from home offices. Extra duties may be assigned to staff that are not able to come on-site on a regular basis.

Most non-teaching staff can expect to work one or two days a week from home offices.

All staff that work remote are eligible for an internet stipend of \$500 a year to help cover the cost. In order to receive the stipend staff must have a minimum internet speed of 50/5 (50 Mbps download and 5 Mbps upload). 100/10 is suggested for homes with multiple users online during the day.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

Classification	# PTO	Carry-Over	Use by date
10 month	9 days	None	N/A
11 month	11 days	Up to 3 days	Use prior year balance by Aug 15th
12 month	18 days	Up to 5 days	Use prior year balance by Aug 15th

Note: Eligible part-time staff will be granted paid time-off on a prorated basis based on the number of regularly scheduled days per week.

10-Month Classified Staff

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

Eligible staff assigned with a 10-month schedule will be granted nine (9) paid time-off days for the complete academic school year to use immediately upon start date through the last day of school.

Any unused paid time-off cannot carry over to the following academic year. ECCS shall cash-out any unused paid time-off for Teachers at the end of an academic year. All other positions will forfeit unused paid time-off.

For 10-month classified staff hired during an academic school year, the amount of paid time-off days granted will be prorated based on your start date. Upon an involuntary separation of employment during the school year, any unused accrued paid time-off will be cashed-out prorated based on start date. Staff who voluntarily resign during the school year will forfeit any unused paid time-off.

11-Month Staff

Eligible staff assigned with an 11-month schedule will be granted eleven (11) paid time-off days for the complete academic school year to use immediately upon start date through August 15th.

11-month classified staff can carry-over up to 3 days of any unused paid time-off to the following academic year.

For 11-month classified staff hired during an academic school year, the amount of paid time-off days granted will be prorated based on your start date. Upon an involuntary separation of employment during the school year, any unused accrued paid time-off will be cashed-out prorated based on start date. Staff who voluntarily resign during the school year will forfeit any unused paid time-off.

12-Month Staff

Staff assigned to a 12-month schedule will accrue 1.5 days for each full month worked, from July 1 to June 30, which for a complete year of employment equates to eighteen (18) paid time-off days and can be used as accrued.

12-month staff has up until August 15th to use any accrued and unused paid time-off from the prior year. 12-month staff may carry-over up to 5 paid time-off days to the following year, otherwise any paid time-off from the prior year beyond 5 days and not used by August 15th will be forfeited.

Paid time-off must be accrued before it may be used. In limited circumstances, the use of paid time-off prior to accrual may be approved at the discretion of your department Director, but cannot exceed a total of five (5) days.

Upon separation of employment, any unused accrued paid time-off will be “cashed-out” and paid to you in your final paycheck. No payment of unused accrued paid time-off will be made if you resign your position and did not provide and complete a two-week notice period. Unused accrued paid time-off cannot be used once you have provided notice of your employment resignation or to extend your employment beyond your last day worked.
Paid Time Off (PTO)

Employees are provided paid-time off dependent on his or her position. The number of PTO days are specified in the employee contract.

Scheduled PTO

- PTO can only be requested for a half day equalling 4 hours or a whole day equaling 8 hours.

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

- PTO requests are submitted to the direct supervisor and must be given at least 1 week in advance of the days requested.
- ECCS does not provide substitute teachers when a scheduled teacher is absent therefore, it is recommended that teachers make every attempt to not schedule multiple PTO days in a row as that negatively impacts instruction.
- PTO requests may be denied if days interfere with a parent conference day, before and after a school approved professional development day, holiday or break, with benchmark, end-of-marking period exams, and/or state assessments, school projects/tasks, or if more than one request has been submitted.
- 12-month employees are encouraged to take PTO during the school year if days requested do not negatively impact the academic program and protocols are followed as outlined above.
- **Staff members should not make advance plans to miss any days that include staff PD days, state testing, or end of quarter assessments. Additionally, staff should not make advance plans to miss the 'day before' or 'day returning' from Vacation Weekends or Break Weeks to in-effect 'extend' an existing vacation.**

Urgent, Emergency PTO

Employees use PTO days for urgent and emergency situations where he or she cannot work on a specified day. Examples could be: use a PTO as a sick day, for doctor's appointments, family emergencies, funerals, etc.

- A call-out should be done before 7 am on the day you are absent.
 - Call your direct supervisor's school phone and leave a message and
 - Send an email to your direct supervisor ~~and to the generic callout@esperanzacyberes.net~~
 - When possible, email students to let them know of your absence.
- Emergency lessons should be available and shared within the course structure.
- Place a notice/announcement in your online course and an email to all students instructing them what to accomplish in your absence.
- In the case of an emergency, school administration will communicate with students and publish the emergency lesson plan.

Summer Pay

Certain ten (10) month and eleven (11) month classified employees receive their academic year compensation on a semi-monthly schedule spread out over a twelve-month period. This period where an employee receives the balance of their academic year compensation when not expected to report to work is considered "summer pay."

For any ten (10) month and eleven (11) month classified employees hired during the academic school year, the Cyber will prorate your "summer pay" based on the number of instructional days remaining that academic year.

For ten (10) month and eleven (11) month classified employees who involuntarily separate employment during the academic school year, the Cyber will provide your "summer pay" on a prorated basis based on the number of instructional days completed that academic year. If eligible, your "summer pay" will be processed no later than one pay period following your separation of employment. Ten (10) month and eleven (11) month classified employees who voluntarily separate employment during the academic school year will forfeit any summer pay.

Please note that balance of contract pay does not alter the employment-at-will understanding and does not create a contractual relationship between you and the Cyber. Both you and the Cyber retain the right to end the employment relationship for any reason at any time, with or without notice.

Purchasing Procedure

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

If you need a specific resource for your instruction, please discuss with the Director/Coordinator of Instruction. If approved for educational need, complete a Purchase Order, signed by the DOI/COI and present it to the administrative assistant who will provide a purchase order number. Once all signatures are obtained the order can be placed.

Reporting Child Abuse and Training

If you suspect child neglect or abuse, please report this to the school counselor and the Director of Instruction immediately. Please see the Child Abuse Policy and information about mandated reporting. Per PA Act 126 all staff must complete a mandated reporter training once every five years for a minimum of 4 hours. Provide updated certificates to your direct supervisor.

Reimbursement for Purchases

If an educational supply or material that is not available at the school is needed, please submit a purchase order beforehand and give this to the Director of Instruction. An item purchased which did not receive prior approval, will not be reimbursed. Many times, items can be purchased through school vendors at a significantly lower rate. Also, obtain a tax-exempt form from the front office to present to vendors when your purchase is approved.

Self-Inflicted Harm and Suicide

If a student discusses harm or suicide notify the school counselor and the Director of Instruction immediately. Please see the Suicide Policy. Per PA Act 79, all staff must complete suicide prevention training every five years. Provide updated certificates to your direct supervisor

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in the school offices and Learning Center. Anyone who does smoke must leave the building and be off property to smoke. Using discretion and respect for those around you while smoking is expected at all times.

Staff Discipline Issues

See Personnel Policies.

Staff Meetings

Regularly scheduled faculty meetings are a valuable component of an effective school. The day of week designated for staff meetings will be determined by the administration. Some staff meetings will be reserved for data meetings. **All staff meetings are mandatory.** In the event of extreme extenuating circumstances which warrant a missed meeting, the Director of Instruction should be notified. It is also the responsibility of the individual teacher or staff member to seek out a colleague to find out what information was reviewed and/or discussed at the staff meeting.

All teachers are required to complete an Induction program before changing certificates from Instructional I to Instructional II. ECCS holds a mandatory Induction program for all new teachers and highly recommends all teachers new to cyber education attend as well. Please discuss with your direct supervisor. If you have completed an induction program at another school, provide the school office with the certificate of completion.

Student At-Risk Program

ESPERANZA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATOR HANDBOOK
2021-2022

The Student At-Risk Program (SAP) is a comprehensive plan designed by a team of stakeholders with the primary goal of formulating an individualized plan that strategically uses resources and supports to ensure developmentally aligned academic and/or behavioral stability. The team will include the school administration, Guidance Department and classroom teachers. In addition, the team may include teachers from the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department or Special Education (SPED) Department. Examples of supports include but not limited to daily reports, attendance monitoring or behavioral modification plans. The SAP team will collectively decide to exit the student from the program based on quantifiable data that demonstrates learning/behavioral goals have been met, and no further supports and/or resources are needed based on his/her performance-data.

Note: During the SAP process, the Guidance Department will play the leading role of initiating, organizing, facilitating and collecting all viable data to be used by the team. The school administrator will support the Guidance [as needed], while monitoring and assessing the overall effectiveness of the program.

Teacher Evaluation and Professional Improvement Plan (new evaluation tool 2021-2022)

Teachers will participate in the Pennsylvania differentiated supervision model, through which all teachers will either 1) be observed regularly by their supervisor and members of the administrative team or 2) participate in action research.. All observations and action research projects will inform the final evaluation. If a teacher is found to need additional support, an improvement plan may be established, and the Professional Learning Coordinator and/or lead teachers assist with the implementation and analysis of the plan. The Professional Learning Coordinator and/or lead teachers can conduct virtual walk throughs to assess fidelity to the plan, provide ongoing coaching and support, and identify additional areas of improvement as needed

Each evaluation consists of four domains and important components about effective online teaching and learning. Each observation cycle will focus on one Domain (unless otherwise indicated) and the final observation will look at all four domains.

Teacher Mentoring Program and Induction Plan

Every new staff member meets frequently with the Professional Learning Coordinator. When possible, a mentor teacher is also provided. New staff members, or those who have not previously completed a formal induction program, are required to attend the monthly induction meetings. Only one absence is allowed for a successful completion of the program.

Travel and Lodging Expenses

Travel and Reimbursement will be handled on an individual basis and should be approved prior to the date of travel.

*** Federal and State law require the school to have many Board-approved policies on file for specific sub-groups of staff and students that do not impact the larger staff or student body. These other policies pertaining to specific students and staff may be found in the Supplemental Policy Handbook (Assistive Technology Policy, Positive Behavior Supports Philosophy, Surrogate Parent Policy, etc.)