Esperanza Cyber Charter School

EDUCATOR HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Contents

Educator Expectations

All teachers and staff will comply with the school Employee Handbook and the expectations as put forth in the Educator Handbook.

Protocols outlined in this handbook will govern some operational issues but will primarily focus on curriculum and instruction.

1. Please be prompt in your attendance, reporting to work on time.
2. Clock in and out of Paylocity 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 with best practices in online teaching and learning through the standards developed by iNACOL.
5. Educators 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. Co-teaching and professional collaboration are integral to the ECCS' teaching model. All educators must strive to develop collaborative relationships, investing in communication and joint classroom preparation.
7. Demonstrate professionalism always, refraining from using profanity or offensive language when communicating with others during school hours or sponsored events.

I read and understand my obligations as an Esperanza Cyber Charter School educator.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Copy this page and submit to your direct supervisor.

Mission Statement

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

> Esperanza Cyber Charter School will provide students with an academically rigorous yet flexible online learning program that tailors learning experiences to each child through a combination of curriculum choices and virtual tutoring and counseling. ECCS targets under-served and at-risk students who have not always found success in traditional schools. ECCS places students on a pathway to post-secondary success.

The founding entity established this mission, Esperanza, Inc. ("EI"), formerly Nueva Esperanza, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to creating Latinx-owned and operated institutions that lead to the familial, economic, and spiritual development of our community. After thirty years of working with Latinx families in North Philadelphia, EI is keenly aware that unemployment and inadequate education are significant problems. EI provides avenues for affordable housing, growing businesses, excellent schools, safe streets, creative spaces, and engaged community life to break this cycle. The Cyber School is a continuation of EI's desire to respond to the need for accessible schools that better meet the educational needs of the Latinx youth of Philadelphia and Hunting Park.

The Cyber believes in the fundamental ability of all students to learn, and we have designed the school with this in mind. We seek to set high standards and ambitious goals for all students by bridging educational gaps, reinforcing student self-esteem, and providing comprehensive support services. The Cyber staff undertake the essential responsibility of providing a safe and equitable learning environment that cultivates a growth mindset and empowers students to take the initiative.

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

Student Files & Access

Student files and their contents are confidential materials. Physical 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 or access to virtual files from one of the office staff. Physical files may be reviewed in the office area. ***Under no circumstances are student physical files to be removed from the office area.***

Supplies

A supply cabinet is located on the third floor and is restocked periodically. All staff are welcome to supplies. If you need something specific or if the cabinet is low in stock, contact Courtney Walton or the department Administrative Assistant. For any technical supplies contact Dan Schroeder and schedule a time to pick it up from the technology team. Note that if the items requested are out of the ordinary, they may need to be approved by administrators. Any purchase(s) not authorized by an administrator may not be reimbursed.

Teacher Computer Use

Teachers will abide by the [Acceptable Use/Internet Safety Policy](#) & Loan Agreement.

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 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 appropriately accommodates, modifies and/or differentiates the general education content according to the IEP goals, levels, and specially designed instruction. 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 must 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 Department will work collaboratively with teachers to ensure that all IEP documents are filed promptly, 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 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 must use a citation style for all research writing directed by their teacher. MLA is typically used for literary topics and APA for scientific ones.

Lesson Structure and Format

All teachers must display the information needed to align with the lesson format and structure as outlined by the supervisor during orientation and onboarding.

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. The 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 the link must be posted to the appropriate section of the class page in the LMS before 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.

Cameras

To create positive relationships with students and families, staff must have their live, real-time camera on whenever they are working with or scheduled to be with students. Staff should also keep themselves within the frame in a way that professionally centers their face with appropriate lighting. Showing our faces demonstrates availability and willingness to help and serve students.

Co-Teaching

ECCS is committed to creating an environment that promotes learning for all of our students.We are aiming to work with individual strategies to close the achievement gap and strengthen student proficiency, having the goal that all students master grade-level essential standards and benchmarks, as well as meet adequate yearly growth goals.

The adequate use of resources and effective learning strategies are important pieces of the puzzle that can help us meet the diverse needs of children in today's classrooms. For these reasons, we integrate co-teaching to achieve these goals.

Co-teaching Responsibilities

Co-teaching is an instructional delivery approach in which two educators with different knowledge, skills, and talents have joint responsibility, accountability, and mutual ownership for designing, delivering, monitoring, and evaluating instruction for a diverse group of learners.

Both teachers in the classroom work in a co-taught environment, and share the title of co-teacher. All of the following components are part of the teacher's formal evaluation:

- **In the Classroom:**
  - **BOTH** professionals in the classroom **are teachers**.
  - **ALL** classroom responsibilities will be divided among **BOTH** teachers.
  - A 50% division of responsibilities is recommended where both educators must be: teaching, contacting parents, opening breakout rooms, monitoring GoGuardian, etc. Intellectual as well as housekeeping duties are equally divided.
  - Professional contributions from both professionals are expected in every class.
  - Varied co-teaching approaches could/must be part of the class.
- **Co-planning:**

- ○ Co-planning must occur on allotted times, and both co-teachers must contribute to the lesson plan. The Google "version history" function confirms that all parties are contributing (if there is no co-planning, there is no co-teaching).
- ○ Lesson planning has to be turned in every Thursday using ONLY the approved lesson planning format provided at the beginning of the school year and must have the co-teaching part filled out and placed in the designated drive folder.
- ○ Timely lesson planning is a core facet of the co-planning process.
- **Professionalism:**
  - ○ Co-teachers must be able to cover classes in case of the absence of any member of the co-teaching team.
  - ○ A respectful and professional relationship is expected from both educators in the classroom.

Co-teachers who fail to meet minimum standards of professionalism will be brought into the office full-time or close to full-time.

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
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. To prevent students from inappropriate use when the teacher is not in the room, this page must not allow student permissions, such as chat, whiteboard permissions, etc.

LMS Design
Within the Learning Management System (LMS), 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 in a particular lesson. No more than one graded activity should be assigned in a given class daily.

Dealing with Student Discipline Issues
See Student Code of Conduct.

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 acknowledgment 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 are available to the parent if they request and legal subpoenas. Keep in mind the school office is an open space, and the confidentiality of student discussions should be maintained.

G-Chat

G-Chat is frequently used by ECCS staff to communicate with each other and students quickly. All staff and educators must respond to g-chats within 4 hours of receipt. All communication via g-chat should be kept professional and exclude confidential information or details that could quickly identify students and their personal information.

Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming Youth Policy

The Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming Youth Policy applies to anything on ECCS property; at ECCS-sponsored functions and activities; electronic technology and electronic communication in ECCS; on ECCS computers, networks, forums, & in mailings; and to the entire ECCS community: including educators, staff, students, parents, & volunteers.

Under the policy, educators are required to address students by their preferred name/pronouns (even if they have not legally changed them), use their chosen name/gender in all unofficial records, avoid using activities segregated by gender (if unavoidable, students should be included in the group corresponding to their gender identity), and always use gender-neutral language in written communication with students and families.

Suppose a student or parent requests a name or pronoun change in PowerSchool or other official/unofficial school records. In that case, educators must contact the enrollment team or complete a change of information form, including written proof of the request. If a student requests to keep the name change private from parents/guardians, educators should meet individually with the student to confirm student's safety and refer student to the Student Engagement Team for further support. For any concerns or questions about the Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming Policy, contact the Title IX Coordinator, Amber Mendoza.

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. Classroom teachers are 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 PowerSchool are required for every contact made about the student.

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

> 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 K-5

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

Grading for Class Assignments & 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 quarter and grades calculated on the work submitted at that time. Work will typically 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 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.

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:
- 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
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:

<u>Advanced</u> on state exam = A (95) in the course
<u>Proficient</u> 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

([Also see Parent Student 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 child maintains good attendance aligned in the school's Attendance Playbook. Absences from classes may impact student performance and disrupt mastery of content. Teachers should do their best to support and encourage students and parents to avoid unnecessary absences.

ECCS expects all students in all grades to attend school and participate in all scheduled live lessons 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. 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 meaning participation in main classes on all scheduled school days will be counted as a class absence. Failure to present meaningful participation in main classes on all scheduled school days will be counted as **No Engagement**. Failure to attend live lessons while logged into the

instructional delivery system will be counted as a **Class Absence.** ECCS will alert parents missed classes by email, text, and/or phone call.

Aligned with the Pennsylvania State Law regarding truancy (Act 138), the following protocol is used to monitor unexcused absences and truancy. Three unexcused **daily absences** will result in the student being identified as truant. Parents will be notified directly of truancy by the Attendance Department. 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 Department.

Sometimes incidents occur (emergencies, illness, appointments etc.) where legal documentation cannot be provided. Therefore, ECCS allows families to excuse a student's absence with a written notice throughout the school year up to 8 times. In an event where a student is unable to make it to school a parent/guardian will be able to provide a written note to excuse the student from school. ECCS will notify parents/guardians when a student reaches the max number of absences excused by written notice.

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:
- Completing this attendance excuse note form.
- By calling the school office in between 7:30 am and 4:00 pm at 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.
- Providing a written excuse note: Bring the note in to the office, mail the note to Esperanza

Cyber Charter School, Attention: Attendance Specialist, 4261 N. 5th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140, or attach the note to an email:

- Excuse Notes/Parent Questions Grades K-5: k-5attendance@esperanzacybercs.net
- Excuse Notes/Parent Questions Grades 6-8: 6-8attendance@esperanzacybercs.net
- Excuse Notes/Parent Questions Grades 9-12: 9-12attendance@esperanzacybercs.net

● Email all their teachers to let them know they will be absent. The student is not excused from school assignments and should plan to make up any work missed.

Truancy

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 truancies.

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.

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."

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
- 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 parent or gaurdian insists they wishes to speak with a specific administrator, then every effort should be made to satisfy their 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.

Student Retention
K-8 Retention
At ECCS, we believe in the value of a rigorous education where students earn their promotion to the next grade level. At the end of each school year, the principal considers on an individual basis all students who have failing grades on their report cards. If it is determined that a student is not ready for work at the next grade level, we may choose to retain that child at the same grade level for another year. Each case is unique, and the principal considers the child's academic achievement, which specific courses the child failed, as well as attendance, engagement, age, and any other factors that may impact students."

9-12 Retention
At the high school level, grade promotion is determined by the number of credits a student earns. Students earn credit by passing courses. Each full year course is worth one credit, and students are required by Pennsylvania law to earn 21 credits in order to receive a diploma. Students must earn at least 5 credits a year in order to be promoted to the next grade level. High school students who do not earn an adequate number of credits may not be able to graduate on time.

Professional Responsibilities

School-Sponsored Activities
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 Principal/Principal. Educators are required to attend all Professional Development Days, two nights of evening Parent-Teacher Conferences per quarter, and Open Houses. Additionally, educators must sign up for four of the following events during teacher orientation FunZones, graduation ceremonies, parent engagement nights, prom, or field day. Should there be a conflict, this must be discussed with the staff member's direct supervisor as soon as the staff member is aware.

State Testing
Parent/Guardian Test Review Procedure
In accordance with guidance on Keystones and guidance on PSSAs from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding PSSA and Keystone testing, parents may exercise their right to review test materials. After reviewing those test materials, parents have the right to opt out of state testing for their child.

The parent, guardian, or legally appointed caregiver shall take the following steps:

● Inform the CEO or their designee of their desire to review tests for their children.
● Work with the administration to determine a mutually agreeable in-person meeting time at the ECCS offices.
● Sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) promising to maintain test security
● Review test documents at ECCS in the presence of a member of the leadership team.
● If, after reviewing the test(s), a parent/guardian has a religious objection to the test, that parent/guardian must provide a written statement explaining that their child is not testing due to conflict with religious beliefs
● All of the above steps must be completed before:
  ○ The end of the test make-up window for PSSAs
  ○ The start of testing for Keystones
This PDE form combines the NDA and opt-out letter within one document.

The CEO or their designee shall take the following steps:

● Find a mutually agreeable in-person meeting time at the ECCS building. The meeting time must be convenient for the parent/guardian, but cannot be a virtual meeting.
● Ensure that the parent/guardian signs the NDA portion of the PDE form before sharing test documents.
● Provide copies of test materials that pertain to the student(s) that the parent represents.
● Supervise the review of those test materials at all times.

- Ensure test security. No copies, photos, facsimiles, handwritten notes, etc may be taken.
- Ensure that no students review a PSSA or keystone test on their own behalf.
- Collect and account for all test materials after the parent/guardian has reviewed them.
- If applicable, collect the completed opt-out form from the parent/guardian.

Testing Break/Interruption Procedure

In accordance with guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, PSSAs and Keystones should be conducted in a manner that minimizes the possibility of distractions and maximizes a positive testing environment for all students. That said, some interruptions are unavoidable.

Unscheduled Breaks

Students will be encouraged to use the restroom during scheduled breaks in between test sessions and before/after the testing day. Any student that needs a restroom break or a stretch/walking break during a test will alert their room monitor. The monitor will take the following steps to ensure that students are supervised at all times:

- Alert leadership that they are in need of another adult (hall monitor) to escort a child to the bathroom or for a brief walk.
- The hall monitor will escort the child to the restroom, and will wait outside the restroom. In general, our students do not need supervision inside a restroom. If a hall monitor feels there is a matter that requires closer supervision, they will contact ECCS leadership for additional help.
- In the event of a walking break, the escort will remain with the student for the entire walk.
- The hall monitor will escort the child back to the classroom.
- The room monitors and hall monitors will collaborate to ensure that only one (1) student leaves the classroom at a time.
- Room monitors should keep record of who leaves class, when they leave, and for how long. Any irregularities in student behavior should be immediately reported to the district testing coordinator (DAC)
- Students may not retrieve any electronic devices before heading to the bathroom. Students may not take backpacks or other belongings with them. Discretion is in order here, as some students may need to take hygiene items with them to the restroom.
- Hall monitors should ensure that students do not discuss any test related matters in the hallways.

Unscheduled Interruptions

ECCS will continue to follow internal board policy, policies of Nueva Esperanza, Inc, and best practices pertaining to prevention, mitigation, and response to all-hazards emergencies. Some best practices about hazards that occur during testing appear below. The district assessment coordinator (DAC), the school assessment coordinator (SAC), and ECCS leadership will make every effort to ensure that ECCS meets these conditions after an unscheduled interruption that forces a late start, early dismissal, or during-testing interruption.
- For any disruption or delay:
  - Staff and students will make every effort to maintain test security, pause testing, secure laptops, and other testing materials.
  - If evacuation becomes necessary, staff will make every effort to secure testing rooms before exiting.
  - In the event of an emergency, the DAC will contact PDE to complete appropriate irregularity reports.

- - If an emergency results in a breakdown of test security, the DAC will contact PDE to complete appropriate irregularity reports.
- In the event of an evacuation
  - Staff and students will safely exit the building
  - Staff will ensure that students do not discuss the test at the staging area while awaiting the all-clear.
- This section assumes that the all-clear is given and testing may resume:
  - The test module must be allotted at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted testing time
  - Lunch periods are adjusted as necessary to allow for at least 90 minutes
  - No new test modules start unless the remaining school day allows for at least 90 minutes of regular testing time.
  - Testing modules will continue to be administered in their proper order. That is, testing that is interrupted should be continued on the next business day, and all other testing events are pushed back accordingly.
- This section pertains to the need for extra testing time
  - If a majority or all students need extra time, other school activities, including lunch, should be postponed. Individual test modules should not be administered on both sides of a lunch period.
  - If a small group of students needs extra time, ECCS leadership will provide a suitable testing environment, plan for lunch to remain available for the small group, and ensure that students are supervised at all times moving to and from small group settings.
- Every effort will be made to maintain test security for all digital and print test materials. At no time will test security be more important than the safety of students and staff. Nothing in this document implies that adults or children should put themselves at risk in the interest of test security.

Student Health, Behavior, and Absence
If a student cannot or will not proceed with testing, ECCS leadership shall:

- Engage with the student, arrange for nursing, social work, and/or mental health intervention in the interest of helping the student get back to the test.
- If this proves imprudent or impossible, the student can exit school for the day in accordance with ECCS attendance policy.
- Students who are absent will have the opportunity to make up testing at another date within the testing window.
- Individual students can work out a testing schedule based on health needs through mutual agreement with the DAC; the schedule does not need to follow that of the majority of students. The agreed upon schedule must fall within makeup testing start and ends dates per PDE

Extended Absence
If a student cannot participate in PSSAs or Keystones within the allotted testing window provided by PDE:

- The child may not complete state testing during this calendar year
- In these cases, the DAC will handle this matter in accordance with the state guidelines for extended absences

Test Administrator/Proctor Absence

Sometimes, unforeseen circumstances will lead to absenteeism among the DAC, SAC, key members of the leadership team, and proctors and hall monitors. ECCS shall:

- Ensure that all key positions have a trained backup in place, including the DAC and SAC.
- Ensure that an adequate and fully trained substitute proctor and hall monitor list are available on each day of testing.
- On all days of testing, plans will be in place to ensure that absenteeism among ECCS employees at any level can be covered without interruption to the student experience. There should never be any erosion of our ability to supervise and serve students.

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
([See Employee Handbook](#))

It is essential to set good examples and be positive role models, both in-person at the school building and on-line in the virtual classroom by dressing in a professional manner at all times. It is easier to teach by precept and example than to expect students to do as we say and not as we do. We must first be practitioners of the principles and values we are trying to instill in them. Demonstrating respect for rules and regulations is one of the most important values. We must be good leaders first and then expect the students to follow our lead.

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 Principal 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 & Events

Periodically, field trips, community outings, or events will occur. All field trips and events must be cleared by supervisors and Director's of Instruction. Trip organizors must complete an [Event Approval Form](#), addressing the trips educational objective, location, and budgetary and transportation needs must be completed two months prior to the trip's date. An approval request will not be considered approved without the proper administrative approval or completion of the approval form.

The day before/after holidays and any PD days are blocked out for field trips. Please do not schedule any field trips during these times or get the appropriate administrative approval.

Event organizers are responsible for field trip permission forms. 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.

It is the responsibility of the educator 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 the Director of Operations for more information.

All monies accepted must be given a receipt (use the receipt book maintained by the Director of Operations.

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.

Work From Home
([Also see Employee Handbook](#))

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.

Educators can expect to have the option to work remotely from home offices except for professional development, NEI events, family engagement events, FunZones/Unplugged, and high-stakes testing. If unable to be onsite for the required days, staff members will need to use their PTO.

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)
([Also see Employee Handbook](#))

Scheduled PTO
- PTO can only be requested for a half day equalling 4 hours or a whole day equaling 8 hours.
- PTO requests are submitted through Paylocity 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 they 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.

- o Call your direct supervisor's school phone and leave a message and
- o Send an email to your direct supervisor
- o 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.

Reporting Child Abuse & Training
If you suspect child neglect or abuse, please report this to a social worker or school counselor and the Principal 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 3 hours. Provide updated certificates to the ECCS HR office.

Self-Inflicted Harm & Suicide
Per PA Act 79, all staff must complete a minimum of 4 hours of suicide prevention training every three years. Provide updated certificates to the ECCS HR office.

If a student discusses harm or suicide, notify a social worker or school counselor, and the Principal immediately. All ECCS school personnel are responsible for looking out for the well-being of students. This includes being sensitive to signs that a student might be experiencing mental health distress. The presence of a risk factor or belonging to a high-risk group does not guarantee that the student will engage in suicidal behavior. Some children show overt signs of suicidal risk, while some may show emotions and/or behaviors that make staff concerned about their well-being. While all ECCS personnel are not responsible for evaluating suicide, all ECCS staff are responsible for referring students to the principal or designee when a child presents with mood or behaviors of concern or self-refers.

Smoking & Vaping
Smoking, vaping, and/or the use of any tobacco product are prohibited in the school offices and on camera or within view of students or other staff. Anyone who does smoke, vape, or use tobacco products must not smoke in view of cameras when working remotely or leave the building and be off property when working in the office. Using discretion and respect for those around you while smoking, vaping, or using tobacco products is always expected.

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 Principal 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.

Staff are expected to have their cameras on during all virtual meeting events. This includes formal, recurring meetings, impromptu meetings, planning meetings, and all PD sessions.

Student Referrals & Support
Please note: The school <u>will not conduct</u> a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the state of Pennsylvania for child abuse investigations and reports. (consistent with § 445 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C.A. § 1232h) and in compliance with § 12.41(d))

Protocol for Student Referrals
Teachers are to contact the grade level counselor for all academic related matters and contact the Student Engagement Team for any social and emotional matters.

Child Study Team
The Child Study Team is a comprehensive team of stakeholders with the primary goal of formulating a unique plan that strategically uses resources and supports to ensure academic and/or behavioral stability. The team will include the school administration, the SET Team, the MTSS team, 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 support include but are not limited to daily reports, attendance monitoring, or behavioral modification plans.

During the Child Study process, the Guidance Department will play the leading role of initiating, organizing, facilitating, and collecting attendance and academic 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. The Child Study 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. The Child Study team will meet regularly under the direction of the Guidance Department.

Child Find Process
ECCS is required to conduct ongoing child-find activities to identify children who may be eligible for specialized services. This process is detailed in the ECCS Child Find Notice in the ECCS Supplemental Policy and Procedures document. The Child Find team will meet regularly under the direction of the Special Education Department.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)
The SAP Team is a systematic process used to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. SAP is designed to assist in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues that pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of the Student Assistance Program is to help students overcome these barriers so that they may achieve, advance, and remain in school. The Student Engagement Team will play the leading role of initiating, organizing, facilitating, and collecting all viable data to be used by the team. The school administrator and guidance will support the Student Engagement Team as needed while monitoring and assessing the overall effectiveness of the program. The SAP team will meet regularly under the direction of the Student Engagement Department.

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 [SAP Referral Form](#)
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 their findings.

Teacher Evaluation & Professional Improvement Plan
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 Principals, Assistant Prinsipals, or Instructional Coordinators will assist with the implementation and analysis of the plan. Additionally, virtual walk-throughs will be conducted to assess fidelity to the plan, provide ongoing support, and identify additional areas of improvement as needed. The Professional Learning Coordinators and coaches will offer additional coaching and support to reinforce the professional improvement plan goals.

Each evaluation consists of four domains and important components of effective online teaching and learning. Each observation lends information to a portfolio that, over time, provides data about the teacher's work in each domain over the school year.

Teacher Mentoring Program & Induction Plan
Every new staff member receives various opportunities for support and development which may include attending an onboarding program coaching, meeting with colleagues, attending Professional Development, and Induction. Per PDE, all teachers must complete an Induction program before changing certificates from Instructional I to Instructional II. Additionally, ECCS holds a mandatory Induction program for all teachers new to the school. Induction is an hour long and held monthly outside the regularly scheduled work hours. All coursework must be completed and only one absence is allowed for the successful completion of the program. The dates and times of Induction will be provided to staff during onboarding.

Purchasing Procedure
If you need a specific resource for your instruction, please discuss with the Director/Coordinator of Instruction. If approved for educational needs, please have the DOI assistant complete a purchase order through Microix. Once an order is assigned a purchase order number, the order can be made.

Reimbursement for Purchases
If an educational supply, material, or reimbursement for a purchase is needed, please submit an expense report and alert your supervisor of the need. Follow all instructions in the expense report

closely. An item purchased that did not receive prior approval will not be reimbursed. Often, items can be purchased through school vendors at a significantly lower rate.

Supplemental Policy & Procedures Notification

Federal and State law requires 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 about specific students and staff may be found in the Supplemental Policy Handbook. Included but not limited to: MTSS Program, School Safety Plan, Independent Evaluation, Confidentiality, Child Find, Assistive Technology, Positive Behavior, Surrogate Parent, Newly Enrolled IEP or ELD students, Litigation Hold, IEP and Grading, Family and Non-Family Visitation, Student Policy and Loan Agreement, Technology Resource Manual, and other policies and procedures as determined necessary by ECCS School Board.