



FLORENCE GARDENS CAMPUS
1234 ALPHABET ROAD
GULFPORT, MS 39503
228 539-1234

BAYOU VIEW CAMPUS
55 51ST STREET
GULFPORT, MS 39507

Parent/Student Handbook

2023-2024

ADMINISTRATION

Heather Blenden, Head of School
Malissia Chitwood, Preschool Director/Operation Manager at Florence Gardens
Amanda Kimball, Preschool Director at Bayou View

I AM HOPE ACADEMY.
I AM THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.
I WILL WORK HARD, BE COURAGEOUS AND PERSEVERE.
I WILL BE HAPPY AND SHOW KINDNESS AT ALL TIMES.
I AM HOPE ACADEMY.

HOPE ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

The hope and mission of Hope Academy is to inspire and prepare all students to realize their full potential as they develop a passion for life-long learning in a happy, safe and nurturing academic environment.

CORE BELIEFS

We believe that:

- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Each student is a unique individual, with his or her own defining qualities, special strengths and specific needs.
- A secure and nurturing environment allows students to learn and develop to their full potential.
- All programs should provide a rigorous, project-based, hands-on curriculum that encourages creativity and critical thinking.
- Opportunities and experiences should be provided that encourage the exploration of talent in music, art, drama, foreign languages, technology, athletics, leadership and more.
- A positive learning environment is necessary for students to accept in themselves and others the importance of dignity and self-worth.
- Placing the interests of students above all others in every decision we make is essential.
- Family commitment is fundamental to achieving and sustaining excellence.
- Everyone can be a leader.

OBJECTIVES

We strive to:

- Prepare students for academic achievement in secondary and post-secondary education.
- Maintain a safe and secure environment free of distractions.
- Cultivate a spirit of creativity and independent thinking in our students and teachers.
- Provide an innovative, college-prep curriculum that embraces the very best principles of teaching and learning free of the constraints associated with high-stakes state testing.
- Immerse students in the fine arts, foreign language, physical education, technology and leadership habits to provide a well-rounded education.
- Limit class sizes, thus allowing instructors to maximize learning opportunities for each student.
- Nurture confident public speakers and performers through participation in a variety of performing arts programs and Student Showcases.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Enrollment Age

Hope Academy will enroll students based on their birthdays throughout the school year. Students are eligible to enroll in PreK 2 on their second birthday. Students who turn 3 will be accepted into the Pre-k 3 program on the day of their third birthday if they are fully potty trained. Depending on their birthday and development, students may remain in PK2 or transition to the PreK 3 or TK-4 classroom at the beginning of the following school year or after their third or fourth birthday.

Immunizations

Upon registration, all students must provide the school with a Certificate of Immunization Compliance (Form 121).

Office Hours

Office hours are 7:45am-3:45pm daily. Please leave a message, if you call and there is no answer. We will return your call.

School Hours for Preschool Students:

School instruction for PK3 and TK4 starts at 8:25am and ends at 2:55pm. Students are tardy after 8:25am and must be checked in the office. PK 2 program begins at 8:45am and dismisses at 2:30pm. Students will not be permitted after 9am with the exception of a scheduled appointment and documentation turned in to the office.

Preschool Drop Off Procedures

Car Line drop off is reserved for students in Pre-k 3 and TK-4. Please use the breezeway to walk your child to the front office doors after 8:25am.

Dismissal for PK2 Students

PK2 students must be picked up and signed out from the classroom. They will not participate in the car rider line in the morning or during dismissal.

Loading Zone Regulations and Public Parking

- Maintain posted speed limits when traveling on campus.
- Campus speed limit is 5 mph.
- Do not block the school entrance or driveways.
- Do not pass other cars in the carpool line.
- Do not leave your car when it is in the carpool line.
- Follow the flow of traffic at all times.
- If possible, have children seated on the passenger side, so they may exit on the passenger side.

Pets on Campus

The school does not allow animals on campus without prior permission from the administration, with the exception of service animals.

Extended Care Services

Extended Care Services are available for an additional fee to Hope Academy students only.

- Early Care Program -Monday-Friday from 7:00- 8:00 am.
- After Care Program Monday-Friday from 3:15-5:30 pm.
- Extended Care fees are outlined in the enrollment contract. All children are charged at a rate of \$7 per hour. Family rate is \$10 per hour.
- **Extended Care Services will begin the Monday of the first full week of school.**
- Families with delinquent accounts will not be allowed to participate in extended care.
- There will be a fee of \$1 per minute after 5:30 pm that a child is not picked up. If necessary, the proper authorities will be notified for students who are not picked up from Extended Care by 6:00 pm.

Check-In/Checkout Procedures

All checkouts must be done through the school office. Photo identification may be requested, if a person is unfamiliar to our office staff. We encourage you to schedule your child's appointments after school hours whenever possible. Please notify your child's teacher of your checkout plans in advance whenever possible. Students must be signed in and out in the office. Late checkouts and check-ins are disruptive to dismissal preparation, thus **checkouts are not permitted within 30 minutes of dismissal time.**

STUDENT HEALTH POLICY

Communicable/Infectious Diseases

Hope Academy maintains a healthy environment by instituting controls designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. The term "communicable disease" shall mean an illness that arises as a result of a specific infectious agent that may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a susceptible host or infected person or animal to other persons.

Any student or employee with a communicable disease for which immunization is required by law or is available, shall be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognized periods of communicability. Students and employees with communicable diseases for which immunization is not available shall be dismissed from school while ill. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, Hope Academy may require an independent physician's examination of the student or employee to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease. Hope Academy reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to control the spread of communicable diseases within the school.

Hope Academy proactively prevents the spread of germs by wiping all surfaces that are commonly touched with germ-killing or germ-reducing products (bleach, Lysol, etc.). We also encourage children and staff to wash their hands regularly. Sanitizing stations and sinks are in each classroom and in common areas.

Notifiable Diseases/Illnesses

Parents are required to notify the Preschool Director of the notifiable illnesses, and in turn, she notifies the families of students who may have been in contact with the infected child.

Notifiable Diseases/Illness include the following: COVID, conjunctivitis (pink eye), encephalitis, hepatitis, influenza (flu) meningitis, diphtheria, high fever, diarrhea, lice, streptococcal, measles, mumps, rabies, rubella, acute respiratory infections (RSV), tetanus, tuberculosis, whooping cough, staphylococcus, pneumonia, any mosquito-borne illness (i.e. Zika, West Nile). Other illnesses that may arise and become a threat to the surrounding area may be added as needed.

Hope Academy follows CDC guidelines when responding to cases of notifiable diseases/illnesses.

Illness

All children who are sick must be kept at home. Sick children (fever of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, frequent trips to the office for illness, etc.) will be sent home from school. For fevers less than 100, the parent will be called to discuss the child's symptoms and the proper action to take for the welfare of the child and other students in the school. Students should be free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea without the aid of medication for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school. In some cases, a doctor's note may be required before the student returns to school. Students with an infectious condition, fever, or persistent runny nose, green mucus, cough, or sneezing should not be sent to school.

In addition, parents will be asked to pick up their child if he/she is found to have conjunctivitis (“pink eye”) or head lice.

Head Lice

In the case of head lice, the child will be readmitted to school only after he or she has been treated with the proper lice-killing shampoo and is checked in our office, as verified by a box top or receipt for the shampoo treatment. As required by law, the Harrison County Health Department will be notified by the Head of School when a child has the third occurrence of head lice.

Prescription Medication

If a child is to receive any prescription medication during the school day, the parent or guardian must have authorization on file in the office. The medicine to be dispensed will be kept in the office and dispensed according to the doctor's instructions. Medicine must be properly labeled. If your child requires medication during school hours, and we do not have a signed authorization, it will be necessary for you to come to school and personally give it to him or her. ***Teachers have been instructed to not dispense medication of any kind, nor should a student keep medication in his or her possession.*** If the office is to administer the medication, it will have to be in the original container labeled with the student's name and time of administration. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy container. The student or parent will be responsible for picking up any medicine that needs to be taken home before the office closes at 3:30pm. Medication must be brought to school in the original container with the appropriate label intact. If medication is not properly labeled, it will not be administered, and it cannot be left at school. No medication can be brought to school by students. Any medication to be sent back home at the end of the year must be picked up by the parent no later than June 1, or it will be disposed of properly. Please advise the school of any special requirements and/or treatments for allergies, seizure disorders or other medical needs.

Non-Prescription Medication

The school office does not dispense any nonprescription medicine other than Tylenol/Ibuprofen, hydrocortisone, antacids, or topical antibiotic cream (i.e. Neosporin). If a child is to receive any non-prescription medication during the school day, the parent or guardian must have authorization on file in the office. ***Teachers have been instructed not to dispense medication of any kind, nor should a student keep medication in his or her possession.*** If the office is to administer the medication, it will have to be in the original container labeled with the student's name.

Allergic Reactions

For an apparent allergic reaction, we will dispense Benadryl if the appropriate permission has been given.

Health Form and Certificate of Immunization

Mississippi law requires all students attending school in Mississippi for the first time to have a physical examination within the 12-month period prior to entering a Mississippi school. Mississippi law requires a physical examination and a certificate of immunization (Form 121) for all students. Forms are to be completed by your physician within the 12 month period prior to entering. Only a certificate of immunization is required for students entering preschool. No child may be admitted to class until this is completed as required by law.

Immunization Practices

Certificates of vaccination shall be issued by local health officers or physicians on forms specified by the Mississippi State Board of Health. These forms shall be the only acceptable means for showing compliance with these immunization requirements, and the responsible school officials shall file the form with the child's record.

If a child shall offer to enroll at a school without having completed the required vaccinations, the local health officer may grant a period of time up to ninety (90) days for such completion when, in the opinion of the health officer, such delay will not cause undue risk to the child, the school or the community. No child shall be enrolled without having had at least one (1) dose of each specified vaccine.

Up-to-date immunizations are required for all students. Parents should be familiar with all necessary immunizations required to attend school in the State of Mississippi. If immunization records are not available, you must get a Temporary Certificate of Immunization from the Harrison County Health Department.

Emergency & Health Information

An “Emergency & Health Information” form is completed with each online enrollment contract. If you need to make changes to the form after submitting your contract, please contact the Preschool Director. On the form, parents give or deny permission for the school to administer over-the-counter medicine, such as Tylenol, to a student. School personnel will NOT administer any over-the-counter medicine unless a parent has given permission on this form.

Notification of Illness and/or Accident

The school office will use information submitted through online enrollment to contact the parent or emergency contacts in the case of accident or injury. It is the parents’ responsibility to make sure the information is current. If your contact information changes (phone number, address, email address, or emergency contact lists), email the Preschool Director to make the change in FACTS SIS. This is not the same as FACTS Billing. Reports are to be completed by the supervising staff member when a student injury which requires first aid occurs.

Concussions and Head Injuries

A student who reports or displays any symptoms or signs of a concussion should be removed immediately from physical activity. An incident report will be completed by the supervising staff member, and the student’s parent/guardian will be contacted with the assistance of the director who will recommend that the student be evaluated by a licensed, qualified medical professional as soon as possible. Students will not continue to practice or return to play while still having symptoms of a concussion.

Doctor’s Request for Information

Occasionally doctors will ask teachers and school officials for information pertaining to the health, behavior, and academics of a child, which will be used to determine appropriate medical plans. When this information is requested, school employees must submit the information directly to the doctor’s office through email or regular mail. This information shall not be given to the parent to deliver to the doctor. The contents of this information is confidential, and shall only be given to the doctor with the consent of the parent.

VISITOR POLICIES

School Offices

The school office areas are designed to facilitate the efficiency and professionalism of the school, therefore, the office, supplies, and equipment may only be used by HA faculty and staff. When visiting the office, maintain low volume and use appropriate language as we commonly have students in the office, campus visitors, and phone calls.

Parent Conferences

Appointments with the Head of School, Preschool Director, and teachers should be scheduled in advance. If you wish to come to the school for a conference, we will do our best to accommodate your schedule. You may request a conference by sending a Remind text, note, or email directly to the teacher. **Please do not attempt to conference with a teacher during times that they are responsible for supervising or teaching students, particularly in the mornings.** Conferences will be scheduled for each student during the first and third terms of the academic year. However, parents are encouraged to request conferences more often, if the need arises. **Teachers are not allowed to**

use their cell phone during times that they are supervising children. Keep this in mind when communicating with teachers during school hours. Please avoid calling a teacher at home during the evening hours, as this is time spent with family.

Visitors

Hope Academy welcomes parents to visit the school; however, instructional time will be protected from undue interruptions or delays. Parents should arrange visits ahead of time whenever possible. Visits with students are limited to lunch, special programs, field trips or by appointment. Parents may not sit in class or participate in enrichment activities, such as recess. This is not conducive to learning or teaching.

Weapons Policy

Hope Academy prohibits the possession of firearms, knives, ammunition, explosive devices (including fireworks) weapons, and weapons-related items in any form by any person on school premises or at school functions, with or without an enhanced permit, except for commissioned law enforcement officers.

Tobacco Use

No person shall use or possess any tobacco or related product on any school property. School property means any school building, vehicle, campus, recreational area, athletic field or other property owned, used, or operated by Hope Academy being used for school-related purposes or during a school related activity. This includes actively smoking or vaping during the car line.

Safety

With the exception of drop-off and pick-up times, we will remain in a soft lockdown at all times. All exterior doors shall remain closed and locked. **All visitors must enter through the front office door at all times.**

Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

Hope Academy prohibits and does not tolerate sexual harassment or misconduct at school or at any school-related activity. Hope Academy provides procedures for employees, students, volunteers or any other victims of sexual harassment or misconduct to report such acts. Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed sexual harassment or misconduct will be appropriately disciplined.

Sexual Harassment Reporting Policy

Immediately report suspected sexual harassment or misconduct to the Head of School. Hope Academy will take all allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct seriously and will promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigate whether misconduct has taken place. Hope Academy will utilize an outside third-party to conduct an investigation of abuse or misconduct. Hope Academy will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective services agencies. Hope Academy will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved in the allegation as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation.

Bullying Policy

Hope Academy is committed to a safe educational environment for all students and employees, free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Any student or employee who feels that he/she has been a target of harassment or bullying or any parent or teacher who feels a child has been the target of harassment or bullying in school; on school property; or while participating in a school activity shall report the incident promptly, orally or in writing, to the Preschool Director. All complaints will be investigated by the Preschool Director and/or the Head of School. Depending on the nature of the offense, disciplinary action may be taken consistent with school discipline policies.

An allegation of harassment or bullying and the results of the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible under the investigation process. Witnesses and those interviewed shall be informed of the confidential nature of the investigation, and shall be informed that it will be a violation of this policy to disclose the

allegations or the nature of the investigation to others, and they will be subject to disciplinary action, if reasonable confidentiality is not maintained.

Bias Behavior

In the event it is found beyond reasonable doubt that an offense was committed by reason of the actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, national origin of the victim, consequences will be assigned based on the seriousness of the offense. This policy applies to all students, parents, school employees and visitors while on grounds, school sponsored activities, or while to and from school during field trips. Further action, as deemed necessary, may be taken under state statutes 99-19-301 and 99-19-307 of the Mississippi Code.

ACADEMICS

Curriculum

We will use the interactive Learning without Tears curriculum for preschool students, “Get Set for School.” The program teaches strong foundational skills such as letter sounds, phonological awareness, print etc. Supplemental materials will be used to enrich the students’ learning. Children will be offered daily hands-on sensory experiences and digital components while they are learning. Children in TK-4 will begin to explore the basics of handwriting development using the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum.

Schoolwide Enrichment Program

Students will be offered various daily learning experiences via classroom centers to incorporate leadership, library, art, music, technology/STEM, physical development and social skills. These opportunities will encourage growth in critical thinking skills, creativity, information literacy, success skills, social and emotional skills, and communication skills.

Student Showcase

The student body and teachers gather quarterly for a Student Showcase program during which the students sing, perform, hear important school and community news, share talents and information, and/or are recognized for achievements. Parents and visitors are encouraged to attend the Student Showcases. All beverages (especially hot drinks) should be in a covered cup at all times on school property. Please turn off all cell phones or set on vibrate/silence. Parents and visitors are asked to refrain from chatting during the Student Showcase. Students are not allowed to chat and everyone is asked to respect the presenter(s).

DISCIPLINE POLICY

General Code of Conduct for All Students at Hope Academy

Maintaining good discipline is a necessary precondition to establishing a school or a classroom climate that is conducive to learning. Children need discipline so that they can learn to get along with others and to understand that there are limits of acceptable behavior and consequences for unacceptable behavior. The purpose of discipline should be to guide children toward acceptable behavior and to teach them to make wise decisions when dealing with life's problems. Students should exhibit age-appropriate social and emotional development and behavior enabling them to function effectively in a classroom environment. The classroom rules reflect the appropriate behavior expected from the children in each classroom.

Discipline Procedures

Discipline is teaching children. Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief, Hope Academy uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following discipline and behavior management techniques.

We do:

- Communicate to children using positive statements (use positive language).
- Communicate with children on their level.
- Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner.
- Explain unacceptable behavior to children (separate the child from the behavior).
- Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- Praise and encourage the children.
- Reason with and set limits for the children (redirect behavior).
- Apply rules consistently.
- Model appropriate behavior.
- Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
- Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.
- Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires and feelings.
- Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

We do not:

- Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.
- Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.
- Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.
- Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- Embarrass any child in front of others.
- Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

All discipline issues will be documented and parents will be informed of the issue with a phone call or written on a daily discipline form. Conferences will be scheduled with parents if particular disciplinary problems occur. If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate child care services for that particular child.

Biting

From time to time young children bite as a result of frustration or lack of verbal skills. If this happens, first aid will be given and the "biting child" will have their attention redirected. Parents will be contacted and an incident report will go home to both children (the child who bit and the child who was bitten) and a copy will be placed in their files.

When biting occurs, Hope Academy will use the following policy:

- First offense: Parent notified and child's attention redirected.

- Second offense: Parent called and child removed from classroom for that day.
- Third offense: Parent called and conference scheduled to discuss future prevention.

Suspension from school and termination may ultimately result if a child continues to bite, but will only be used as a last resort. Verbal and written notice will be provided to parents in this event.

DRESS CODE

General Information

Please refer to the Uniform Policy for additional guidelines. The Uniform Policy is available on the website and in the enrollment contract. The goal of the Hope Academy uniform policy is to have our entire student body look neat and be comfortable while at school. Parents should help their child maintain a neat appearance. Uniforms shall be clean and well-maintained. Please replace items that become faded, frayed, torn, or stained. These guidelines apply to events on campus and at HA-related events off-campus (e.g., dances, games, field trips, performances, etc.). Preschool students may wear any outerwear from home.

For assemblies, showcases, field trips, and special programs shirts must be tucked in and include the Hope Academy Hawk logo. No T-shirts may be worn on Showcase Days. Shorts and pants must be khaki. LEGGINGS and OUTERWEAR must be solid, neutral colors. No logos, prints, stripes, screen print, or glitter is allowed on leggings or outerwear. Colors are limited to royal blue, black, white, nude, or gray for leggings and outerwear. Printed leggings are not permitted.

Shoes may be any flat, soft-soled, closed toe, heel-closed shoes. Athletic shoes are most suitable for school because students participate in recess daily. Soft-soled, flat boots may also be worn during the winter months, but must be a solid, neutral color.

Preschool Shirts

Preschool students wear light blue or white polo-style shirts with the Hope Academy logo embroidered on the left breast pocket area in royal blue. Peter Pan style shirts are also acceptable for girls. Girls may wear a light blue knit dress with the Hope Academy logo. Shorts must be worn under dresses and jumpers.

Spirit T-shirts that display the Hope Academy logo are allowed on Fridays, except on Showcase days.

Boys: Khaki shorts or pants are to be worn by boys. Hair should be kept neat and clean. Hairstyles/hair-colorings that are extreme or designed in any unusual manner, in the opinion of the administration, to distract or draw attention will not be permitted. Artificial hair color is not permitted. There must be no designs, names, or lines cut into the hair. Boys may not wear earrings.

Girls: Girls may wear khaki shorts, pants, skirts, skorts, or jumpers. Jumpers must have the Hope Academy logo monogrammed on the left breast. Modesty shorts are required under skirts and jumpers. Small earrings may be worn, while dangling earrings are not permitted for safety reasons. Artificial hair color is not permitted, including clipped-in hair extensions.

MISCELLANEOUS

Room Representative/Parent

The classroom teacher will identify and ask a parent to serve as Room Representative. The teacher will provide the Room Representative/Parent with contact information of all classroom parents. The teacher will communicate with the Room Representative/Parent regularly. The Room Representative/Parent will help coordinate class events, such as parties.

Birthdays

School birthday celebrations should be simple. The school is not the place for elaborate and costly birthday parties. Birthday decorations are not permitted. You may send a treat and/or treat bag in for each classmate. Due to allergies, no latex balloons at school, please.

Private Parties

Birthday invitations may be distributed at the school only if the entire class is invited to the party, or if all the girls or all the boys are invited to the party. The school copier may not be used for party invitations. Students may not pass out invitations/fliers for parties of students that do not attend Hope Academy.

Field Trips

All field trips require the Head of School's prior approval. A parent or guardian must sign the permission slip and return it to school by the date indicated on the permission slip. Hope Academy does not provide mass transportation (i.e. bus), so parents and teachers assist with transportation through personal vehicles. The teacher(s) and director have the authority to govern the field trip including students, chaperones and other family members.

As a general rule, all individuals who attend field trips should be connected to Hope Academy as a teacher, student family member, or teacher's family member.

Adults attending field trips shall not be permitted to consume alcoholic beverages, use foul language or to smoke/vape during the trip. Violation of this policy will result in action by the Board of Directors of Hope Academy.

Deliveries to Students

Please do not send flowers, candy, balloons, or gifts of any kind to students at school. These items will not be delivered to a student's classroom.

Toys/Electronic Games at School

Students should not bring toys, electronic games, or other such items unless instructed to do so by a teacher. These items are a distraction and could get lost or broken during the school day. Hope Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

Inclement Weather Policy

While Hope Academy generally follows the Gulfport School District's lead with regard to school closure due to inclement weather, decisions regarding the closing of school will be made on a case-by-case basis. Hope Academy will post school closings on Facebook and send notifications via Remind messaging. (Please note: There is a difference between the Gulfport School District and the Harrison County School District.)

In case of inclement weather, the safety of the students is of utmost importance to Hope Academy. Ultimately the decision to remain at home or report to school in bad weather is best determined by the parent/guardian. Our families travel from a variety of neighboring cities, and it is not uncommon for the weather to be different from one area to another. When necessary, decisions regarding school cancellations will be announced no later than 6:30am on the morning of school.

Additionally, if inclement weather poses a risk later in the day, we will make a call no later than 12:30pm to cancel after school activities, including the provision of extended care. In rare circumstances, we may call upon parents to pick up their children earlier than the scheduled dismissal time in order to ensure that all students and faculty have time to travel safely home ahead of dangerous weather. In all of these cases, information will be communicated through Remind text and Facebook.

School-wide/Class-Wide Messages

Parents or students may not distribute notes, invitations, letters, announcements, business solicitations, fundraising solicitations, etc. without the approval of the teacher, preschool director, and Head of School.

Teacher Requests

Hope Academy will consider parent requests for a particular teacher in grades where more than one teacher is available. However, the request is not guaranteed.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Hope Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Finance Office

Hope Academy's Finance Office is located off campus and can best be reached through email at financeoffice@hopeacademyfg.org. The Preschool Director and the Head of School are not able to answer billing questions, process requests for cancellations, payment plans, etc. All such questions and requests must be submitted to the Finance Office. The Preschool Director nor the Head of School have access to billing information, nor do they have the ability to stop payment, change payment dates, cancel contracts, refund money, adjust accounts, etc. The Finance Office staff is also available for on campus meetings by appointment. Parents/Guardians should email the Finance Office to make an appointment.

Contract

An Enrollment Contract must be completed and electronically signed by the financially responsible person (typically a parent/guardian) of each student. A copy of this contract is available through FACTS or will be provided upon request. For more information concerning tuition and fees, available payment plans, and other financial policies please refer to the Student Enrollment Contract in FACTS. Any requests for contract cancellations must be submitted through the finance office via email at financeoffice@hopeacademyfg.org. The finance office will submit the request to the Hope Academy Board for consideration. Requests for contract cancellations could take up to 30 days to process.

Tuition and Fee Payment

Please make all tuition and fee payments through FACTS or by checks payable to Hope Academy. Financially responsible parties who complete the enrollment contract online must also complete the FACTS billing portion of the enrollment process, even if they plan to pay by cash or check. All fees, tuition, etc. may be combined on one check with the exception of meal payments. Tuition (all payment plans), extended care, lunch, extracurricular activity fees, and field trip payments may be made through FACTS, an online tuition payment processing program. Hope Academy encourages the use of FACTS for making payments. A FACTS account will provide you with easy access to view account details, such as, payment history, balances due, due dates, lunch account balances, annual statements for tax purposes, etc. (NOTE: an annual fee is charged by FACTS to the parent to use this service). Hope Academy cannot process credit or debit card payments on campus. Card payments may only be processed through your FACTS account.

Extended Care Services

Extended care services are charged to the parent/guardian at a rate of \$7.00 per hour. Family rate is \$10 per hour. For purposes of calculating extended care charges, time is collected from the sign in sheets. Time is accrued daily and is rounded up to the nearest 15 minute increment. Time collection records will be kept, and can be reviewed by parents/guardians upon request.

Lunch

Lunch money may be added to your student's lunch account using FACTS or by paying by check in the office. If paying in the office, please clearly indicate the student's name and that the payment is being made for lunch, to be certain these funds are correctly credited to the student's lunch account. A lunch count will be taken by school staff and the charge will be deducted from the student's lunch account for each meal. Students who have delinquent lunch accounts or no money in their prepaid lunch account must bring their lunch. Preschool lunches are \$4 each. Lunch fees **shall be paid ahead of time**, preferably using FACTS or by check. Menu options vary from time to time and will be sent home on monthly pre-order forms. Students are required to bring their lunch on days that they have not prepaid or pre-ordered lunch. Refrigerators and microwaves are not for student use.

Collections

Please adhere to payment due dates. Delinquent accounts are reviewed by the Hope Academy Board of Directors. Should a tuition payment not be received within 15 days from its due date, Hope Academy has the right to assess parents a service charge of \$20 for each delinquent payment. Should a tuition payment not be received within 20 days from its due date, the parents shall be in default of the Enrollment Contract. Parents that are in default of the Enrollment Contract will be subject to notification from Hope Academy stating their child will not be permitted to return to school until said amount is paid. If a parent becomes delinquent on extended care payments, the use of Extended Care services may be suspended until all past due balances are paid. All tuition and fees, including fees for Extended Care services and other incidentals must be paid before a student may participate in end of year parties, ceremonies, and/or preschool graduation.

Solicitation/Money

As a general rule, neither students nor parents are allowed to solicit funds or sell fundraising items for groups such as ball teams, scout troops, church groups, etc. on school grounds. Students should not bring money to school unless a parent or teacher establishes the purpose.

Collecting Money from Students

The classroom teacher, preschool director, or office manager will write a receipt for all cash collected for school related purposes for \$5.00 or more (field trips, school pictures, programs etc.). All requests for funds must be pre-approved by the Head of School or preschool director.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

PTO gives parents and teachers the opportunity to work together to enrich and supplement the educational experience. PTO is a strong ally to HA's Faculty by supporting the school's goals to nurture creativity, shape scholars, and inspire leaders. PTO is led by an elected board and depends fully on volunteers from our students' families and our community. All family members-moms, dad, grandparents, etc. are encouraged to get involved in PTO. PTO plans and executes annual events and fundraisers, such as Garden Gala, Fall Festival, Parent Breakfast, Veterans' Day Breakfast, Grandparents' Day Breakfast, and so much more! Room parents are also part of the PTO. PTO funding is kept separate from the operating budget of Hope Academy, so it is important to work directly with PTO if there are PTO fundraising opportunities or concerns. PTO can be reached via email at PTOuser@hopeacademyfg.org.

Fundraising Activities

Each year, the Hope Academy PTO conducts special events to generate funds for the school. These fundraisers help to minimize tuition increases and provide financial support for many of our unique programs. Moreover, these projects provide an opportunity for our Hope Academy family to work together for the benefit of the school. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in fundraiser activities by making a financial contribution and/or volunteering. All fundraisers require the Head of School's approval. Fundraising activities rely on the support of all Hope Academy families. A high level of commitment is expected and necessary from all stakeholders for the fundraisers to be successful.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Parent/Guardian:

I have had the opportunity to review the material contained in the Hope Academy Student-Parent Handbook through the school website. I understand that I may request a printed copy from the office. I also understand and agree that my child and I will be held accountable for the policies, procedures, behaviors, and consequences outlined in this handbook.

Student Name (please print)

Date

Parent or Guardian (please print)

Signature of Parent or Guardian

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Terms and Conditions for use of Hope Academy internet services included in the handbook. I understand that these privileges are designed for educational purposes. I will not hold Hope Academy responsible for material acquired or problems related to the use of the material required on the internet.

I hereby give my permission for my child to utilize Hope Academy internet services information that will be obtained by the teacher and certify that the information contained on this is correct. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision of and when my child's use is not in a school setting.

Student Name (please print)

Date

Parent or Guardian (please print)

Signature of Parent or Guardian

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RELEASE FORM

In order to promote student achievement and Hope Academy, we may use photos and videos of our students on our website, our Facebook page, in the newspaper, and/or other media outlets. Please complete the form below to indicate whether you give permission for us to use your child's photo.

_____ Yes, I give permission for my child's photo or video to be used on the Hope Academy website, Facebook page, in the newspaper, and/or other media outlets.

_____ No, I do not give permission for my child's photo or video to be used on the Hope Academy website, Facebook page, in the newspaper, and/or other media outlets.

Child's Name _____

Grade _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____