FAMILY HANDBOOK
2025-2026

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"The mission of Paul Public Charter School is to educate our scholars and to develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers, and leaders."

Paul PCS functions more smoothly and effectively for students, families, faculty, and staff when the requirements and expectations of the school are clear. The Family Handbook has been written to provide you with information on the policies, procedures, practices and expectations associated with being a student at Paul PCS. Please review the Handbook in its entirety. By being a fully-informed parent, you are better prepared to support your child and to actively participate in the Paul PCS Community.

Greetings Paul Students, Families, and Friends,

I am excited to welcome you to what promises to be a dynamic year of growth and learning for our students. As the CEO of Paul PCS, I am eager to continue the work of growing the legacy of excellence started by our founder, Mrs. Cecile Middleton. Our staff members have spent the Spring and Summer of 2024 preparing to receive our students, working to solidify, refine and expand our academic and social-emotional programming and developing an instructional and engagement strategy that will yield positive growth for our students in both in-person and virtual environments.

We are striving to make Paul PCS the highest performing charter school in the country. We will accomplish this through the implementation of our school model, the emphasizing of academic rigor and by ensuring all Paul PCS students exhibit the tenets associated with being a M.E.R.I.T. Scholar.

Every member of our faculty and staff is committed to providing every Paul PCS student with the skills, knowledge, and personal integrity required for future academic and career success. We know you share that goal for your child(ren) and are honored that you have chosen Paul PCS. I wish you all a wonderful school year and look forward to working together!

In Service,
Dr. Tracy L. White,
CEO, Paul PCS

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PAUL PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

2025-2026 Academic Calendar

August '25

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

September '25

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

October '25

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

November '25

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

December '25

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

January '26

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

February '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March '26

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

April '26

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

May '26

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

June '26

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

July '26

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

Beginning of Advisory
School Closed for Staff and Students
PD for All Staff (School Closed for Students)
New Staff Orientation
Student Led Conferences (12:15pm dismissal)
End of Advisory (12:15pm dismissal)

Total Days in SY2025-2026: 180

First Day of School: August 18, 2025
Last Day of School: June 12, 2026

Days in Advisory 1: 46
Days in Advisory 2: 47
Days in Advisory 3: 41
Days in Advisory 4: 46

Instructional Hours

MS Monday- Thursday 8:00AM- 3:40PM
HS Monday- Thursday 8:15AM- 3:30PM

MS & HS- Friday 8:00AM- 1:30PM

MERIT SCHOLAR EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

It is the policy and expectation of Paul PCS that every student maintains regular and consistent school attendance. A student's absence from school may be excused for the following documented reasons:

1. Illness or other bona fide (legitimate) medical cause experienced by the student (**documentation may be required at the discretion of the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy**)
2. Exclusion, by direction of DC authorities, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other conditions requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons. (**documentation may be required at the discretion of the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy**)
3. Medical or dental appointments for the student(**documentation may be required at the discretion of the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy**)
4. Death in the student's family
5. Necessity for a student to attend judiciary or administrative proceedings as a party to the action or under subpoena
6. Observance of a religious holiday
7. Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by school authorities
8. Temporary suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other condition(s) or emergency requiring a suspension of classes
9. Failure of DC to provide transportation in cases where there is a legal responsibility for the transportation of the student
10. Absences to allow students to visit their parent or a legal guardian who is in the military during, immediately before, or immediately after deployment (documentation may be required at the discretion of the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy)
11. An emergency or other circumstances approved by an educational institution. (documentation may be required, Approved by the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy)

All notes and documentation for absences must be shared immediately with the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy. If excuse notes or documentation is shared after the 5th day of an absence the day(s) can not be excused.

Event Eligibility and Attendance Requirements

In order to maintain high expectations for all scholars, attendance is a key factor in eligibility for school events. Scholars are expected to attend school consistently and meet the following requirement:

Any scholar with an attendance rate below 95% at the time of a school event will not be permitted to attend.

This policy applies to all school events, including but not limited to:

- Prom
- Graduation
- School dances
- Field trips
- Milestone celebrations

Scholars and families will receive regular updates on attendance data and will be notified in advance if attendance jeopardizes participation in upcoming events.

We encourage all families to prioritize attendance as part of a scholar's academic success and full engagement in the school community.

What is an unexcused absence?

Any absence that does not fall into one of the excused categories, as defined by your child's school, including the excused categories listed above, is an unexcused absence. Also, any absence that is not timely reported to the school by the parent or guardian is an unexcused absence. DC Code § 38-203(c)(2)

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic Absenteeism is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason, including **unexcused and** excused **full and partial** absences. There are 180 school days in the school year. Chronic absenteeism has a negative impact on scholar success in school.

Recovery Attendance Impact

Paul PCS wants to emphasize that Attendance Matters and impacts a student's academic performance. Scholars that are truant, 25 unexcused absences, or chronically absent will not be eligible for summer school.

Daily Block Attendance Policy

At Paul Public Charter School, consistent attendance is essential for academic success and on-time graduation. High school students earn course credit based on both academic performance and meeting minimum seat-time requirements.

Any scholar who accumulates more than 25 unexcused absences in a specific course will not be permitted to attend summer school to make up that course if they fail it. Instead, the scholar will be required to retake the course during the following school year (SY25–26).

This policy ensures that all scholars meet the necessary instructional time required for high school credit and graduation, in alignment with local education regulations and Paul PCS expectations.

Half Day Attendance

All students are required to attend school on half days. These days are considered official instructional days and count toward the required number of school days. Missing school on a half day without an approved excuse will result in an unexcused absence, which may negatively impact a student's attendance record and academic standing.

Timely Absence Explanations

Paul Public Charter School will make every effort to contact families when a scholar is absent. However, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide documentation for the absence within 5 days. Parents must provide an explanation for each absence on the day of the absence, but no later than five days after the absence. Absences will remain unexcused if the parent fails to provide an explanation per or if the explanation or if it is provided after five days of the absence. Without proper documentation, the absence will be marked as unexcused.

Failure to provide explanations, and/or the accumulation of excessive absences without official documentation, will result in the actions described in the chart below as **required by OSSE**:

Number of Absences	Resulting Actions
3 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of three absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student.
5 **unexcused absences** (each advisory)	• The school administrative team will schedule a mandatory attendance impact meeting with the parent or primary guardian of the student.
5 absences (each advisory) - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial**	• The student's grades for each class they have amassed 5 absences in, over the course of an advisory, will be lowered by one full letter grade.

absences (present less than 60% of the day)	

Failure to provide explanations, and/or the accumulation of excessive absences without official documentation, will result in the actions described in the chart below as **required by Paul Public Charter School**:

Number of Absences	Resulting Actions
5 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of five absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student. • **The only exception to this policy is if formal, validated documentation from a physician or court agency is submitted to the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy excusing the student's absences.**
7 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of seven absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student.
10 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of ten absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student.
10 **unexcused absences** (Year to Date)	• **The school will refer to Child and Family Service Agency (CFSA) and the Truancy Division for Educational Neglect and Truancy any student who has excessive unexcused absences that violate the District's attendance law. District of Columbia law requires the school to refer to CFSA any student age 5-13 years within 2 business days after 10 unexcused absences.** • **High School and Middle School students will be referred to a community based program such as the PASS Program to support attendance concerns.** • The school administrative team will schedule a mandatory attendance impact meeting with the parent or primary guardian of the student.

Number of Absences	Resulting Actions
10 absences (each advisory) excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• Students will fail all classes that they accumulate 10 or more **excused or unexcused** absences in during an advisory period. • **The only exception to this policy is if formal, validated documentation from a physician or court agency is submitted to the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy excusing the student's absences.**
15 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of fifteen absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student.
15 or more **unexcused absences** (Year to Date)	• District of Columbia law requires the school to refer to Truancy Court Social Services any student age 14-17 within 2 business days after 15 unexcused absences. Students under the age of 14 will be referred to the ATTEND Program via DC Superior Court. • The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of fifteen absences year to date**.**
20 absences year to date - excused/unexcused**, and excused/unexcused partial absences (present less than 60% of the day)**	• The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will send a notice of concern regarding the accumulation of twenty absences year to date and will schedule a mandatory conference with the parent or primary guardian of the student. • **The only exception to this policy is if formal, validated documentation from a physician or court agency is submitted to the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy excusing the student's absences or the discretion of the CEO.**
20 consecutive **unexcused absences**	• Students amassing 20 or more consecutive, unexcused absences will be dropped from attendance at Paul PCS. They will also be ineligible for future enrollment.
Recovery Attendance Impact	• Paul PCS wants to emphasize that Attendance Matters and impacts a student's academic performance. Scholars that are

	truant, 25 unexcused absences, or chronically absent will not be eligible for summer school.
Retention due to Attendance	● Any scholar that has **25+ unexcused absences** will automatically be retained for SY24-25. Scholars with 25+ unexcused absences have not demonstrated mastery of skills necessary for promotion of the next grade.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of outreach and consequences connected to Attendance to school.

Arrival

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe that timeliness is a reflection of responsibility and demonstrates a sense of urgency for learning for our MERIT scholars. Daily, on-time attendance helps students start the day with focus and intention, setting the tone for excellence.

Students may begin entering the building as early as 7:45 AM each school day. Arriving by 7:45 AM ensures they have enough time to properly put away technology such as cell phones and headphones and prepare for the start of their school day.Middle School, First period begins promptly at 8:00 AM and High School, First period begins promptly at 8:15 AM.

Arrival Process

This process is -systematic and each step is critical to follow. Failure to comply can cause a breakdown in the safety system - and could result in a consequence for the scholar., -

- Scholars are required to be in a line- up outside in full uniform by 7:45am
- The doors for both schools - open at 7:45am.
- Staff will narrate what is expected of scholars, including requests to be in uniform, directions required for electronic devices and phones and expectations for food and beverages. Scholars are not able to bring in any open containers or beverages, this includes water. -
- Scholars will be asked to empty their pockets and place their bookbags, coats, and all non-Paul items on the conveyor belt. Hand searches can occur as deemed necessary by -security
- Scholars are to remove belts and anything metal from their waist, pockets or on their person prior to walking through the X-ray machine.
- Once through the x-ray machines scholars will be asked to grab all their belongings from the table.
- Scholars will have the opportunity to get breakfast before going to class. -

- Scholars that come in Tardy, after first block, without an excuse note for their tardy arrival will be directed to Tardy Hall
- -

Prohibited Items:

- Scholars can not bring in open beverages including water bottles or food containers, they are asked to finish all drinks and food prior to entering the building.
- Scholars cannot bring outside food, i.e. McDonald's, Starbucks, Popeyes in the building. They will be asked to complete the food before entering the building or it will be discarded.
- Plastic reusable water bottles must arrive empty (No ice and water allowed). Scholars will have access to the school's water fountains with a filtration system. Scholars are not allowed to bring STANLEY or that style of container into the building.
- Scholars cannot bring large quantities of snacks in the building. Large quantities of food will be confiscated and discarded.
- No glass bottles, no glass perfume or cologne allowed in the building.
- No edge brush with a pointy tip allowed or hair gel.

Tardy to School

Scholars that arrive at school Tardy will attend Tardy Hall, they will remain in this space for the entirety of their first block, where a parent or guardian will be contacted and the scholar will complete a reflection. They will be marked absent from their first block class. Scholars that continue to be excessively tardy will face additional disciplinary actions.

Scholars whose grades are impacted by excessive tardiness will not be eligible to take the course during summer school. In addition, academic grades for the advisory will be lowered for scholars who accumulate a designated number of absences, this includes absences that are a result of being tardy to school. See the "Number of Absences-Resulting Action" Chart on pg. 12-14 for details."
Students are tardy if they are not in their seats by 8:00am (MS) and 8:15am(HS). Tardy hall for both schools is - for the entire block 9:40am (Block 1).

Excused Tardies

At Paul Public Charter School, we expect all scholars to arrive by 7:45 AM to ensure they are prepared for the start of their first class. Scholars who arrive after the start of the first block are considered tardy and may be required to attend Tardy Hall, if the tardiness to school is unexcused.

We recognize that on occasion, there may be valid reasons why a scholar is late. In these cases, a tardy may be excused if it meets specific criteria and is properly communicated to the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy.

Process for Requesting an Excused Tardy

The parent or guardian must contact the Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy and provide official documentation of an appointment, metro/bus/rail issues or the emergency that has caused the Tardy arrival to school.

Reasons That May Be Considered Excused

The following reasons may qualify as **excused tardies**:

- Verified **medical appointments** (with note from doctor or clinic)
- **Personal illness** (with parent/guardian communication)
- **Family emergency** (e.g., death in the family, hospitalization)
- **Transportation delays** beyond the scholar's control (e.g., WMATA service interruption with proof-this would impact the school as a whole)
- **Court appearance** (with official documentation)
- **Religious observance**
- **Safety concerns** (e.g., scholar felt unsafe traveling to school and this is communicated to staff)

Please note: Oversleeping, traffic, missed rides, or running late without a valid reason are not considered excused tardies.

The Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy will confirm with the Parent/Guardian if the scholar will be excused from Tardy Hall as well as the Tardy to School is excused.

Dismissal

Dismissal is a calm, safe, and structured end to the day where all scholars are dismissed in an orderly manner under active staff supervision, reinforcing high expectations, minimizing conflict, and supporting a respectful school culture that extends into the community.

- Schools will dismiss by grade level or Crew
- Staff will narrate the expectations during dismissal as well as safe passage so that scholars are meeting expectations in the community. -Scholars will have transition time to go to their lockers at the end of the day to gather belongings and will also retrieve technology including cell phones.
- Scholars will be escorted by staff from their lockers and classes out of the door and encouraged to go straight home
- Scholars are not allowed to remain on school grounds unless participating in a club, with a staff member or on an athletic team.

Early Dismissal

In-School Pick Ups

Only a parent, guardian, or other authorized person designated in writing by a parent or guardian and entered in PowerSchool may pick up a student from school. The parent, guardian, or other authorized person must provide proper identification, such as a driver's license or non-driver's identification card to pick up the child and follow instructions provided by staff. Any parent, guardian or other authorized person who seeks to pick up a child before dismissal time must come to the Main Office/ Main Lobby to request the child to be called for early dismissal. Students will not be called to the office before the parent, guardian or other authorized persons arrives in the Main Office/Main Lobby.

Early Dismissals will not occur after 2:30pm. This policy is to ensure that Paul staff can prepare for dismissal and ensure safety of all scholars.

Street Passes

Paul PCS will no longer issue courtesy Street Passes for all scheduled appointments, illness and emergencies. All parents and guardians will need to follow the protocol for In-school Pick Ups. This means that parents/guardians or an approved adult will have to come in and pick the scholar up for all scheduled appointments, illness, emergencies. Parents must contact the registrar, Ms. I. Carlo to add authorized designees to the school pick up list. Ms. Carlo can be reached at icarlo@paulcharter.org.

No student is allowed to sign themselves out of the school building for early dismissal, even if they are over the age of 18.

Virtual Friday

Virtual Friday Expectations

Paul PCS has designated specific Fridays as *Virtual Fridays*. On these days, scholars are expected to attend all of their scheduled classes virtually and fully participate, just as they would during in-person learning. Scholars are expected to be in a stationary location and not in transit. Scholars are expected to have their cameras on at all times and in uniform (Paul Shirt). Any scholar having a camera off poses a safety issue for the organization and all other scholars in the link. Therefore, teachers must be able to see the scholar's face and must be in a position to respond. When asked questions scholars must answer via chat and/or come off mute. Scholars that do not answer or have their cameras off without permission will be removed from the class. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the principal for unique circumstances.

Virtual Friday Attendance

Attendance and engagement are required and will be monitored. Scholars are expected to arrive to all classes on time. Teachers will take attendance at the start of each class and multiple times throughout the period to ensure virtual participants remain present and actively engaged. Scholars who are absent from class on virtual days will be subject to all absence enforcement actions as described in the section above.

Scholars who do not attend three Virtual Fridays will be required to come to our building to take their virtual classes, supervised by a staff member. If a scholar doesn't attend in-person learning after being required, a parent will be required to attend a meeting to discuss scholar expectations. Scholars with persisting technology and attendance issues will be required to attend classes in the building.

Failure to meet behavior expectations for our virtual setting will result in a documentation in Powerschool and a consequence will be assigned. Scholars are expected to be present in all assigned classes and virtual spaces as well as follow the hierarchy of responses.

If scholar attendance does not meet 92% or higher virtually the school will reconsider Virtual Friday and all staff and scholars will return to the building on Fridays.

Virtual Friday and Technology

Scholars with technology issues should report to the tech room via a google meet link for support on Fridays. If there are issues with their technology, they should also share this with their Crew, Anchor (advisory), or school leader immediately. If a scholar will be absent virtually, please notify Ms. Linda Long at llong@paulcharter.org or via the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

Virtual Friday and CTE/Dual Credited Programming

Scholars participating in the ATC program must arrive at school by 1:45pm. ATC scholars are expected to attend all Virtual Friday classes.

UNIFORM POLICY

To improve the school's educational environment, promote a more effective climate for learning, foster school unity and pride, and allow students to focus better on learning rather than attire, the School has a dress policy for students that applies to school days and school-sponsored events. Paul PCS believes that a person's attire communicates attitudes and values. Every profession or workplace sets particular expectations for appropriate dress. Attending School and being an active learner is our scholars' profession. For this reason, the School will implement consistent and strict dress expectations.

All Paul PCS students must be in the PCS uniform during all school hours unless a School Administrator notifies parents, guardians, and other authorized persons of an exception or a student has a pass for a "dress-down" day issued by an Administrator. Uniforms must be worn neatly, properly fitted, and clean. All uniform pieces must be purchased from the vendor below to ensure a consistently dressed student body. THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. If you foresee an issue complying with the dress policy, please contact a school administrator immediately. We will try to assist you in complying with the dress policy, but we are not guaranteed to be able to provide uniforms.

We will not have a system or loan uniform pieces to scholars who arrive out of uniform. Parents/Guardians will be expected to come and provide what is needed for the scholar to be in uniform. Scholars that are out of uniform will not be able to join the school community, this could result in an unexcused absence and additional consequences for the scholar.

Risse Brothers is the Paul PCS uniform vendor.

- **Website:** https://www.rissebrothers.com/index.cfm .
- **Store Address:** 9700 Martin Luther King Jr Highway Suite B Lanham, MD 20706
- **Telephone number:** 301-220-1985.

Please help us maintain a safe, respectful, and distraction-free school environment by ensuring your scholar is in full compliance with the uniform policy each day.

Uniform Expectations by Day

- **Monday–Thursday:** All scholars are expected to be in full **Paul PCS uniform**, as outlined in the uniform section of the handbook.
- **Fridays:** Scholars may wear approved **Paul SWAG**, which includes **Paul PCS t-shirts** and other spirit wear. Scholars must still adhere to other dress code expectations regarding bottoms, shoes, and accessories.

Uniform Requirements:

Middle School Uniform (Grades 5-8)	
Shirts	**Primary Option**: Gold Paul PCS polo shirt. **Alternative Option:** White oxford shirt with the middle school - tie displaying the "Paul" logo (available in short or long sleeves).
Pants	**Required:** Navy slacks. **Additional Option:** Scholars are permitted to wear joggers. **Belts:** Required if the pants have belt loops. **Fit:** Pants must extend from the waist to the top of the shoe. Jeans and other long pants are not permitted under uniform pants.
Skirts	**Required:** Plain navy knee-length skirts. **Leggings:** Navy leggings can be worn under skirts. Jeans and other long pants are <u>not</u> permitted under uniform skirts.
Shorts	**Allowed(Seasonal):** Plain knee-length navy shorts may be worn between August and September 30th and from May 1st until the end of the school year.
Shoes	**Color:** All Black shoes or sneakers only. **Restrictions:** For safety reasons, crocs, slides, slippers, and heels are not allowed unless special permission has been granted.
Leggings, Tights, & Socks	**Colors:** Only plain solid black, navy, white, or brown tights are acceptable. Striped, designed, decorated, or brightly colored tights are not allowed. **Socks:** Students may choose their socks, but those displaying weapons, drug paraphernalia, lewd designs, or profanity are prohibited.
Long-Sleeved Undershirts	**Colors:** A white, black, navy, or gray long-sleeved solid shirt may be worn under a school-approved uniform short-sleeved shirt.
Jewelry	**Allowed:** Modest jewelry is permitted. **Restrictions:** Excessively large, dangling earrings and large "statement" necklaces are prohibited. The school will determine if an item qualifies as "modest jewelry."
Hats & Head Coverings	**Restrictions:** Hats, durags, bonnets, ski masks, rollers, bandanas, and other headgear are prohibited inside Paul PCS buildings except for religious purposes.
Coats & Jackets	**Restrictions**: Coats and jackets are not worn inside any Paul PCS building except when exiting or entering the building.

Sweaters & Sweatshirts	**Allowed:** Gray Paul Logo Sweatshirts - **Hoodies are not allowed.**
Tie	Solid Blue Tie

High School Uniform (Grades 9-12)	
Shirts	Paul PCS Polo or Light Blue Oxford Shirt with the school tie
Pants	**Required:** Khaki (tan) pants. **Additional Option:** Scholars are permitted to wear joggers. **Belts:** Required if the pants have belt loops. **Fit:** Pants must extend from the waist to the top of the shoe. Jeans and other long pants are not permitted under uniform pants.
Skirts	**Required:** Plain khaki knee-length skirts. **Leggings:** Navy leggings can be worn under skirts. Jeans and other long pants are not permitted under uniform skirts.
Shorts	**Allowed - (Seasonal)** Plain knee-length khaki shorts may be worn between August and September 30th and from May 1st until the end of the school year.
Shoes	**Color:** All Black shoes/sneakers only **Restrictions:** For safety reasons, crocs, slides, slippers, and heels are not allowed unless special permission has been granted.
Leggings, Tights, & Socks	**Colors:** Only plain solid black, navy, white, or brown tights are acceptable. Striped, designed, decorated, or brightly colored tights are not allowed. **Socks:** Students may choose their socks, but those displaying weapons, drug paraphernalia, lewd designs, or profanity are prohibited.
Long-Sleeved Undershirts	**Colors:** A white, black, navy, or gray long-sleeved shirt may be worn under a school-approved uniform short-sleeved shirt.
Jewelry	**Allowed:** Modest jewelry is permitted. **Restrictions:** Excessively large, dangling earrings and large “statement” necklaces are prohibited. The school will determine if an item qualifies as “modest jewelry.”
Hats & Head Coverings	**Restrictions:** Hats, durags, bonnets, ski masks, rollers, bandanas, and other headgear are not allowed inside Paul PCS buildings except for religious purposes.

Coats & Jackets	**Restrictions:** Coats and jackets are not allowed inside any Paul PCS building except when exiting or entering it.
Sweaters & Sweatshirts	**Allowed:** Navy Paul Logo Sweatshirts **Hoodies are not allowed.**
Tie	Blue Tie with Thin Gold & White Stripes

Additional Uniform Guidelines for All Grades

- **Uniform Shirt:** It must be tucked into the pants, and the pants must be worn at the waist level when the student is in a public place inside or outside a school building. Stained, torn, or overly worn uniform shirts are not acceptable.
- **Fit:** All bottoms, whether pants or skirts, should fit properly and not sag below the waist.
- **Dress-Down Days:** These are designated as rewards for specific actions by a scholar. Parents, guardians, and scholars will be notified of such days by email, telephone, or written notice.
- **Belts:** Must be solid black and worn with pants or skirts with belt loops.
- **Ties:** Ties, with the exception of 5th grade can be purchased at the school or at Risse Bros. The amount at the school is extremely limited, so we encourage parents to purchase from Risse Bros.
- Scholars should not wear, Clothing intended for School Staff (Staff SWAG) as it is not part of the Scholar Uniform
- Cut-off shorts are not permitted. This includes khaki or navy blue shorts that have been altered or cut and display fringes or fraying at the bottom hem. All uniform shorts must be appropriate in length, hemmed, and unaltered**.**

By adhering to this uniform policy, scholars at Paul PCS contribute to a focused, respectful, and inclusive academic environment.

Virtual Days Uniform Expectations

On days that students attend school virtually, they are expected to be in school uniform. The uniform on those days however, consists of their assigned color Paul polo shirt or Paul SWAG for the high school and whatever appropriate bottoms they select as their legs will not be visible on camera.

Students who appear on camera out of uniform will be instructed to immediately correct their attire prior to being readmitted to their virtual classroom. This behavior will also be documented and could cause a scholar to lose their Virtual Privileges.

CLEAR BAG POLICY

To support the safety and security of all students and staff, Paul Public Charter School requires that any bag a scholar chooses to carry throughout the school building must be clear.

Scholars are not required to bring a book bag or other bags; however, if they do, we encourage clear and transparent bags to facilitate a safe and efficient entry process. Scholars who enter the building with a non-clear bag will be subject to a more thorough search upon entry.

Once inside the building, scholars are expected to store all non-clear bags in their assigned lockers. Only scholars with clear bags are permitted to carry them throughout the academic day, **this includes purses.** Scholars with non-clear bags may retrieve them at dismissal **from their lockers because they are not allowed to** carry them during the school day.

To support this policy, Paul Public Charter School will provide each scholar with one clear bag at no cost. If a replacement is needed it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that the scholar has a compliant clear bag.

If safety concerns arise regarding bags, school and network leaders reserve the right to revoke this privilege at their discretion.

To support the safety and security of all students and staff, Paul Public Charter School requires that any bag a scholar chooses to carry into the school building must be clear.

Scholars are not required to bring a bag; however, if they do, it must be clear and transparent to facilitate a safe and efficient entry process. Scholars who enter the building with a non-clear bag will be subject to a more thorough search upon entry.

Once inside the building, scholars are expected to store all non-clear bags in their assigned lockers. Only scholars with clear bags are permitted to carry them throughout the academic day. Scholars with non-clear bags may retrieve them at dismissal but may not carry them during the school day.

To support this policy, Paul Public Charter School will provide each scholar with one clear bag at no cost. If a replacement is needed or if a scholar prefers to regularly carry a bag, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that the scholar has a compliant clear bag.

Technology

The Disconnect Act of 2025

The Disconnect Act of 2025 is a District-wide law designed to reduce personal device use in schools. It prioritizes student wellness, school safety, and instructional time by requiring schools to limit cell phone access during the school day. All public and public charter schools in DC are expected to implement and maintain policies that govern how phones and similar devices are stored while students are in school.

Personal Electronic Devices

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to creating a safe, structured, and academically focused environment for all scholars. In alignment with the Disconnect Act of 2025, passed in Washington, DC, and in support of our MERIT values, we have implemented a daily cell phone collection system for all high school students.

Our cell phone and personal electronic collection plan supports both the law and our school's vision to foster Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers. The goals of this plan are to:

- Maintain a secure and respectful school environment
- Protect instructional time from digital distractions
- Promote a culture of academic focus and self-regulation
- Ensure consistency in expectations and accountability for all scholars

This system depends on clear communication, teamwork, and consistency from students, families, and staff.

Cell Phone Collection Procedures

- All student phones must be turned in upon arrival each school day and will be securely stored until dismissal.
- Phones are collected and stored in the designated phone garage, located on the side of the building near the former high school entrance.
    - This space is covered, weather-resistant, and large enough to hold all phone lockers.
    - Scholars may also store AirPods and over-ear headphones.
    - There is not sufficient space for personal computers or large electronics.
- Students may not keep their phones or give them to individual staff members unless a formal exemption is in place.

Exceptions

- The only students exempt from the daily phone collection procedures are those with a formally approved IEP or 504 Plan that includes documented accommodations for device use or alternate arrival procedures.

- The Arrival Team will coordinate closely with the Special Education (SPED) department to ensure these plans are implemented appropriately and consistently.

Family Role in Supporting the Policy

Families are important partners in ensuring this policy is successful. We ask families to:

- Talk with their scholar about the importance of focus, responsibility, and digital discipline
- Ensure that their scholar arrives on time and follows the daily phone procedures
- Contact the school if their scholar has a documented accommodation or if questions about the process arise

By following this policy, we support student well-being, uphold the law, and reinforce our culture of focus and academic excellence.

MS Process: Scholars must hand in their cell phones to their CREW/1st block teacher and it will be stored in a lock box, which will be relinquished to their 7th block teacher for redistribution at the end of the day. Smart watches and AirPods must be stored in their lockers until the end of the day.

High School Process: Scholars will be assigned a phone locker that is unique to them with a combination to open, they will place their cell phone, personal devices, airpods and over the headphones in the locker. They will be able to retrieve these items at the end of the day.

Failure to comply will result in scholars having to surrender their cell phones to the administration, and parents will need to pick them up. Scholars' phones and earpods will be confiscated by teachers and staff if found or seen. The Deans of Culture will address any scholars who refuse to turnover electronic equipment found or seen in classrooms, hallways, auditorium and cafeteria.

Paul Public Charter organization will not be responsible for the cost of any confiscated cell phone or other personal electronics that may be broken, damaged, misplaced or lost.

School-Issued Chromebooks

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a representative of Paul Public Charter School, users accept personal responsibility for reporting any misuse of the network or school-owned equipment to the IT Manager or designee. Misuse is commonly viewed as:

- vandalism or any message(s) sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language, harm to self or others, or any other issues described in this document.

The school is providing access to its computer networks and the Internet for educational purposes only. The use of your assigned account and school-owned equipment must be in support of the educational goals of Paul Charter. Users are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using the electronic information services.

Access to Paul IT Systems is a privilege and not guaranteed. This privilege may be revoked at any time for inappropriate use. The list below has examples of unacceptable use. If any of this is determined to have happened we have the right to take away this privilege:

1. **Uses that violate the District of Columbia or federal law or encourage others to violate the law.** Users should not transmit offensive or harassing messages; offer for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by school or state policy; view, transmit or download pornographic and gambling materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intrude into the networks or computers of others; inappropriate content; and download or transmit confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
2. **Uses that cause harm to others or damage their property.** For example, users should not engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); employ another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; uploading a worm, virus, "Trojan horse", "time bomb" or other harmful or malicious form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to computers, networks, or information systems.
3. **Uses that jeopardize the security and/or quality of student and staff access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.** For example, users should not disclose or share passwords with others; they should not impersonate another user, nor should they engage in activities that severely degrade the performance of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.
4. **Uses that are commercial transactions.** Students and staff may not sell or buy anything over the Internet unless deemed necessary in completing their job role and with expressed approval from an Executive Director or designee. One should never give others private information about oneself or others, including credit card numbers and Social Security Numbers.
5. **Students are not to use devices that are not assigned to them without the permission of the assigned user of the device or permission from the IT department.** Any loaned device must be assigned and tracked to each user.

Internet Safety Compliance

- Paul Public Charter School adheres to the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

- Use of Paul devices subjects users to security measures that block or filter inappropriate Internet content.

Securly (Digital Privacy Act)

- Securly is a comprehensive online safety and security platform designed primarily for educational institutions. It provides a suite of tools to ensure a safe online experience for students, including web filtering, cyberbullying detection, and student activity monitoring. Paul PCS monitors Paul issued devices using Securly.
- **What it does:**
  Securly offers web filtering, and student safety monitoring to protect students from harmful online content and ensure their digital well-being.
- **Why it does that:**
  The goal is to give students access to a safer online environment by proactively identifying risky behavior early on.
- **How does it do that:**
  Securly analyzes internet activity, identifies improper information, and sends out real-time notifications using sophisticated algorithms, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. It easily combines with school networks and gadgets to monitor student conduct and impose filtering regulations.
- **Why is it needed:**
  Students are increasingly exposed to online risks like cyberbullying, inappropriate information, and digital diversions as a result of the growing use of digital tools in the classroom. Securly assists in reducing these dangers, fostering a more secure and concentrated learning environment.
- **How it keeps user information protected:**
  Securly protects user information with strong encryption mechanisms and stringent data privacy guidelines. It complies with legal requirements including FERPA, COPPA, and GDPR, guaranteeing that all data is handled securely and that access is limited to individuals with the proper authorization.

Chromebook Assignment:

- Each student receives a personal Chromebook for their entire time in each Paul school. (5th graders are issued devices for that year only).

- Students must maintain their device for their entire time they remain at Paul. **Note: 8th and 12th grade scholars will return chromebooks after successfully meeting the promotion/graduation requirements.**
- Students must bring Chromebooks to school daily, fully charged.
- Responsibility for taking care of their device and charger falls on students. Families may be financially responsible for the $75 fee for damaged, lost, or stolen chromebooks, or a $20 replacement fee for damage or loss of charger (students will receive one free charger swap).

- Chromebooks are for educational use only and must be returned at the request of the Tech Department.
- Only students in grades 5, 6, and 8 will turn their devices in at the end of the year. All other scholars must maintain their device and bring it back in the new school year. Please note that the above rules apply in this case.

Charging:

- Students must charge Chromebooks before school each day.
- The IT team generally only issue loaners for scholars during testing, these devices cannot be taken home, violations of this rule may result in a fee assigned for the full value of the device. Students who do not have their device on other school days may not receive a loaner device to participate in classroom activities.

Opting Out:

- Students cannot opt out of receiving a Chromebook as they are essential for classroom success.
- Students may not bring personal devices to use during the school day.

Identification:

- Chromebooks have unique stickers and barcodes linked to students.
- Quarterly inventory checks will be conducted by the IT team.

Recommendations for handling and care:

- Chromebooks should be transported closed and in a protective case.
- No food or drink near devices; no additional stickers or decorations allowed.

Damages, Misplacement, Malfunctions, and Theft:

- Report any issues immediately to teachers or the IT department.
- If a device is damaged or lost, students must report the damage/loss to the IT department immediately. ***If the device is lost or severely damaged parents may be financially liable incurring a $75 fee for replacement or repair.***
- Report thefts with a police report to avoid financial liability.

Audits:

- Quarterly Chromebook audits by the IT department are mandatory.
- The IT department will schedule device audits with schools.
- Non-compliance (i.e. not bringing their device on scheduled audit days) may result in device deactivation.

Parents Use:

- Parents can use Chromebooks to check on student work and connect with teachers via the student's email account.
- Chromebooks are not for personal use.

Hapara Platform Usage:

- All students must sign into a Chrome browser with their Paul-issued email accounts when using the internet on school-assigned or personal computers, whether at school or home in order to initiate Hapara.
- Paul PCS will use Hapara to support teacher-student communication, manage student assignments, and monitor online activities.
- Teachers can view students' web sessions in real time, allowing them to monitor what students are using their devices for in class.
- This tool helps teachers understand student challenges with assignments.

Academics

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

The Paul instructional philosophy is designed to grow graduates who are college-bound and of a mindset that they belong to interconnected global communities. Therefore, each department (Sciences, Math, Social Sciences, World Languages and the Arts) will make global connections with the goal of: 1) giving student choice, 2) making work authentic, and 3) creating opportunities for exhibition of student learning. Paul offers a balanced curriculum in the humanities and sciences based on clearly articulated academic standards. Mathematics, Science, English, Spanish/French and Social Studies are the backbone of our students' education and enhance the study of other subject areas by providing a broad context in which to better understand them. In addition to the required core subjects, visual and/or performing arts as well as health and physical education, and Global Studies (high school only) courses are offered. Students performing above grade level in Reading are placed in Advanced/Honors English, which challenges students to tackle grade-level standards using above grade level literature and texts. In addition, students performing above grade level in math are placed in Advanced Math, preparing them to take AP courses in high school.

Paul also provides each student with wide-ranging opportunities and challenging experiences to expand his/her world, vast academic and extracurricular activities to increase his/her knowledge, and leadership opportunities that will equip him/her to take an active role in society.

Middle School - Course Catalog

	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
Year-Long Courses	Math 6 English Language Arts Geography Earth Science	Math 7 Honor Math 7 English Language Arts ELA U.S. History Life Science Life Science Honors Art	Math 8/Pre-Algebra Algebra 1** English Language Arts Action Civics Physical Science Biology** Spanish I** Spanish for Native Speakers I** Honors Art Honors Art II
Electives/World Languages *These courses are semester long. Scholars will take three courses each semester.*	Dance Physical Education & Health Music Art Reading Workshop* Math Workshop* CHAMPS	Dance Physical Education & Health Music Art Reading Workshop* Math Workshop* CHAMPS	Dance Physical Education & Health World Language Music Art Reading Workshop* Math Workshop* CHAMPS

*** Some scholars may need to remain in Reading or Math Workshop for the entire academic year.**
**** For some courses, scholars will receive HS credit.**

High School - Course Catalog [1]

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
English	English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
	ESL I	ESL II	ESL III	
	English 9	English 10 Honors	AP English Language	AP English Literature
Math	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II Algebra II Honors	Pre-Calculus AP Pre-Calculus
	Foundations of Math for ELs	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II
	Geometry *(Students earned Alg I in 8th*	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus AP Pre-Calculus	AP Calculus

[1] Credits must be earned in the courses in blue font per the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Exceptions are made for the equivalent AP course. Exceptions are made for the equivalent AP course.

	grade)			
Science	Biology	Chemistry Chemistry Honors	Anatomy & Physiology	Physics AP Environmental
	Chemistry Chemistry Honors *(Students earned Bio in 8th grade)*	Anatomy & Physiology	Physics AP Environmental Science AP Physics	
Social Studies	World History I	World History II	US History	Government / DC History
		World History II Honors	AP US History	AP Government / DC History
World Language*	2 of the following courses must be taken: Spanish I, Spanish II, Spanish for Native Speakers I & II, AP Spanish Language, AP Spanish Literature *(*Spanish I and Spanish for Native Speakers I earned in MS counts toward reqs)*			
GCS	[redacted]		GCS 11	GCS 12
Art / Music*	.5 credit of Art / .5 credit of Music			
PE / Health*	.5 credit of Health / 1 credit of PE and/or Dance			
Electives*	2.5 credits of electives total Elective offerings include: Workshop/Lab Courses, Reading Intensive, Explorative Writing, Computer Science Explorations, Computer Essentials (PLTW), Career Explorations, Advanced Studio Art, LIfetime Fitness, Psychology, Financial Literacy, Print and Drawing, AP Art, AP Seminar, AP Research, AP African American Studies, Psychology, AP Psychology, dual credit, and Advanced Technical Center (ATC) CTE courses. ***Additional credits earned above the requirement in other subject areas also count towards the electives requirement.***			

*The PE/Health, music, art, and World Language requirements may be satisfied at any time during the scholars' 4 years at Paul.

Middle School Grade-Level Promotion Requirements

Students who have successfully passed all of their core academic classes (Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies) will be promoted to the next grade level. Conversely, students who fail one to two core academic classes will not be promoted to the next grade level unless they complete the failed core course(s) during the summer school program. Students who fail more than two core courses will be retained and will be required to repeat the entire grade level unless they have successfully completed an approved academic summer program. ***Note: 8th Grade students who must pass two or fewer courses for summer school to be promoted, may participate in the 8th Grade Promotion Exercises. However, official promotion to the 9th Grade will be dependent upon successfully passing summer school courses.***

HIgh School Graduation Requirements

To earn a diploma from the Paul International High School, a scholar must complete one hundred (100) hours of community service and earn a minimum of twenty-four (24) credits. A full year course is valued at one (1) credit and a semester course is valued at one half (0.5) credit; semester courses taken every day are valued at one (1) credit.

The twenty-four (24) credits required to earn a diploma must include the following:

- Four (4) credits of English
- Four (4) credits of Mathematics, to include the following: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II.
- Four (4) credits of Social Studies in the following subjects: World History I, World History II, US History, US Government (.5), DC History (.5)
- Four (4) credits of Science, to include three (3) lab sciences
- Two (2) credits of Spanish
- One and one half (1.5) credits in Health/Physical Education
- One half (0.5) credit in Art
- One half (0.5) credit in Music
- Three and one half (3.5) credits through elective offerings*

Note:

**At least 1 of the elective credits must include Global Studies or Global Citizenship.*
**At least two (2) of the credits must include College Level or Career Preparatory (CLCP) courses.*

The courses may fulfill subject matter or elective requirements and may include courses at other institutions.

In addition to the above listed requirements, to **participate in senior activities and Paul International High School's graduation ceremony**, high school scholars must also:

- Take the SAT or ACT college admissions test
- Submit proof of one (1) 2- or 4-year college acceptance
- Not be more than .5 credits short of the Carnegie Units required to graduate

Grade Level Promotion-High School
To earn a diploma from Paul International High School, scholars must earn 24 credits. The guidelines for promotion to the next grade are listed below:

9th Grade to 10th Grade

- Earn 6.0 credits
- Includes: 4 core classes (Algebra 1, 1 Science credit, 1 History credit, 1 English credit)

10th Grade to 11th Grade

- Earn 6.0 credits (12 cumulative credits)
- Includes: 4 core classes (1 Math credit, 1 Science credit, 1 History credit, 1 English credit)

11th Grade to 12th Grade

- Earn 6.0 credits (18 cumulative credits)

- Includes: 4 core classes (1 Math credit, 1 Science credit, 1 History credit, 1 English credit), 1 Spanish credit, and 1 Global Citizenship/College Preparation course

Many high school courses must be taken in a particular sequence. Thus, there might be limitations on the number of courses taken per year in a particular subject area. Scholars are encouraged to consider the requirements for graduation in addition to requirements for grade level promotion when selecting courses.

Program of Study:

General Education Courses

These courses are standards-based and taught by teachers who, according to ESSA standards, are highly qualified. Unless otherwise noted, all courses offered at Paul PCSl are general education courses. All scholars have access to these courses and, as they earn more credits, they are afforded more choices in the classes they can take.

Special Education

Scholars that receive special education services have full access to all courses as stated in their Individualized Education Plan. The coursework is modified to match the scholar's ability and needs. Each plan is then evaluated and reviewed annually by an appropriate, multi-disciplinary team.

Intervention and Resource Classes

Paul PCS offers Math Workshop and English Language Arts (ELA) Workshop (in lieu of an elective/world language course) in the Middle and High School to those 6-10th grade students who are performing two or more years below grade level in reading or mathematics. In addition, ELA workshop and Math Workshop are offered to students who require additional reading or mathematics support as specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or other support plan. All workshop courses use a blended learning approach that incorporates multiple modes of instruction including specific software which provides individualized instruction to students. READ 180 and System 44 are the software programs used to support instruction in the ELA Workshop courses. MATH 180 is the software program used to support instruction in the Math Workshop course.

Honors Courses

Paul PCS is committed to preparing all scholars for success in college and beyond. To meet the needs of scholars that are ready for accelerated work, honors courses are offered for select courses. Honors courses are designed to challenge the scholar beyond the level offered in a college prep level course and, to prepare scholars for the rigor of future AP courses and exams. Scholars should consider that projects and exams may overlap and can result in work-load fluctuations. Summer work is often required.

Advanced Placement Courses-High School

The College Board administers a program of college-level courses and examinations called Advanced Placement. Scholars who obtain certain scores on the exams may qualify for college credit, or exemption from college courses. These courses are designated AP. Due to the level of rigor required by these courses, their grades carry a weighted average and scholars must apply and be accepted into each course each year.

In agreement with the College Board's statement that "all scholars who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be given consideration for admission to AP courses" and the strong correlation between taking AP courses and success in college, any PIHS scholar may apply for enrollment in an AP course within their grade level course sequence. Scholars may, with approval from the Principal, apply for enrollment in AP courses outside their grade level course sequence.

Learning Recovery

Middle School: Scholars may be enrolled in an additional academic intervention program for math and ELA. These intervention programs will provide additional skill practice aimed at growing scholars' performance on math and ELA standards.

- **iXL ELA:** iXL ELA is a supplemental online program that provides support in major components of reading, including fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Used in grades 5-10.
- **iXL Math:** iXL Math is a supplemental online program that helps develop a conceptual understanding of math, while building procedural fluency and using real-world applications. Used in grades 5-10.
- **Reflex/Frax**: Reflex and Frax are adaptive, game-based programs that help to build mastery of math facts and fractions, respectively. Used in grades 5-8.

High School: For scholars enrolled in 9th or 10th grade ELA and/or Math Courses (Algebra I or Geometry), scholars participate in Learning Recovery during their course block. Scholars in Middle School enrolled in HS Algebra I will engage in Learning Recovery in their Algebra I course block.

- **iXL ELA:** iXL ELA is a supplemental online program that provides support in major components of reading, including fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, and writing mechanics. Used in grades 5-10.
- **iXL Math:** iXL Math is a supplemental online program that helps develop a conceptual understanding of math, while building procedural fluency and using real-world application. Used in grades 5-10.

The Paul PCS Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction-High School

At Paul International PCS , we recognize that truly effective communication is not just about knowing the linguistic structures of a language. Understanding the culture in which a language is spoken is just as important. Students who go above and beyond the requirements of the Seal of Biliteracy by participating in a cultural competency activity are awarded the Paul International PCS Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction.

To be considered for the Paul International PCS Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction, please submit verification of one of the following cultural competency activities (on official agency letterhead):

- Twenty-five hours of community service in target language
- Participation in recognized service learning summer activity in target language
- Participation in school-sponsored language-focused travel of at least one week in target language
- Completion of 2-week internship in target language

- Demonstrated proficiency in two or more languages in addition to English.

College, Career, and Technical Pathways at Paul

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to preparing every scholar for success in college, career, and life. As part of this mission, we offer multiple pathways that allow students to explore high-demand industries, earn college credit while in high school, and gain valuable real-world skills. These opportunities are aligned with our vision of ensuring equitable access to postsecondary success for all students—especially those from historically marginalized communities, including multilingual learners, students of color, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Global Citizenship Seminar

The Global Citizenship Seminar (GCS) is a two-year course that prepares students for success after high school by developing their college, career, and life readiness skills. Beginning in Grade 11 and continuing through Grade 12, the course equips students to make informed decisions about their futures and to navigate the transition from high school to adulthood with confidence and purpose.

Throughout the seminar, students will:

- Explore a variety of post-secondary pathways, including 2- and 4-year colleges, career and technical programs, military service, and workforce opportunities.
- Strengthen college and career readiness skills such as time management, organization, communication, resume writing, and interview techniques.
- Develop a personalized postsecondary plan aligned to their individual goals and strengths.
- Receive guided support with the college application process, including essay writing, financial aid applications (FAFSA/DC CAP/DC TAG), and scholarship searches.
- Build financial literacy skills, including:
    - Understanding the true cost of college and how to compare financial aid packages
    - Identifying and applying for grants and scholarships
    - Creating and managing a personal budget
    - Exploring topics such as credit, savings, and student loans
- Engage in critical discussions around identity, leadership, and civic engagement to become thoughtful and responsible global citizens.

By the end of Grade 12, students will have a concrete postsecondary plan, a foundational understanding of personal finance, and the tools to take ownership of their future.

Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs

Paul's Career & Technical Education (CTE) program provides scholars with a rigorous, hands-on learning experience in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand Information Technology (IT) careers. This program of study offers a structured sequence of technical coursework, real-world industry exposure, and opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials. Through this pathway, students build critical skills that prepare them for success in college and careers in the technology sector.

Students begin their CTE coursework in 9th grade, starting a multi-year pathway designed to build deep content knowledge and applied skills. The IT program features a four-course Computer Science sequence that ensures vertical alignment and readiness for postsecondary opportunities:

- 9th Grade – Computer Science Essentials
- 10th Grade – Computer Science Principles
- 11th Grade – Computer Science Applications (*launching SY 2026 – 2027*)
- 12th Grade – Cybersecurity (*launching SY 2027 – 2028*)

Each course in this sequence is a prerequisite for the next. In addition to coursework, CTE scholars have access to internships, job shadowing, and project-based learning opportunities through Paul's growing industry partnerships. Scholars complete the program with a competitive advantage and a strong foundation for further study and entry into the tech workforce.

Advanced Technical Center (ATC)

Through our partnership with the Advanced Technical Center (ATC), Paul scholars can participate in college-level courses aligned to high-demand career fields. ATC offers a two-year, dual credit pathway in both Cybersecurity and General Nursing, giving students the opportunity to earn college credit at no cost while also fulfilling high school graduation requirements. These programs also provide access to industry-recognized credentials and paid internship opportunities, helping students build meaningful experience in their chosen field.

Students in both pathways benefit from strong partnerships with local institutions of higher education:

- The Cybersecurity pathway is offered in partnership with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) to strengthen the pipeline of local students pursuing careers in cybersecurity.
- The General Nursing pathway is offered in partnership with Trinity Washington University, preparing students for careers in the medical field and addressing critical workforce needs in Washington, DC.

Students entering grades 9 through 11 are eligible to enroll in ATC courses. No application is required, and transportation is provided to and from the center to ensure full accessibility. ATC classes run five days a week.

Dual Enrollment/Credit Program

Paul International High School's Dual Credit program allows scholars to simultaneously earn one high school credit alongside the college credit awarded by the participating institute of higher education (IHE). This program gives qualified high school scholars beginning the summer term concluding their 9th grade year. Through partnerships with local universities and colleges, scholars can earn transferable college credits in core subjects like English, math, science, and the humanities. This opportunity supports early exposure to college-level rigor and reduces the time and cost of earning a postsecondary degree.

Program Details

Dual Credit courses will count as elective credits toward Paul International High School's graduation requirements. These courses also satisfy the College Level or Career Preparatory (CLCP) requirement. However, in unique situations, the CEO has the discretion to recognize Dual Credit as fulfilling specific content area requirements.

Content Area Credit

For a Dual Credit course to be recognized as fulfilling a specific high school content credit (beyond general credit), the content of the college course must closely align with the standards of the corresponding high school course. This determination must be made and documented via a signed letter by the CEO (or her designee) **before** the student begins the course.

Some examples below of when a course might count toward content areas include but are not limited to:

- Student transfers to Paul International High School with a credit in American Sign Language (ASL). The transfer student wants to continues studying ASL and enrolls in a college-level ASL course. *This must be done prior to the senior year to ensure the two credits of World Language are earned, or else they will be enrolled in a Paul World Language course at Paul concurrently.*
- Student takes a college US History course with comparable content to the Paul course as a sophomore. This would fulfill the HS requirement for US History, and this student can then take AP Government as a junior instead of our US History class. *In this scenario the student earns the course credit prior to taking it on the traditional Paul sequence. This also requires someone with content expertise to review the course syllabus and make the recommendation to the CEO that this course covers equivalent content.*
- Student enrolls in an art course at a college prior to taking it at Paul International High School. *Again, this must be done prior to the senior year to ensure the requirement is met, or else the student will be enrolled in a Paul art class concurrently.*

Students must earn a 70% (a "C" grade) or higher to earn Dual Credit. A grade of D or F in a Dual Credit course will have the F displayed on their Paul transcript, and it will impact their GPA. If a student opts to withdraw from a dual credit course in accordance with the IHEs' procedures then the course will not be displayed on Paul's transcript. *The one exception to this is students participating in the ATC program who earn a D; Paul will recognize D grades/credits awarded in the ATC program only. **

Dual Credit courses will use the weighted Paul AP grading scale. ATC courses are dual credit courses and will thus use this grade scale as well. ATC courses must have a credit value of 3.0 or higher in order to count for dual credit.

Letter Grade	Grade	GPA Value
A	90-100	5.0
B	80-89	4.0
C	70-79	3.0
D* (ATC)	60-69	0.0
F	0-60	0.0

By participating in the Dual Credit program, a student consents to sharing their transcript from the IHE they attend with Paul International High School.

To be considered as Dual Credit, the following criteria must be met:

- The IHE must agree to the awarding of dual credit. Typically IHEs offer particular courses that qualify for Dual Credit. Students must be enrolled in eligible courses at the IHE to qualify for dual credit**.** These courses will be published on an Approved Course Chart by the IHE.
- If the IHE does not offer dual credit or the particular course is not dual credit eligible per the IHE, students can still earn college credit (but no high school credit) as part of a dual enrollment program.
- Students may have to complete additional paperwork with the IHE to have the course listed as a dual credit. For instance, through the University of the District of Columbia CARE program, they must complete the *CARE Dual Credit Approval Form* with the following signatures:
    - Student
    - Parent/Legal Guardian, if the student is under the age of 18
    - Counselor
    - Principal
    - Paul Public Charter School Central Office Representative - the College Readiness & Retention Coordinator

Because students have a wide array of choices when registering for dual credit courses it would be impossible to capture course descriptions for these courses in the Paul catalog. We defer to the published course descriptions from the IHE. All dual credit courses will be listed separately on the Paul transcript with the IHE named for reference.

Senior Year (12th Grade)

Additional Graduation Requirements

In addition to meeting academic and behavioral expectations, all seniors must complete the following requirements to be eligible for graduation:

- College Acceptance Letter: Submit proof of at least one college acceptance.
- Completion of GCS Class: Successfully complete the Graduation & College Seminar (GCS) course.
- FAFSA Completion: Submit confirmation of FAFSA completion or an official waiver.
- Voter Registration: Seniors who are 17/18 years of age must register to vote.

Any exceptions to these requirements must be discussed and approved by the Head of School and Principal.

Community Service Hours

In order to receive a high school diploma, OSSE requires that every senior completes a minimum of 100 hours of community service. Seniors who do not meet this requirement by the end of April 2026 will be in jeopardy of retention.

Throughout the school year, scholars will receive regular updates on their community service hour status. The school will also share information and opportunities for completing community service to support scholars in meeting this graduation requirement.

Senior Early Release

At Paul PCS, we believe in preparing our scholars for life beyond high school by providing opportunities such as internships, dual enrollment courses, and employment. In alignment with our commitment to college and career readiness, we offer qualified seniors the opportunity for early release.

Seniors who have completed **at least 60 community service hours by August 15, 2025**, and whose schedules permit, will be eligible for early release. At the end of the first semester, the school team will review each scholar's community service progress. Scholars who have **not completed at least 75 hours** by the first day of the second semester will **lose their early release privilege**.

Additionally, if a scholar is at risk of failing any classes at any point during the year, their early release status may be **revoked**.

Senior Event Participation Policy

In order to participate in end-of-year (EOY) senior events, scholars must be in good academic and behavioral standing. Seniors who are required to attend summer school will not be eligible to participate in these events. Additionally, scholars with multiple Level 3 or higher behavior referrals will be disqualified from participation. All seniors must also maintain an **Individual Student Attendance (ISA) rate of at least 95%** to remain eligible.

Scholarships

Paul offers scholarships for Seniors who demonstrated excellent performance and community involvement throughout their time at Paul. These scholarships are awarded in late May, and the award letter details instructions for how the scholar can access the scholarships. Please note that any scholarships not claimed by September of the year they are awarded will be forfeited and monies will be moved to the Alumni support fund.

Early College Credit Opportunities for Middle School Scholars

To support accelerated learners, Paul offers eligible 8th grade students the opportunity to earn Carnegie high school credit in select courses. These courses include:

- Algebra I
- Biology
- Spanish for Native Speakers I

These offerings allow advanced middle school students to begin high school with credits already earned, opening the door for greater flexibility in their future schedules—including early access to AP, CTE, ATC, or Dual Enrollment courses.

8th Grade Community Service Hours

By April 2026, all 8th grade scholars are expected to complete a minimum of 25 hours of community service. This initiative ensures that students enter high school on track to meet graduation requirements and build a strong foundation in civic responsibility. Early exposure to community service helps scholars develop empathy, leadership skills, and a deeper understanding of the needs within their communities. It also encourages a lifelong commitment to service and prepares students to become active, engaged citizens.

5th Grade Community Project and Presentation

During the first semester, all 5th grade scholars will participate in a **Community Impact Project**, where they will identify a need or issue within their local community and work collaboratively to develop a solution or raise awareness. Scholars will research the topic, plan and execute a small-scale project (e.g., organizing a donation drive, creating educational materials, or writing letters to local leaders), and conclude the experience by presenting their work to families, staff, and fellow students during a special **Community Showcase Presentation**.

Purpose and Importance:

This project is designed to help scholars build a sense of civic responsibility, empathy, and leadership at an early age. By engaging with real-world issues, scholars learn how they can make a positive impact in their communities. The process fosters critical thinking, collaboration, research skills, and public speaking—key competencies that will prepare them for future academic and social success. It also reinforces the importance of being active, caring members of society, even at a young age.

Grading Policies and Procedures

Policy Statement: All students will be graded based upon the categories listed in the "Grading Weights" section. All students are expected to meet the given deadlines for homework submission, projects, and presentations.

Overview:

High School - Students will earn a grade in every credit-bearing course in which they are enrolled. The grade a student earns reflects the level of effort and level of mastery of the content and skills. All students must take the final exam in the course, regardless of their course grade prior to the exam (**NOTE: Upon administrator approval, students who have earned a 90 or above over the course of the year may be exempt from the final exam.)*

Middle School - Students will earn a grade in every course in which they are enrolled. The grade a student earns reflects the level of effort and level of mastery of the content and skills. All students are required to take final exams in all courses. Final exam grades will be included in the second advisory (for semester courses) or the fourth advisory (for year-long courses) calculation. 8th grade students do have the potential to earn credit for Algebra 1, Biology, and Spanish 1.

Policy Guidance:

A. **Homework Policy -** Homework is an important aspect of school work at Paul Public Charter School. It helps students prepare for class and extends concepts learned in class. For this reason, no late homework will be accepted unless the student has a documented excused absence. If homework is not submitted the day it is due scholars will earn a 0 in the gradebook for that assignment. Students with an excused absence have two days to turn in homework assignments. Students with excused, long-term absences can make alternative arrangements with their grade level administrator. It is the student's responsibility to speak with his or her teacher about late homework assignments the day s/he returns to school. Parents are asked to monitor homework nightly.
B. **Late-Work Policy -** The purpose of all major assignments/projects is to give students an opportunity to practice concepts they have learned or to extend concepts learned. It is expected that scholars submit all work on time. In the event that a scholar does not meet a deadline, the final grade on the assignment may be reduced by one letter grade each day the assignment is late. If the assignment is not submitted within four days, the student will earn an F on the assignment. This policy applies to all in class assignments, projects, essays and all other long-term homework assignments (those that are not due the next class period). Teachers must communicate with parent or guardians for major assignments submitted 2 - 4 days late to communicate the receipt of the project and penalty on the scholars' grade. The communication must be documented in Powerschool.
C. **Make-Up Work Policy -** We want students to learn and take responsibility for their school work. Scholars with excused absences must pick up their work the day they return to school. It is the scholar's responsibility to request his or her work from his or her teacher. Students have **three days** to complete their assignments for each excused day that they were absent. This includes

class notes, handouts, and any other academic work that was missed. ***Students exceeding five excused absences in a row must see their teachers to create make-up work plans***. The Academic Dean or School Principal, with the support of the Counselor will support the scholar and teacher in creating the make-up work plan. No credit will be given if the plan is not followed correctly by the student. Adjustments to the plan may be made at the teacher's discretion. Requests for work should be made directly to that subject area teacher.

D. **Assignments During Breaks -** During the extended breaks, students may have homework or projects that complement and reinforce what they are learning in class. This work is designed to assist students in improving their grades and expanding their learning experiences. Parents are asked to supervise these activities and join in the fun of learning. All assignments given prior to the break must be completed and submitted to the appropriate teacher by the teacher assigned due date.

E. Special Populations Make-Up Policy

We are committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed. Students with the accommodation of extended time will have five days to complete their make-up work instead of the customary three days. Students should request their assignments from their teachers when they return to school. Teachers will also follow up with absent students to ensure students get makeup work. Teachers will provide all necessary materials, including class notes and handouts. Students exceeding five consecutive excused absences must meet with their teachers to create a make-up work plan. No credit will be given if the plan is not followed correctly, though adjustments may be made at the teacher's discretion. Work requests should be made directly to the subject area teacher.

F. Home & Hospital Care

Any Paul Public Charter School student who has been or is anticipated to be absent from school, on a continuous, partial, or intermittent basis, for **10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days** during a school year due to a health condition may be eligible for home or hospital instruction. A Home or Hospital Instruction program is designed to provide academic instruction in core subjects to the greatest extent possible as well as the provision of special education and related services as appropriate. Please see the Paul Family Handbook for further guidelines.

G. Student Technology Use for Instruction

Paul provides all scholars access to its computer networks and the Internet for educational purposes only. The use of a Paul assigned account and school-owned equipment must be in support of the educational goals of Paul Charter. Scholars are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using the electronic information services. Please see the Paul Family Handbook for further guidelines on technology use.

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

Middle School: Paul PCS students take a series of exams each year to assess their academic progress. By law, students who attend public charter schools in the District of Columbia are required to take the same annual assessment tests as all public school students. Students in the District take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) in mathematics and English language

arts/literacy in grades 6 through 8, and DC science and health/physical education assessments in grade 8.

All students in Middle School will take the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times throughout the school year. This assessment is a computer adaptive test that provides students with a raw score in reading and mathematics that can be compared to students across the country. This score will be used to determine reading and math performance levels. Additionally, the exams are used to guide instruction and placement into ELA or Math Workshop. Student performance levels are closely monitored and interventions are adjusted as needed to reflect changes in student performance.

Throughout each unit of study in the Middle School, students are required to take Unit Assessments (Social Studies and Science) and Mid-Advisory Assessments (Math/ELA). These assessments cover the instructional content that has been presented in each unit (approximately every 3-4 weeks). These Assessments are standard across grade levels and specific to content areas. In addition, towards the end of each advisory period, students will take Interim Assessments in Reading and Math. The purpose of the Unit Assessments and Interim Assessments is to gauge progress of student learning and mastery of content in order to inform adjustments necessary in planning and instruction.

For semester-long courses, students take final exams or complete a performance assessment at the end of the semester to determine mastery of key skills in the course.

For year-long courses, students will take final exams aligned with curriculum standards and cover material that has been taught in class over the last quarter. Final exam grades will be included in the second advisory (for semester courses) or the fourth advisory (for year-long courses) calculation.

High School: PIHS students take a series of exams to assess their academic progress. By law, students who attend public charter schools in the District of Columbia are required to take the same annual assessment tests as all public school students. Students who are enrolled in ELA 9, ELA 10, Algebra 1, or Geometry will complete the DC CAPE assessment. Students enrolled in Biology or Health will also complete the DC Science and health assessment. Additionally, all students in grades 10 – 11 will take the PSAT. In the Spring, 11th graders will take the SAT for the first time and a second time during the fall of their senior year.

High School students in grades 9-10 (and selected 11th & 12th grade students)will take the NWEA Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times throughout the school year. This assessment is a computer adaptive test that provides students with a raw score in reading and mathematics that can be compared to students across the country. This score will be used to determine reading and math performance levels. Additionally, the exams are used to guide instruction and placement into ELA or Math Workshop. Student performance levels are closely monitored, and interventions are adjusted as needed to reflect changes in student performance.

For Social Studies and Science, throughout each unit of study in the High School, students are required to take Unit Assessments. These assessments cover the instructional content that has been presented in each unit (approximately every 2-4 weeks). Unit Assessments are standard across grade levels and specific to content areas. In addition, towards the end of each advisory period, for Math and ELA courses, students will take Interim Assessments in Reading and Math. The purpose of the Unit

Assessments and Interim Assessments is to gauge progress of student learning and mastery of content in order to inform adjustments necessary in planning and instruction.

For semester-long courses, students take final exams or complete a performance assessment at the end of the semester to determine mastery of key skills in the course.

For year-long courses, students will take final exams aligned with curriculum standards and cover material that has been taught in class over the last advisory. Final exam grades will be included in the second advisory (for semester courses) or the fourth advisory (for year-long courses) calculation.

GRADING WEIGHTS AND FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

Categories	Definition	Weighting
Projects/Essays/Labs *[Frequency: At least two per Advisory]*	This includes, but is not limited to essays, presentations, portfolios, projects, debates, research papers, lab reports, or performance tasks that extend over a series of class periods. *Note: All assignments in this category must have a rubric for grading that includes assessment of mastery of standards.*	25%
Summative or Interim Assessments (Quarterly Interim Assessments, Unit Tests, Finals/Midterms) **Note**: The Advisory Two Interim Assessment will be used as the "mid-term" for Math and ELA courses.	These include network and teacher created assessments intended to provide summative data for progress of students with priority DC CAPE Standards, NGSS Standards, and Science/Social Studies Literacy and Content Standards	25%
Formative Assessments (Illuminate Formatives and Exit Tickets) *[Frequency: At least two per Advisory 1 - 3, At least 1 for Advisory 4]* ***Note:*** *At least 2 Formative Assessments per Advisory* (see Formative Assessment Windows below) must be administered in Illuminate.	These are teacher-created assessments that require students to demonstrate their mastery of the grade-level standards taught and to provide feedback on how students are meeting academic standards. **Note**: Formative Assessments are not required to be administered during weeks in which Interims, Unit Tests, Finals, MAP, or DC CAPE are administered. See Appendix for sample formative assessments.	25%
Homework *[Frequency: minimum of 2-3 Per Week]*	Student activities or assignments completed outside the classroom that seek to strengthen and reinforce student learning or prepare students for the next day's instruction. At least two to three homework	5%

Note*: Teachers will be expected to enter at least 1-2 weekly into PowerTeacherPro*	assignments per week.	
Classwork *[Frequency 3 - 5 Per Week]* **Note***: Teachers will be expected to enter at least 2 weekly into PowerTeacherPro*	Classwork is an opportunity for students to practice skills taught aligned to the lesson objective and criteria for success. This includes, but is not limited to do-nows, independent practice and exit tickets any other class assignments not associated with any other grading category. ***Note:*** *Classwork does not have to be graded for mastery; however, all Exit tickets must be reviewed and/or graded for mastery to inform instructional planning.*	20%

READ 180 AND MATH 180 WORKSHOP GRADING WEIGHTS

Categories	Definition	Weighting
Summative Assessments *[Frequency: minimum of 1 per advisory]*	This includes Rskills tests, reading counts quizzes, Mskills tests, writing assignments, and performance tasks.	15%
Classwork *[Frequency: minimum of 5-10 per week]*	This includes independent reading logs, do nows, exit tickets, whole group or small group assignments.This includes average daily software time. Computer Time-on-Task: 15 minutes a day according to the Time-on-Task Report or an average of 75 minutes in a 5-day week)	40%
Formative Assessments *[Frequency: minimum of 1 per week]*	This includes reading counts quizzes, brain arcade, software performance.	45%

Guidelines for Assigning Grades for Rskills, Mskills, Performance Tasks, and Writing Assignments

Test Scores	Gradebook
Below 65%	60%
60-65%	70%
65-70%	75%
70-75%	80%

75-80	85%
80-85%	90%
85-90%	95%
90-100%	100%

Guidelines for Software Usage Grades

Avg. Daily Software Time	Grade
15 or more minutes	100%
12-14 minutes	85%
10-11 minutes	70%
Less than 10 minutes	55%

Final Grades

High School - The final grades for year long courses (**English Language Arts (ELA)**, **Math, Social Studies, Science, AP Courses, CTE Courses, and World Language)** are an average of all four advisories and must be greater than or equal to 70% to pass the course for the year.

The final grades for semester-long courses **(Electives)** are an average of the two advisories within the semester and must be greater than or equal to 70% to pass the course for the year.

Paul Middle School - The final grades for year long courses (English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Social Studies, Science, World Language) are an average of all four advisories and must be greater than or equal to 70% to pass the course for the year.

The final grades for semester-long courses (Electives) are an average of the two advisories within the semester and must be greater than or equal to 70% to pass the course for the year.

Final Cumulative Course Grade is calculated with the following weights:

Advisory 1 - 25% Advisory 2 - 25%
Advisory 3 - 25% Advisory 4 - 25%

Office Hours

Paul Public Charter School believes in office hours for students because they are a vital part of our commitment to academic excellence, equity, and student success. At Paul PCS, office hours are more than just extra help—they are a structured opportunity for scholars to take ownership of their learning, receive individualized support, and deepen their understanding of the material.

We believe:

1. **Every student deserves access to support** – Office hours ensure all students, regardless of their starting point, have the opportunity to get the help they need to succeed.

2. **Academic growth happens beyond the classroom** – Learning doesn't stop when class ends. Office hours provide time to reinforce concepts, practice skills, and close learning gaps.

3. **Relationships fuel success** – During office hours, students can build meaningful relationships with their teachers, which boosts confidence, motivation, and engagement.

4. **College and career readiness requires self-advocacy** – Encouraging students to attend office hours teaches them how to seek support, ask questions, and manage their academic responsibilities—critical skills for future success.

In short, Paul PCS sees office hours as an essential way to uphold our values and support the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally.

At Paul PCS, all staff and teachers are expected to hold **at least 60 minutes of office hours each week** to ensure students have regular access to academic support and guidance. These office hours can be structured in one of two ways:

- **Two 30-minute sessions** (e.g., on different days or during different times to maximize accessibility), or

- **One 60-minute session** per week.

What Triggers Office Hour Assignments?

Students may be **required** to attend office hours if:

- They have **missing assignments** or low performance on a recent assessment
- They are **struggling with content** or pacing in class
- They need support with an **upcoming project, paper, or exam**
- They demonstrate **behavior or executive functioning challenges** impacting learning

- They have an **IEP/504** that includes supplemental academic support

Teachers should notify families directly (via PowerSchool message or email) when a student is assigned to attend.

If a Student Fails to Attend

- The teacher will document the missed session and follow up with the student.
- After 1 unexcused absence, the family will be contacted.
- Repeated absences may result in:
    - Referral to grade-level support team
    - Loss of privileges
    - Parent/guardian conference

SMART Saturday Program

SMART Saturday programming is a 6–8 week enrichment series designed to provide targeted support in mastering key ELA and math concepts. This structured opportunity helps scholars build confidence and strengthen academic skills essential for success. The program specifically prepares scholars for the CAPE assessment in April, with the ultimate goal of promoting academic growth and increasing student proficiency.

Academic Probation

After each advisory progress report, any student failing two or more courses is placed on academic probation. While on academic probation: (1) teachers will send all communications to families; (2) students must participate in Grade Recovery; 3) students may be required to enter into an academic contract and/or academic success tracker; and (4) students will be not be allowed to participate in extended day activities including athletics, until their grades improve (measured after 4 weeks of C or better grades). Progress monitoring of students on academic probation will occur at least once a month.

Grade Recovery

Paul PCS offers grade recovery opportunities at two points during the school year. The purpose of grade recovery is to provide scholars with an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of course content and earn a passing grade, helping them stay on track for promotion and graduation.

Scholars who earn a final grade between 55 and 69 in a course may be eligible to participate. Eligible scholars are expected to attend a 1–2 week after-school session to improve their course grade.

Note: Scholars with five or more unexcused absences in the course are not eligible for grade recovery.

CREDIT RECOVERY

Paul PCS offers several options for scholars to recover credit during the year and during the summer. **Credit Recovery** courses are only available to students who have already enrolled in a course but failed to earn a credit, allowing them an additional opportunity for students to learn course material and demonstrate their knowledge. Credit Recovery options are as follows:

- ***Summer School*** – Summer school courses will be offered for scholars that need credit recovery as well. Scholars will be permitted to take a **maximum of 3 courses per summer**. Scholars will complete coursework on the power standards covered in the school year. Scholars who successfully complete summer school will earn a credit for the course that they have completed. Note: Upon the approval of the Principal and Head of Schools, a scholar may be allowed to take a 4th course or complete an independent study project for summer credit recovery based upon unique circumstances.

- ***Online Courses & Independent Study Courses*** - PIHS recognizes that for some scholars, the need to recover only one or two course credits is all that stands between them and successful completion of high school. At times, scholars may not be able to make up those required credits in the same traditional format and graduate on time. In those instances, Paul may offer the opportunity for scholars to enroll in an online course and/or an independent study course to recover missing credits. In both instances, the same high academic standards present in a traditional class are upheld.

    - *In the case of an online course, Paul has used providers including Keystone School, Fuel Education, and Apex. The Principal, or designee, is responsible for identifying the best provider based on needs of the eligible students. As part of this process, the Principal (or designee) must also identify the appropriate courses based on alignment of course content to Paul curriculum and verify that the course offered meets the credit/Carnegie Unit requirement. The highest grade the scholar can earn will be a 70% in the class.*
    - *In the case of independent study, an adult from the community will design and implement a standards-based project or course with approval from the Principal (or designee). To qualify for independent study a student must have received a 60% or higher to qualify. The highest grade the scholar can earn will be a 70% in the class.*

Eligibility for Credit Recovery:

1. Student must be enrolled at Paul Public Charter Schools,
2. Student must have taken a course and failed to receive any credit (69% and below).
3. Student must have approval from his or her Principal prior to enrolling in the course, who will
    a. ensure that the student needs to recover the course, and
    b. determine if the course content, if offered by a school other than Paul, corresponds with a Paul PCS course and graduation requirement,

4. If the course is taken during the summer at Paul, the scholar will be enrolled in summer school and is expected to attend daily per the summer school policy,
5. The course provider, if not Paul PCS, must be accredited and approved by Paul.

Timing:
The majority of credit recovery occurs during the Paul Summer School program, which includes flexible options for credit recovery – from half day to full day schedules, and other arrangements as deemed necessary. In some instances, we will consider offering credit recovery after school or through more flexible scheduling, but always under the supervision of a teacher.

Awarding of Credit:

1. The scholar must receive a grade of 70% or higher in the course. A final report card must be submitted to the Principal with the grade and grading scale clearly indicated. The student will then receive a grade of a "C" for the previously failed Paul course.
2. If the scholar fails the course he or she is attempting to recover, it can impact promotion status and progress toward graduation. These consequences will be discussed with the student.

Original Credit
Original credit courses are for students who have never taken the course or who failed a course due to an excessive number of absences. Original credit courses will be prioritized for current seniors and rising seniors.

Paul International High School will do what it can to ensure that students are able to take the courses a student needs to graduate through purposeful scheduling and existing credit recovery programs as well as academic interventions and support. However, in the instances where students are in need of credits in order to graduate that are not possible to schedule, students and families are welcome to explore other accredited LEA's that offer courses that meet the Carnegie-unit requirement. Families will be responsible for all costs associated with those programs. Any recovery options must be approved by the School Leader, or designee, PRIOR to student enrollment to ensure that the recovery program meets Paul criteria.

Eligibility:

1. Student must be enrolled at Paul Public Charter Schools,
2. Student must have not taken the class in the past or must have failed it due to excessive absences, to be verified by the Principal as part of the graduation plan meeting.
3. Student and parent must have a meeting with the Principal or designee and counselor to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding for the student and how taking the **Original Credit** will impact the students' progress toward graduation, including but not limited to:
    - Ensuring that the original credit does not supersede other recovery needs which take priority,
    - Reviewing why the student needs to take the Original Credit and what issues may still be a factor (i.e. attendance) that may impede the students' success in the Original Credit program,
    - Discussing consequences of non-completion or failure in the Original Credit program,
    - Discussing any costs associated with the program,
    - Setting timeline and expectations for completion and for support, including staff supervision,
    - ***All parties must agree to and sign the graduation plan for the student to be eligible.***

Timing:
Whenever feasible, Original Credit programs should be done during the summer. Only in limited cases will we allow students to take Original Credit in addition to a full course load of classes. These cases will be considered when there were extenuating circumstances earlier in their high school career or a higher display of academic maturity as they have aged.

Awarding of Credit:

1. The scholar must receive a grade of 70% or higher in the course in order to receive credit for the course. The grade received will be the grade awarded on the transcript, unless it is a D grade which will not be honored. A final report card and transcript must be submitted to the Principal with the grade and grading scale clearly indicated prior to the granting of the credit.
2. If the scholar fails the course he or she is attempting to recover, it can impact promotion status and progress toward graduation.

SUMMER SCHOOL CRITERIA

Summer school courses will be offered for scholars that need credit recovery as well. Scholars will be permitted to take a **maximum of 3 courses per summer**. Scholars will complete coursework on the power standards covered in the school year. Scholars who successfully complete summer school will earn a credit for the course that they have completed. Note: Upon the approval of the Principal and Head of Schools, a scholar may be allowed to take a 4th course or complete an independent study project for summer credit recovery based upon unique circumstances.

In order to participate in summer school, a scholar cannot receive a grade lower than a 50% in a course.

Paul PCS wants to emphasize that Attendance Matters and impacts a student's academic performance. Scholars that are truant, 25 unexcused absences, or chronically absent will not be eligible for summer school. A scholar that has more than 25 unexcused absences in a course will not be allowed to attend summer school if he/she/they fail the specific class. Therefore, the scholar will be required to take the class in the upcoming academic year. . This policy ensures that all students are meeting the necessary seat requirements for high school graduation. Furthermore, Scholars whose grades are impacted by excessive tardiness will not be eligible to take the courses again during summer school.

SPECIAL CASES
For classes with long term substitutes, the Academic Dean, or designated school team member, will ensure all assignments issued are graded and ensure grades are entered into Powerschool. The Instructional Specialist or designated school/network team member will be responsible for the creation of lesson plans. Classwork and homework will be graded for completion by the designated school team member. Assessments will be graded by the designated school team member or instructional specialist.

The Instructional Data Fidelity Manager, or designee, will provide the grades for students who transfer into Paul in the historical grades in Powerschool. If a student comes to Paul midway through an advisory, the transfer grade will be provided to the necessary teachers by the grade level counselor.

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to fostering a community grounded in honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Academic integrity is essential to maintaining a learning environment where all students can thrive and succeed based on their own merit and effort.

Expectations of Academic Integrity
All students are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity in their academic work. This includes:

- Submitting their own work for all assignments, quizzes, tests, and projects.
- Acknowledging all sources of information, including digital and AI tools, and avoiding plagiarism.
- Refraining from cheating or assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty.
- Respecting intellectual property, including copyrighted materials, digital content, and the original work of others.
- Reporting suspected violations of academic integrity to a teacher or administrator.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools
Paul Public Charter School recognizes that AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or other generative platforms) can support learning and writing when used responsibly and ethically. However, improper or unauthorized use of AI technology can violate academic integrity policies.
Acceptable Use of AI:

- Using AI tools for grammar and spelling assistance, idea brainstorming, or learning support, as approved by the teacher and/or as indicated in a scholar's IEP or 504.
- Citing AI-generated content when it directly contributes to an assignment (e.g., "Assistance provided by ChatGPT").

Unacceptable Use of AI:

- Submitting AI-generated responses as your own original work without teacher approval.
- Using AI tools to bypass the learning process, such as for essays, problem sets, or tests meant to reflect personal understanding.
- Failing to acknowledge or cite AI when it has influenced the final product.

Teachers must explicitly set specific rules about whether and how AI tools can be used on particular assignments. Students are expected to follow these instructions carefully.

Forms of Academic Misconduct
The following behaviors are considered violations of this policy:

- **Plagiarism**: Copying or closely imitating the work or ideas of others (including AI tools) without proper citation.
- **Cheating**: Using unauthorized materials, copying another student's work, or receiving assistance during an assessment without permission.
- **Fabrication**: Inventing or altering information, data, or citations in academic work.
- **Collusion**: Working with others on an assignment meant to be completed individually.

- **Impersonation**: Pretending to be someone else or having someone else complete work on your behalf.

Consequences of Violating Academic Integrity
Paul Public Charter School provides students with the support and guidance needed to understand and practice academic honesty. Through instruction, collaboration, and reinforcement, we aim to develop responsible, ethical scholars prepared for success in college, careers, and life.

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in the following consequences:

- Scholar receives a zero on the assignment or assessment.
    - First Time Violations of Academic Integrity: If this is the scholar's first violation documented, the scholar will receive an opportunity to resubmit/retake the assignment within 5 days.
- Scholar receives a disciplinary referral submitted to the Dean of Culture.
    - The teacher must conference with the scholar to discuss the explicit actions that violate academic integrity. The teacher must notify the scholar's parent or guardian in compliance with our Paul Way expectations for disciplinary referrals. Documentation of the conference with the scholar and communication with the family must be documented in Powerschool.

TRANSCRIPT REQUEST PROCESS AND POLICY

Transcripts may be requested by the student, parent/guardian, and receiving school. Official transcripts will be **signed and sealed** by the Registrar. Additionally, the counselor provides official transcripts for college and scholarship applications. In the event that the Registrar is unavailable, the College Readiness and Data Compliance Manager or the Instructional Data Fidelity Manager can sign and seal transcripts.

The Paul Way & MERIT Scholar Framework

The Paul Way: What We Believe and How We Build Community

At Paul Public Charter School, our mission is to ensure that every scholar is equipped for success in school, college, and life. To achieve this, we follow The Paul Way—our unified model for culture and community rooted in our core values of MERIT: Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers.

The Paul Way outlines the behaviors, mindsets, and expectations that guide how our scholars and staff interact, learn, and grow together. It is not just a set of rules—it is the foundation of who we are, how we treat one another, and what we aspire to become. Our school community is built on pride, purpose, and accountability.

Through the Paul Way, we teach and model essential life skills using a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) framework. These competencies support scholars in developing the character, leadership, and self-awareness necessary to thrive in and beyond school.

The Paul Way is present in every part of school life—from classrooms and hallways to field trips and community events. It is how we create a safe, supportive, and high-expectation environment where all scholars can succeed.

The MERIT Scholar: Who We Expect Our Scholars to Be

Being a MERIT Scholar is more than a label—it is a commitment to personal excellence and community leadership. Every day, Paul scholars are expected to demonstrate the qualities that define our core values:

Motivated

We inspire scholars to discover their passions, set ambitious goals, and persevere through challenges with resilience. Motivation is built through purpose, pride, and the pursuit of excellence in every task.

MERIT Scholars are active participants in their own learning. They:

- Approach school with curiosity and drive.
- Set meaningful goals and work hard to reach them.
- Demonstrate resilience by overcoming challenges with focus and determination.

Empowered

We empower our scholars to take ownership of their learning journey and make meaningful contributions to their school and community. Through leadership roles and real decision-making opportunities, scholars build urgency, confidence, and strong relationships that support personal and academic growth.

MERIT Scholars use their voice and choice to make a difference. They:

- Know their strengths and use them with confidence.
- Make informed decisions and speak up for what is right.
- Lead with integrity, whether in a group or on their own.

Responsible

We teach and expect responsibility in both academic and social settings. Our scholars engage with integrity, demonstrate respect for others, and contribute to a culture of inclusion, accountability, and ethical behavior.

MERIT Scholars understand the impact of their actions. They:

- Follow through on their commitments to school, family, and peers.
- Treat others with empathy, fairness, and respect.
- Own their behavior and make thoughtful choices that build trust.

Independent

We encourage scholars to develop self-direction, confidence, and the ability to make thoughtful choices. Independence supports personal growth and prepares scholars to navigate challenges with resilience and focus.

MERIT Scholars are capable, self-directed learners. They:

- Take initiative and manage their time well.
- Think critically and seek solutions on their own before asking for help.
- Navigate the world with purpose, confidence, and a strong sense of identity.

Thinkers

We foster intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Scholars are taught to question, analyze, and innovate in a supportive environment that values creativity and inquiry—preparing them to thrive in a dynamic and ever-changing world.

MERIT Scholars are thoughtful, inquisitive, and reflective. They:

- Ask questions and seek to understand new ideas.
- Analyze problems with care and creativity.
- Make reasoned decisions and consider the perspectives of others.

These attributes are intentionally taught, modeled, and reinforced across all grade levels. Scholars are not expected to come to school knowing how to embody MERIT—we grow these qualities together through daily practice and support.

The Connection Between MERIT, The Paul Way, and Positive School Culture

Our school culture is built on three connected components:

- The MERIT Scholar Attributes – The mindset and character we help scholars develop.
- The MERIT Paul Way – The consistent actions and behaviors we expect scholars to demonstrate.
- Adult Ownership and Consistency – The commitment of staff to teach, model, and reinforce expectations across all spaces.

This culture framework helps every scholar feel safe, seen, and supported. It ensures that Paul is not just a place where students attend school—it's a place where they belong, grow, and prepare to lead.

When families, staff, and scholars are aligned in expectations and values, we create a strong, unified community. Together, we uphold the Paul Way to ensure excellence in every classroom, hallway, event, and interaction.

TownHall at Paul PCS

Purpose:
Town Hall is an important part of our school culture. It brings scholars and staff together to **build community**, **celebrate achievements**, and **reinforce shared values**. It's also a space to address concerns and help scholars grow socially and emotionally.

Why It Matters:
A positive school culture takes intention. Town Hall provides a consistent time for the whole school to

come together, recognize scholar success, and teach important life skills like respect, responsibility, and teamwork.

What Happens at Town Hall:

- **Community Building** – Strengthening connections and school pride.
- **Celebrating Success** – Honoring academic achievement and positive behavior.
- **Teaching Social Skills** – Modeling behaviors that help scholars thrive.
- **Problem Solving** – Addressing challenges and building shared solutions.

Scholar Expectations:

- Wait for an official announcement before leaving class.
- Transition calmly and respectfully to the auditorium.
- Sit in assigned seats and remain seated.
- Use Level 0–1 voices and show respect at all times.
- Follow directions for restroom use and dismissal.

Town Hall is a key way we stay connected as a community and celebrate what it means to be a MERIT scholar at Paul.

Social-Emotional Learning

WE TEACH

At Paul, social and emotional learning happens through formal instruction, informal instruction, opportunities to practice, and through intrapersonal reflection. First, families can expect their scholars to receive formal instruction about the five core competencies of SEL: (1) Self awareness, (2) Self management, (3) Responsible decision making, (4) Social awareness, and (5) Relationship skills. Through the use of empirically tested, age appropriate social and emotional learning curriculum, students will learn the vocabulary, foundational skills and habits related to the five core competencies. Each week, grade level teams will focus on a new skill, habit, or set of skills to learn and intentionally practice. Examples of formal learning opportunities might include:

a. Completing weekly advisory lessons in an intentional small group setting
b. Completing reflections for SLC preparation
c. Creating, monitoring and reflecting on personal goals during small group sessions
d. Participating in restorative conferences for themselves or with peers as needed
e. Completing personal reflections related to disciplinary infractions

f. Utilizing skills and habits through guided classroom practice: brain breaks, reflection stations in classrooms, mindful minutes, emotional identification, meditation breaks, movement breaks, to name a few.

Students will also have ongoing informal learning opportunities to practice social emotional skills throughout each school day. Examples of informal instruction might include:

a. Collaborating with peers for group work during classroom instruction
b. Attending and participating in town hall meetings
c. Participating in afterschool clubs, activities and organizations with peers
d. Participating in service learning projects
e. Participating in peer mediation activities
f. Activism within their community through engaging in our student government association
g. Learning and using vocabulary related to social and emotional learning
h. Earning "Scholar dollars" by demonstrating the skills and habits associated with the five core competencies of social and emotional learning
i. Engaging in and adhering to the policies, procedures and expectations that have been aligned to the five core competencies of social and emotional learning

Finally, families will have the opportunity to reinforce the skills and habits their scholars are learning in school, within their own homes. At Paul, we see families as collaborators in educating the whole child, and firmly believe that we cannot be successful without parent or guardian support. Collaboration with our families is integral to the personal and academic success of our students. Therefore, we prioritize the involvement of our families with our social and emotional learning initiatives. Social emotional learning support within families might include:

- Ongoing communication from grade level teams related to the formal instruction students are receiving about social and emotional learning
- Invitations to participate in after-school workshops specifically geared towards social and emotional development
- Suggestions and tips for reinforcing social and emotional learning at home
- Opportunities and invitations to participate in school-based activities throughout the year
- Supporting the school through active participation in our PAG association

WE MODEL

The mission of Paul PCS is to educate our students and to develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers, and leaders.

We expect students to:

- Be **Motivated**
- Be **Empowered**
- Be **Responsible**
- Be **Independent**
- Be a **Thinker**

In order to ensure every scholar achieves this mission, we recognize that students must also learn through observation of others, including their observations of the staff members in their community. Social and emotional learning is not just for our students. Rather, it also includes shaping the mindsets, attitudes, beliefs, habits, skills and behaviors of all the members within our school. As a result, our staff is held to a high caliber of standard while working at Paul, and are expected to demonstrate the social and emotional competencies taught to students at all times: (1) Self-Awareness, (2) Self-Management, (3) Responsible Decision Making, (4) Social Awareness, and (5) Relationship Skills. It is because we recognize adult social and emotional learning as a community priority, that we are able to offer staff ongoing training and professional development around effective social and emotional learning. We expect our staff to consistently model the five core competencies we hope to see in our students, demonstrating these competencies through the ways in which staff interacts with one another, the ways in which staff interacts with students and the ways in which staff interacts with families. Modeling social and emotional learning through attitudes, beliefs, mindsets, interactions and behaviors also includes:

a. Interacting with students in ways that are aligned to our community expectations, and that demonstrates a firm understanding of the five core competencies of social and emotional learning
b. Interacting with colleagues in ways that are aligned to our community expectations, and that demonstrates a firm understanding of the five core competencies of social and emotional learning
c. Incorporating skills and habits of the five core competencies into content planning across all school disciplines, including core content and electives
d. Providing formal instruction through the social and emotional advisory curriculum
e. Providing informal instruction through demonstration of the five core competencies
f. Participating in restorative practices, including restorative conferences and community restoration activities
g. Engaging in professional development that enhances social and emotional skills
h. Incorporating social and emotional learning into classroom management and disciplinary approaches to managing student behavior

The Paul Way M.E.R.I.T Matrix:

*What does it mean to perform like a **M.E.R.I.T** scholar?*

Paul PCS Pirate Pride	Be Motivated	Be Empowered	Be Responsible	Be Independent	Be a Thinker
Learning Environment	○ Moving with **URGENCY** ○ Actively participates in discussions	○ Possesses knowledge but also demonstrates	○ Be prepared ○ Follow directions the first time given	○ Make **your own** decisions ○ Stay focused ○ Stay on task	○ Ask thought - provoking questions ○ Think critically about the

	○ Always take academic risks ○ Seeks to understand the material beyond surface-level ○ Earn Merit dollars	critical thinking skills ○ Ability to apply what they learn ○ Contributes to the academic learning by giving insightful feedback ○ Use appropriate hand signals	○ Be accountable for their actions or inactions ○ Submits assignments on time	○ Own **YOUR academic success** ○ Own **YOUR behavior data**	information being presented ○ Think outside of the box ○ Ability to make informed decisions ○ Offer unique perspectives
Hallways	○ Move with purpose ○ Display a pass to ensure adequate permission to be in the halls ○ Be in your seat when the bell rings	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices ○ Stay to the right	○ Hands off walls ○ Always walk ○ Keeps the environment clean ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices ○ Acts in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of others ○ Stay to the right	○ Take care of your own business ○ Go directly to your destination ○ Respect personal space	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices ○ Stay to the right
Cafeteria	○ Be on time ○ Go directly to your destination	○ Use level 0-1 voices ○ Use positive language ○ Put trash in bins ○ Go directly to your seat/table ○ Listen to the lunch lead's instructions	○ Be on time ○ Go directly to your table/seat ○ Put trash in bins ○ Remain in your seat ○ Follow cafeteria rules	○ Keep your space clean ○ Do the right thing ○ Respect personal space	○ Follow directions ○ Remember to clean up after yourself
Restroom	○ Move with urgency to and from the restroom ○ Follow 10/10 rule		○ Remember to always have a pass ○ Flush the toilet and wash your hands	○ Take care of your own business ○ Inform an adult of any misconduct	○ Follow 10/10 rule ○ Make sure that the restroom is as clean when you leave as it

			○ Make sure the restroom is as clean when you leave as it was when you arrived ○ Use the restroom during transitions ○ Follow 10/10 rule	○ Follow 10/10 rule	was when you arrived
Outside Activities	○ Be active ○ Follow game and activity rules	○ Follow game and activity rules ○ Keep an eye out for peers and adults (who may be giving directions)	○ Clean up trash ○ Follow adult directions ○ Stay on school grounds ○ Be appropriate	○ Give others privacy ○ Use appropriate voice levels ○ Keep hands, feet, and other objects to self	○ Follow game and activity rules ○ Allow others a chance to play
Online	○ Stay fully engaged during the lesson ○ Actively listen and participate ○ Be on time	○ Show academic integrity by using appropriate sites and following copyright laws ○ Own YOUR academic success	○ Follow virtual classroom norms ○ Be prepared for class ○ Handle equipment with care	○ Communicate issues and concerns, i.e., academic, cyber-bullying, and technical issues ○ Ensure you check your student email account throughout the day for communication from your teachers and/or the administrator	○ Do research using multiple appropriate and reliable sources
Public Transportation	○ Get on and off promptly ○ Have Kids Ride Free Card or fare ready before boarding	○ Know where you are going or ASK for help ○ Know the rules	○ Remain seated ○ Use Level 1 voices ○ Keep belongings with you	○ Use manners ○ Keep hands, feet, and other objects to self	○ Know where you are going or ASK for help ○ Remove yourself from situations and

	○ Follow the transportation authority's instructions	○ Be aware of your surroundings		○ Follow Metro rules and regulations	people that are causing trouble
Community	○ Go directly to your destination ○ Use manners ○ Keep hands, feet, and other objects to self	○ Reflect before acting ○ Remember that you are representing your family and school community	○ Use appropriate language ○ Remove yourself from situations and people that are causing trouble	○ Use appropriate language ○ Remove yourself from situations and people that are causing trouble	○ Reflect before acting ○ Remember you are representing your family and school community
Auditorium	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices	○ Hands off ○ Always walk ○ Language appropriate ○ Level 1 voices

WE CELEBRATE

M.E.R.I.T Money Incentive System

Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe in celebrating and reinforcing positive behavior that reflects our core values. Through the M.E.R.I.T Money system, scholars are recognized and rewarded for consistently demonstrating what it means to be a Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinker—both in school and in the broader community.

What is M.E.R.I.T Money?

M.E.R.I.T (Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers) Money is our schoolwide incentive program. Scholars can earn M.E.R.I.T dollars throughout the day for showing strong character, leadership, and positive choices in all school spaces—including the classroom, hallways, cafeteria, arrival and dismissal, and even during off-campus activities like field trips.

Who Can Award M.E.R.I.T Money?

All Paul PCS staff and stakeholders—including teachers, support staff, and administrators—can award M.E.R.I.T dollars to scholars. Community members may also notify school staff when they observe scholars demonstrating MERIT behavior outside of the school building.

How Can Scholars Use M.E.R.I.T Money?

Scholars can use their earned M.E.R.I.T dollars to:

- Purchase items from the school store
- Gain access to special field trips
- Participate in school experiences, raffles, and incentives

The system is designed to promote intrinsic motivation, responsibility, and school pride.

M.E.R.I.T Money will never be taken away as a disciplinary action. This program is focused on encouraging and rewarding positive behavior, not punishing mistakes. Disciplinary actions will be addressed through separate, restorative approaches.

We Hold Each Other Accountable

Aligned with MERIT: Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe that all members of our community—students and staff—must take responsibility for building and maintaining a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment. As part of our commitment to developing Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers, we hold one another accountable for meeting clear expectations for behavior both in and out of the classroom.

We recognize that even with proactive systems in place, scholars may still make poor choices or struggle to meet expectations. When this happens, our response is grounded in growth, reflection, and restoration—not just punishment.

Schoolwide Behavior System

Paul PCS has a structured system in place that includes both proactive teaching and consistent responses to behavior that does not align with our values. Our Code of Conduct Policy outlines four levels of behavior infractions and the corresponding consequences (see full policy for details).

Our approach emphasizes:

- Teaching and reinforcing appropriate behavior
- Responding to issues with fairness, consistency, and care

- Maintaining a focus on restorative practices and returning scholars to learning as quickly as possible

Step 1: Identify the Level of the Infraction

Each behavior is categorized by level (I–IV) based on severity. The first response is an on-the-spot redirection, designed to interrupt the behavior, refocus the scholar, and prevent further disruption.

Step 2: Determine Who Manages the Behavior

Our school-wide discipline model is built on empowering staff to lead in their spaces:

- Teachers and staff are expected to manage minor behaviors using their classroom management plans and strategies. This includes proactive teaching, redirection, and consequences that support learning.

- Administrators become involved when behavior is more serious, persistent, or poses a safety concern.

Our goal is always to respond in a way that teaches, restores, and returns scholars to learning—as long as safety is maintained.

Hierarchy of Responses

We follow a clear Hierarchy of Responses (used both in-person and virtually) to ensure all scholars are treated fairly and consistently. This system helps determine the appropriate response to conflict or disruption and ensures that:

- Restitution and reflection happen as quickly as possible

- Scholars are welcomed back into the learning environment with dignity

- Families are included when necessary to partner in supporting scholar growth

This approach reflects our belief in Empowerment: helping scholars understand their impact, take ownership of their actions, and learn from their mistakes with the support of trusted adults.

Responding to Scholar Behavior at Paul PCS

A Step-by-Step, Restorative Approach Aligned with MERIT

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. When scholars make behavioral mistakes that do not pose an immediate safety concern, our goal is to support growth, reflection, and return to learning with dignity.

Our response process is aligned with our MERIT values—especially Responsibility, Empowerment, and Independence—and reinforces that behavior is a skill that can be taught and practiced.

Behavior Response Steps (for Non-Safety-Related Incidents)

1. Redirection
    - Staff provide a clear, respectful reminder of expectations.
    - Intended to quickly refocus the scholar without disrupting instruction.
2. Adjustment
   The teacher may make a non-verbal or environmental change (e.g., moving seats, using proximity).
    - Staff observe and re-engage the scholar in learning.
3. Problem Solving
    - Scholar participates in a brief reflection or conference about the behavior and alternative choices.
    - Focuses on learning from the moment, not punishment.
4. Working in an Alternative Space
    - If behavior continues, the scholar may be moved to a nearby classroom or designated space to take a short break, ref
    - Scholars are still expected to complete work during this time.
5. Time Out of Class with an Administrator
    - For continued disruption or failure to respond to other steps, the scholar is temporarily removed from class to meet with a school leader.
    - This time is used to reflect, problem-solve, and make a plan for reentry.
    - Other consequences may be assigned as needed, such as parent contact, restorative action, or temporary loss of privileges.
6. Close the Loop
    - The scholar and teacher reconnect to review expectations, restore the relationship, and return the scholar to the classroom community.

This approach ensures that behavioral redirection is handled fairly and with consistency, allowing scholars to remain engaged in their education while addressing issues constructively.

Behaviors that pose a safety concern, involve aggression, or violate school policy at a higher level are handled through separate procedures outlined in the Paul PCS Code of Conduct.

VIRTUAL LEARNING CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS AND RESPONSES	
BEHAVIORS	**LEVELS OF INTERVENTION & RESPONSES**
○ Disruptiveness that distracts student learning (consistent talking at the wrong time, calling out, making disruptive noise, etc) ○ Inappropriate dress- Pajamas, no shirt, etc... ○ Leaving class(hangout) and not returning ○ Mis-use of platform- Music during class ○ Sleeping/lounging in class and/or off task behaviors ○ Plagiarizing work from the internet ○ Unpreparedness ○ Gossiping ○ Inappropriate tone or attitude ○ Non-performance or refusing to do work ○ Tardy to Class or School ○ Minor harassment (name calling, not repeated) ○ Profanity ○ Inappropriate language and/or gestures ○ Non-verbal disrespect	1st Step: Teacher Strategies: ● Verbal reminder ● Verbal redirection ● Loss of privilege 2nd Step: Conversation with student w/reflection time in Independent/Reflection area. 3rd Step: Correspondence wih parent ● Logged in Dean's List 4th Step: Issue detention based on the infraction

Systems of Accountability

Vision

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe that accountability is not about punishment—it's about growth and learning. Our systems are designed to help scholars reflect on their choices, learn from missteps, and build the skills necessary for success in school and life.

Systems of accountability are intentional teaching opportunities that allow us to guide scholars in strengthening their decision-making, emotional intelligence, and leadership abilities. Through structured reflection and support, scholars are empowered to repair harm, take ownership, and rejoin the community stronger. Rooted in our MERIT values, these systems create a respectful, achievement-focused environment where every scholar can thrive.

Accountability Principles

- Scholars are assigned a system of accountability in response to behavior and choices.
- The system is a learning moment, not just a consequence, it's a space to relearn expectations, practice new strategies, and grow.

- All systems must be documented and clearly communicated to key stakeholders.
- Scholars will have an opportunity to reflect on their behavior to develop stronger decision-making skills.
- A responsible adult will be present during the system to support the scholar and communicate outcomes.
- Accountability systems are not designed to exclude—but to teach, reset, and reintegrate.

Overview of Systems

System	Description
Saturday Detention	Held on designated Saturdays from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Dates are listed on the calendar. Scholars engage in reflection, restorative tasks, and MERIT-aligned lessons.
MERIT Day	Monthly, on Professional Development (PD) days from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Scholars participate in growth-focused sessions, skill-building, and restorative work.
In-School Suspension (ISS)	Full-day removal from class and community. Scholars receive academic work and guided reflection. Requires approval and documentation in PowerSchool.
Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)	Assigned only for Level 4 or 5 behaviors. Scholars may not attend school or activities. Academic work is provided. Must be approved and logged in PowerSchool.
Afterschool Detention (30 min)	For Level 1–3 behaviors. Occurs the same or next school day directly after dismissal. Scholars reflect on behavior and expectations.
Lunch Detention	Held during the lunch period, outside the cafeteria. Includes a reflection component. School lunch is provided.
Out of Community	Temporary removal from one or more classes. Scholar completes academic work in an alternative location. Requires a Scholar Whereabouts Form and accurate attendance.
Parent Meeting	Mandatory meeting with scholar and guardian to address behavior and plan next steps. Held in person or virtually. Documented follow-up provided.

Private Deaning	One-on-one conversation in a private space, used to redirect behavior and reteach expectations. Outcomes and next steps are documented.

How Are Systems Assigned?

- Assigned by a Culture Team Member or School Leader, based on the behavior and its frequency or severity.
- A referral is required to initiate any system.
- The behavior, response, and follow-up must be documented.
- Clear communication with both the scholar and their family ensures transparency.
- The staff member assigning the system must monitor completion.
- Scholars are informed of the behavior that led to the system and what's expected moving forward.
- These systems are a chance to teach—to help scholars see what went wrong and how to do better.

During the System

- Scholars must follow all expectations during the system of accountability.
- Clear behavioral expectations will be stated upfront, and redirection will be used if needed.
- Families will be contacted if a scholar misses or fails to meet expectations during the system.
- Any instructional time missed will be clearly communicated and accurately documented in PowerSchool.
- A staff member is present throughout the process.
- Scholars are given space and tools to reflect, learn, and reset.
- A tiered response structure (e.g., verbal reminder → reflection → parent contact) ensures fairness, consistency, and learning opportunities.

After the System of Accountability

- Communication is sent to families about the completion status and any follow-up steps.
- Referrals are closed out once all actions are complete.
- Scholars and families are updated if the behavior persists or improves over time.
- Positive change is acknowledged, and ongoing support is provided.
- Scholars who complete the system during the day are welcomed back to class, ready to re-engage.

Shout-Out Opportunities

Recognition	Description
MERIT Growth Shout-Outs	Celebrate scholars who show progress after feedback. Can be private (e.g., family call) or public (e.g., intercom or lunch shout-out).
Repair & Restore Recognition	Acknowledge scholars who take ownership, repair harm, and reflect responsibly. Highlighted during lunch or in advisory.
Turnaround Champion	Publicly recognize scholars who demonstrate significant improvement after an infraction. Shared in town halls or community spaces.
MERIT Tracker Milestones	Use point systems or trackers to measure progress tied to MERIT values. Milestones are celebrated and documented.

Redirection Opportunities: Teachable Moments

Opportunity	Description
MERIT-Aligned Reminders	Real-time guidance that helps scholars reset behavior and connect actions to core values.
Reset & Reteach Moments	Calm, supportive opportunities to reteach expectations and model accountability as a leadership skill.
Reflection Conversations	Intentional discussions to help scholars or staff reflect on choices, impacts, and growth areas—before or after a system is assigned.

At Paul, accountability is how we teach, not just how we respond. Through consistent, fair, and supportive systems, we build scholars who are not just academically prepared, but emotionally intelligent, self-aware, and MERIT-driven.

WE RESTORE

At Paul Public Charter School, we use Restorative Practices to help students grow, learn from mistakes, and stay connected to the school community. When a student causes harm—intentionally or unintentionally—we guide them through a process that focuses on accountability, reflection, and restoring trust.

We believe that every scholar is a valuable part of our community. Restorative practices give them the chance to repair harm, rebuild relationships, and return stronger. These practices are not meant to replace consequences, but to teach important social, emotional, and leadership skills that will help scholars succeed in school and in life.

Key Restorative Practices at Paul

1. Restorative Conference
   A structured meeting between the scholar, their parent/guardian, school staff, and anyone impacted by the behavior. Together, they reflect on what happened, identify the harm, and decide how to make things right. This can happen alongside other consequences if needed.

2. Community Restoration
   After a restorative conference, scholars may complete an action to repair harm, such as writing an apology, presenting a reflection, or helping restore damaged property. These actions help scholars understand the impact of their behavior and show growth.

3. Community Circles
   Circles are held regularly in classrooms and community spaces to help scholars build relationships, talk about important topics, and share their experiences. Circles are safe spaces for students to speak, listen, and learn together.

4. Parent Support and Engagement
   Families are an important part of the restorative process. Parents/Guardians may be asked to attend conferences, participate in workshops, or support reflection at home. By staying engaged, families help scholars stay on track and make positive choices.

At Paul, restoring the community is part of learning. We teach scholars to take responsibility, reflect on their actions, and rebuild relationships—so they can become strong, respectful, and empowered members of both our school and the world beyond.

Social Emotional Learning and Counseling Support

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe in nurturing the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally. Our counseling and social-emotional learning (SEL) supports are designed to help all scholars succeed in school and in life. We are committed to building a strong foundation of mental wellness and emotional intelligence for every scholar, every day. Our counselors and social workers are essential partners in that mission.

SEL Education

Our school counselors lead SEL education across both campuses, delivering lessons and supports that build key social and emotional skills. In addition to our in-house team, we partner with

community-based organizations to provide additional counseling and therapeutic support at both the middle and high school levels.

School Counselors

Each grade level is assigned a dedicated school counselor who provides support in three main areas:

- Academic guidance
- Behavioral support
- Social-emotional development

Counselors are available to all students and serve as their primary advocates alongside teachers. They work with students individually, in small groups, and in classroom settings. Their services may include:

- Check-ins and wellness monitoring
- Academic counseling and goal-setting
- Group or individual counseling
- Family support sessions
- Classroom SEL lessons
- Post-secondary and college planning (especially at the high school level)

Counselors also collaborate closely with families and staff to ensure each student is supported holistically.

Social Workers

Each campus has a school social worker who primarily supports scholars receiving special education services. They focus on helping students meet their behavioral goals and provide:

- Individual and group counseling
- Classroom-based (push-in) support
- Crisis intervention services for any scholar when needed

Telehealth and Virtual Support

For scholars participating in distance learning or those who need additional flexibility, telehealth counseling services are available on an as-needed basis. These services help ensure that every scholar can access emotional and behavioral support—even remotely.

Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Policy Statement:

Subject to compliance with all federal regulations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), it is the policy of Paul PCS that students be acknowledged for appropriate behavior and sanctioned for inappropriate behavior that occurs while students are attending school, onsite or virtually, during school-sponsored events, or off campus behavior that impacts the school community.

Overview:

Paul PCS maintains high standards of conduct both in and outside of school (this includes the virtual environment). We recognize that the adolescent years are a time of transition when children are expected to learn that to make wise decisions one must think through the consequences of their conduct carefully. The purpose of Paul PCS's Code of Conduct is to give students guidelines and clear expectations that will reinforce good decision-making skills, as well as the use of sound judgment and basic reasoning in their day to day activities.

The Code of Conduct guides students in making informed and responsible choices and provides a foundation on which students can build respect for themselves and others. It also helps us create a culture in which students have the opportunity to focus on achieving academic and social success and to understand the norms that will be expected of them as they mature and become responsible citizens.

All adult members of the Paul PCS family are also expected to adhere to the components of the Code of Conduct and work together to support and enforce Paul PCS's goals.

Jurisdiction:

While the provisions of this policy purport to control, regulate, or establish standards for the actions, behavior, or activities of students of Paul PCS—including Paul Middle School and PIHS—those provisions shall be enforceable by school authorities, both during regularly scheduled school hours as well as at such other times and places including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- When the student is on school grounds;
- When the student is on or off school grounds participating in or attending any function or activity (including field trips, class trips, or athletic contests) that are sanctioned by Paul PCS;
- When the student is traveling on public transportation and the activity involves any conduct prohibited by DC Law, including from the time students leave home to come to school until the time they return home;
- When the student commits a prohibited offense that occurs outside of school hours (with emphasis on infractions Level III or greater, to include during the summer, whether or not a student is enrolled in Paul PCS's Summer School Program);
- When the student's off campus behavior has a negative impact on the school community
- When the student is in the virtual learning environment; and

- When the student is using school equipment in order to commit a prohibited offense that may occur on or off of school grounds

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to abide by all of the rules, regulations and standards of Paul PCS at all times. Specifically, students MUST:

- Abide by the Code of Conduct Policy as provided to the student and their family.
- Refrain from inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior at all times.
- Accept responsibility for their behavior.
- Respect themselves and all other individuals in the School at all times.
- Meet academic expectations in the physical and virtual learning environment.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Adhere to, support, and abide by the rules and regulations of the School, and to hold their children accountable to the same.
  If a scholar is found to be in possession of a weapon or contraband, it will be destroyed and can not be retrieved by the Guardian or Scholar.
- Adhere to the School's attendance policy which requires all students of the Middle School and PIHS to be present daily, unless absence is appropriately excused.
  - Participate in parent meetings regarding your child's academic, behavioral, socio-emotional and attendance progress.
- Communicate with teachers to stay informed of their child's academic program and progress.
- Alert the School to any specific problems or concerns that develop.
- Notify the school of changes with contact information, which includes phone number and address.
- Participate in activities in the School. Parents are expected to attend at least 3 parent events throughout the school year. This includes beginning of the year parent orientation and Student-Led Conference/Parent-Teacher Conference.
- Take an active part in the parent component of the School.

TEACHER/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers and staff are expected to:

- Implement the mission and philosophy of Paul PCS.
- Model the behaviors and performance standards expected of Paul PCS students.
- Foster a learning environment and fulfill the professional obligations required by their positions.
- Keep open lines of communication with students and parents/guardians.
- Be friendly to students and their families and cooperative at all times.

Off Campus:

When scholars are off campus, commuting to and from school or participating in in school sponsored events or activities, we reserve the right to consequence behaviors that go against the code of conduct. We also will consequence as needed and appropriate behaviors that go against the code of conduct when scholars are not school grounds but representing Paul PCS or the behaviors impact the school community.

Level I: Behaviors that occur in the community that can be managed by the teacher or staff member that is witness to the behavior	Consequences/Interventions
○ Chewing gum/eating in class ○ Cell Phone Violation (first time) ○ Copying homework ○ Disrupting class (i.e. calling out, excessive talking/laughing) ○ Entering locker at wrong time ○ Failure to report to mandatory Homework Center ○ Failure to turn in signed Behavior Progress Report ○ Grooming outside the bathroom ○ HALLS violation (poor transition) ○ Inappropriate chat conversations within the virtual classroom environment ○ Dishonesty ○ Not following directions/instructions from staff member ○ On-camera or on-site disruptions ○ Profanity (not directed at staff or students) ○ Refusal to do work ○ Sleeping in class ○ Tardy (less than 5 minutes late to class) ○ Throwing items (minor)- (i.e. paper, writing utensils) ○ Unprepared for class ○ Any behavior or conduct not specifically enumerated in any other Level that causes minor disruption to the academic environment but does not involve damage to property or harm to self and others.	○ Staff members follow the hierarchy of consequences that can include: • non-verbal redirection • verbal redirection/seat change/appropriate consequence • reflection/family contact, and a referral in Deanslist, to be shared with the School Leadership Team. ○ Teacher or staff member/student conference • Mediation or VOMP ○ Counseling/intervention ○ Loss of school privileges and a violation of good standing ○ School/community work tasks for reflection ○ Restorative option, as deemed appropriate ○ Administrator-led detention (onsite or virtual) ○ Teacher-led detention (onsite or virtual) ○ Parent meeting (on-site or virtual)

Level II: Behaviors in the community that are more serious in nature that are managed by administrative staff (School Based Leadership Teams).	Consequences/Interventions
○ Academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating on an assessment) ○ Bullying, threatening, or intimidating others verbally, physically, in writing or electronically (first incident) ○ By-standing during inappropriate or unsafe behavior (i.e., watching a fight) ○ Cell Phone/Airpod Violation ○ Creating unsafe/uncomfortable environment among peers ○ Failure to attend an assigned System of Accountability	○ School Based Leader follows a protocol which can include, • Administrator/security removal • Reflection/reset with student • Write-up in Deanslist/family contact • Assign a System of Accountability consequence (Ex. Detention,

○ Forgery of passes ○ Horseplay (ie. play fighting, agreed upon playful physical contact) ○ Inappropriate behavior during assemblies/fire drills ○ Inappropriate computer/phone/internet usage ○ Inappropriate displays of affection ○ Inappropriate comments/gestures ○ Inappropriate language/profanity directed at staff or student(s) ○ Lying or giving misleading information to staff ○ Uniform violation: • no tie • untucked shirt • no belt • inappropriate shirt • Hoodie • Hat • wrong shoes • Wrong pants ○ Not following repeated directions/instructions from staff member ○ Physical /verbal contact that could lead to a fight /bullying ○ Possessing, selling, buying, distributing any unauthorized items for personal gain (i.e.: selling candy) ○ Removal from class by Teacher/Staff request ○ Repeated Level I Violations (2 or more) ○ Unauthorized area without permission/trespassing (area is labeled not for scholars) ○ Walking out of class/Leaving class without permission ○ Writing or tagging that is not permanent or etched/engraved into school property	Saturday Academy, restorative consequence) • Follow-up meeting with student and impacted staff and/or students. ○ Restorative option (as deemed appropriate) ○ Short term suspension if the student has willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person ○ In-school suspension (whole day or partial day) ○ Parent/guardian conference ○ System of Accountability • School Level Detention • Saturday Detention • Discipline Modification Class ○ Individual behavior modification plan ○ Disciplinary probation and/or a behavioral contract

Level III: Behaviors that impact the safety of the community and that are managed by the School Based Leadership Team	**Consequences/Interventions**
○ Communicating slurs based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex , age, marital status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, sexual orientation, disability, source of income, status as a victim of a family offense, or place of residence or business, including derogatory ○ Destruction of school property ○ Egregious disrespect that causes emotional distress to scholars and/or staff ○ Falsifying academic documents ○ Instigating or inciting violence ○ Leaving school without permission ○ Offensive gestures that are physically threatening ○ Offensive gestures that are sexual in nature	○ School Based Leadership Team Follows a protocol which can include, • administrator/security removal • reflection/reset with student • Write-up in Deanslist/family contact • 1 to 10 day suspension re-entry meeting (with parent, student, and/or impacted staff and/or student(s)). ○ Restorative option (as deemed appropriate). ○ In-school suspension (whole day or partial day)

○ Physical Contact that can lead to an altercation (this can be horseplay, play fighting, etc.) on a staff or student ○ Possession of lighter/igniter/matches or tobacco ○ Possession or distribution of drug paraphernalia (ie. rolling papers) ○ Theft (under to $200) ○ Vandalism (under $20O) ○ Posting or distributing material that is demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to students/staff to include mutual combat ○ Reckless behavior that could cause harm ○ Repeated Level I & II violations (excessive/repetitive as deemed by School Leadership Team) ○ Skipping class (missing an entire class w/o notice or a pass) ○ Including being found out of area during class time ○ Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other Level that causes disruption to the academic environment or causes harm to self and others.	○ Temporary or long-term removal from place-based instruction (virtual learning with no in-class option)

Level IV: Behaviors that are egregious in nature and seriously impact the safety of the community that are managed by the School Based Leadership Team	**Consequences/Interventions**
○ Extortion ○ Fighting ○ Gambling ○ Hazing ○ Planned retaliation on peers that causes physical or emotional harm ○ Sexual harassment (after thorough investigation) ● Can include multiple incidents of gestures and language that is sexual in nature ○ Making physical/verbal threats to staff/peers ○ Tampering with outlets, extinguishers, fire alarms, etc. ○ Participating in a major disruption that causes safety concerns or a change in the academic day ○ Pattern of harassment or bullying (including sexual harassment, making threatening remarks, etc.) ○ Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other Level that causes significant disruption to the academic environment or causes harm to self and others. ○ Arson ○ Posting or distributing material that is demeaning, humiliating, or causes emotional distress to students/staff to include harassment Assault of staff member ○ Breach in security protocol that includes leaving the building open to outsiders or safety issues ○ Physically attacking others without retaliation including hits, slaps, strikes, spitting, etc. ○ Repeated incidents of bullying/harassment; to include sexual harassment	○ School Based Leadership Team follows a protocol that can include ○ administrator/security removal ○ reflection/reset with student ○ Write-up in Deanslist/family contact ○ Recommendation for a long term suspension or expulsion submitted to the Head of Schools or designee ○ Restorative option (as deemed appropriate) ○ Long-term removal from place-based instruction (virtual learning with no in-class option)

○ Contaminating food including the use or distribution of narcotics, medication, alcohol, etc. ○ Engaging in a group fight resulting in major injury or participating in "jumping" another student and/or students ○ Engaging in sexual acts on school premises or school related functions ○ Fighting that results in major injury ○ Gang involvement or gang related activity ○ Improper relief of bodily waste or Intentionally causing biohazard ○ Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct (including groping, disrobing or any other inappropriate touching of a sexual nature) ○ Major theft ($200+) ○ Major vandalism ($200+) ○ Possession of weapons (blades, guns, any other weapons that could be used to inflict harm) ○ Possession, distribution, or USE of drug alcohol, or any prescription drugs ○ Sexual assault ○ Causing a serious disruption or damage to school's computer systems, electronic files or network ○ Theft ○ Repeated Level 3 violations ○ Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other Level that causes major disruption to school operation, causes significant harm to self and others, and/or is illegal	

Zero Tolerance for Aggression or Threats Toward Staff

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all members of our community. **Physical aggression or threats of any kind toward staff members will not be tolerated.**

These serious behaviors undermine our school values and can result in **immediate removal from the school community** and the initiation of the **expulsion process**.

We ask that families partner with us to reinforce the importance of safety, respect, and accountability at all times.

Substance Use and Possession Policy

At Paul Public Charter School, we are committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and focused learning environment. **Scholars who are believed to be under the influence of narcotics, tobacco, or**

alcohol—including smelling of these substances—will not be permitted to remain in the school community that day and may require immediate Parent/Guardian pick-up.

If a scholar is found to be **in possession of narcotics, tobacco, or alcohol**, they will receive an **immediate consequence**, and, if necessary, be **referred to local safety or law enforcement agencies** for further support.

We expect all scholars to uphold the values of safety and responsibility. Families are essential partners in reinforcing these expectations and ensuring scholar well-being.

GANGS AND RELATED ACTIVITY

1. The Policy Statement:

Students are prohibited from being members of gangs or engaging in gang related activities in or around Paul PCS.

2. Policy Guidance:

1.Definition of "Gang" – A "Gang" means a group that identifies itself through the use of a name, distinct appearance or language, including hand signs, the claiming of geographical territory or the espousing of a distinct belief system that frequently results in unlawful activity.

2.Definition of "Gang Activity" - Gang activity includes, but is not limited to:

a. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, symbol, sign or other thing which is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang.
b. Committing any act or using verbal or nonverbal speech, including gestures, handshakes, or other such sign, that indicate membership or affiliation in a gang.
c. Using any speech or committing any act in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity including, but not limited to:
    i. Soliciting others for membership in a gang

    ii.Requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating, threatening, or harassing any person

    iii.Committing any illegal act or other violation of school rules or policy

    iv.Inciting other students to act with physical violence or other form of harassment against any other person.

    v.Paint, write or otherwise inscribe gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols, or signs on school supplies or school property.

3. Consequences- Any student engaging in any gang or gang-related activity shall face disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion and notification of the police.

BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION POLICY

A. PURPOSE- Paul PCS is committed to fostering an environment on Paul PCS's campus and at School activities that is free of bullying, sexual harassment or intimidation all of which are disruptive to learning and can adversely affect academic achievement, emotional well-being, and school climate.

B. DEFINITION: Paul PCS, in accordance with the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, defines "Bullying" as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intra-family offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and

2. Can be reasonably predicted to:
   a. Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property;
   b. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
   c. Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
   d. Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

C. DEFINITION-

Paul PCS prohibits acts of bullying and sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes sexual violence, which the school defines as physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. Sexual harassment can be carried out by school employees, students, or third parties.

Bullying and sexual harassment are strictly prohibited on school grounds and immediately adjacent property, at school-sponsored events, on transportation to and from school or school-sponsored events, through use of electronic devices that are the property of the school, and at any location/function not school-related and through personal electronic devices if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim or witnesses or that materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of

the school. In determining the appropriate response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying or sexual harassment, School Leaders will consider the following factors: the developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved, the levels of harm, the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behaviors, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Determining whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy and the appropriate consequence for violations of this policy from among the consequences detailed in the Code of Conduct Policy will be based on the facts and surrounding circumstances of each violation.

D. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Paul PCS works to prevent and manage bullying of and by our students using the following methods:

- ●Conducting annual professional development to increase understanding and awareness of the prevalence, causes and consequences of bullying, harassment and intimidation
- ●Educating staff on research-based strategies on how to prevent bullying in the classroom, as well as how to foster an environment that is inclusive to all people.
- ●Communicating with families about the prevalence, causes and consequences for bullying.
- ●Providing support and counseling for victims of bullying to address social-emotional welfare, as well as for those identified as bullies to educate the bully of the long term effects this treatment can have on the victim.
- ●Providing curriculum regarding bullying and how students can foster an accepting environment and a positive school climate for teaching in homerooms.
- ● Providing a systematic way for students to communicate anonymously with School Leaders when bullying is taking place in the building, at school activities, or electronically using school equipment.

E. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND RANGE OF CONSEQUENCES

Paul PCS takes bullying seriously. Accordingly, we not only teach better skills to bullies, bystanders and victims, but also provide serious consequences for bullies and those that instigate or standby without offering safe and appropriate support to victims with the aim of correcting the bullying behavior. The goals of our interventions are to both prevent future occurrence of bullying, bully-like behavior, or retaliation as well as to protect and support the target of the bullying.

Paul PCS expects our scholars to behave in a way that supports Paul PCS's intent to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all of our students, staff and community members. MERIT Scholars are expected to:

- ● Treat all members of the Paul PCS community with respect;
- ● Respect the property of Paul PCS, its staff, and other students connected to Paul PCS;
- ● Respond appropriately to instructions from all Paul PCS staff.

Students who do not meet these expectations will be held accountable for their actions in accordance with our Code of Conduct Policy. The range in consequences and assigned infraction Levels are diverse in order that we may consider all the details of a bullying incident to include: severity of incident, nature of the incident, developmental ages of the students involved (as targets, bullies or bystanders), and any history of problem behavior from the person exhibiting bullying behavior. Additional or unique consequences to fit a particular situation may be assigned beyond those outlined here as deemed appropriate by school Administration.

Students who are identified as bullies may be required to make apologies or participate in mediations with the students that are identified as victims. Students who are identified as bystanders, those that are contributing to an unsafe environment (i.e. recording, sharing, commenting on, instigating, etc.), will also earn consequences. Decisions around these responses are made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the comfort-level and safety of the victim. Our priority is to create a safe and purposeful learning environment for all students—victims, bystanders and bullies.

F. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

1. REPORTING

One of the great challenges that Paul PCS faces in addressing bullying is underreporting. We aim to create an environment in which all stakeholders will feel safe informing school Administrators of concerns that impact student safety. Our School website provides a venue for anonymous reporting of concerns. This forum allows students to report concerns anonymously. We provide information to students and staff on all of these ways to report concerns to school officials.

Students are encouraged to share with adults (teachers, support staff or Administrators) whenever they hear of or see bullying or are themselves being bullied. Students can speak confidentially to a Paul PCS staff member or may write a note or incident report and turn it into a counselor or Administrator either openly or anonymously. All reports of bullying received by Paul PCS staff will be forwarded to the Dean of Students or another available School Administrator and will be investigated promptly. (See below for contact information.) Any Paul PCS employee who witnesses, receives an oral or written account of, or otherwise reasonably suspects the occurrence of, any act constituting harassment, discrimination or bullying must promptly notify the Principal both verbally and in writing. All students, parents and guardians, visitors and others are strongly encouraged to report any such conduct. Retaliation or reprisal by any employee or student against any individual who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of harassment, discrimination or bullying is strictly prohibited and will result in severe discipline.

2. INVESTIGATION

When investigating a case of potential bullying, the School shall question all students who are involved or who may have knowledge of the bullying incident. We will use the information gathered from these investigations to determine consequences and design supports for students who are the victims of bullying. The School will maintain the confidentiality of all information about bullying provided by a student to an adult unless a student is in danger of hurting himself or herself or another person or there are signs that a student is experiencing abuse. We will not share information provided to us by suspected victims unless the suspected victim requests mediation or another intervention by Administrators. We will take all appropriate steps to protect suspected victims of bullying during the course of the investigation process. The individual responsible for conducting the investigation will be responsible for making determinations about confidentiality. Any time a student is feeling bullied or knows of bullying, she or he should contact the nearest adult to make a confidential report as soon as practicable. Likewise, parents or guardians who have concerns about potential or suspected bullying are encouraged to make a confidential report to the Dean of Students, Academic Dean, or Principal and are asked to

support their targeted or by-stander children in making a report. This support from parents and guardians is critical in helping us reduce unreported incidents of bullying and thus will contribute to an overall decrease in bullying behavior in our school. The School will contact the parents or guardians of victims and bullies to report the finding of a bullying investigation.

3. APPEAL PROCESS

An appeal process is in place for a person accused of bullying, a target of bullying, and anyone who is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation. A request for an appeal may be submitted by the appellant to the CEO in writing within 30 days of the conclusion of the initial investigation. The CEO will review the relevant information and will initiate a secondary investigation if she or he determines that additional information is needed. The secondary investigation shall be completed within 30 days of receipt of the appeal, unless the CEO determines, in her or his reasonable judgment, that the circumstances require additional time to complete a thorough investigation and sets forth such circumstances in writing shared with the accused. In any event, the investigation shall be concluded within 45 days of receipt of the appeal.

When an appeal is filed, the School shall notify the appellant of the right to seek further redress under the Human Rights Act.

4. IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION: The personnel listed below are available to assist any student, parent or guardian, or staff with any questions and/or concerns regarding bullying and/or harassment.

HS Principal- Georgia Kirby, gkirby@paulcharter.org
Middle School Principal- Whitney Lane, wlane@paulcharter.org
Head of Schools-Shendrina Walker, swalker@paulcharter.org
Assistant Director of Culture, Climate and Support- NaKeisha Jones-Helton, njones-helton@paulcharter.org

G. SUPPORT SERVICES

If a student expresses a desire to discuss an incident of bullying, harassment or intimidation with a staff member or Administrator, such staff member or Administrator shall promptly take steps to provide the student with a safe, private environment to discuss the incident and shall notify the school counselor, social worker, or school psychologist so she or he can address the social-emotional needs of the victim or target, as well as those of the student who is accused of bullying, harassment or intimidation.

The School shall maintain and make readily available to students and families a list of support services that are available to students who are bullied and those who bully within our schools and the community.

H. ANNUAL REVIEW

At the end of each school year, School Leaders will review bullying data in order to assess whether Paul PCS's bully prevention policy needs to be changed in any way. This data will be shared with all stakeholders and their feedback will be solicited to help us continue to improve our policy

EXPULSION

Students may be recommended for expulsion from Paul PCS and referred to the proper authorities for the following offenses all of which are classified as Level IV offenses:

- Tampering with electrical outlets or fire extinguishers
- Arson, starting fires, or playing with igniters
- Possession of explosives on school grounds
- Attacking a student or staff member
- Possession, distribution or use of drug paraphernalia, alcohol, marijuana or any drugs/narcotics (over-the-counter, controlled, or illegal) regardless of amount or type
- Possession or use of a weapon of any kind (including, but not limited to air rifles, BB guns, guns, or any other weapons that could be used to inflict harm)
- Sexual assault
- Fighting that results in major injury
- Theft using force, coercion, intimidation or threat of violence
- Bodily injury or emotional distress to another person

Students recommended by Paul PCS staff for expulsion shall immediately be placed on out-of-school suspension. The Dean of Students or his or her designee shall immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) by telephone and inform them of the reason(s) for the recommendation for expulsion. The School shall also send parent(s) or guardian(s) a copy of the written notice recommending expulsion.

Due to the severity of these Level IV infractions, Paul PCS staff may, in their sole discretion, contact local authorities to report these infractions. Paul PCS staff will consider whether the behavior can be safely and appropriately handled through school-based disciplinary action before involving law enforcement. Additionally, the Principal may, in her or his sole discretion, recommend for expulsion a student who repeatedly engages in Level III offenses, or has multiple short-term suspensions.

STUDENT SAFETY AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Paul PCS is not an organization that uses physical intervention as a regular way of ensuring student and staff safety. Appropriate personnel are trained, however, in physical intervention so that, on the rare occasion that physical intervention becomes necessary for the safety and well-being of the child and/or of other students or adults in the school building, they are equipped to employ it. Paul PCS is committed to using physical intervention only as a very last resort in an attempt to keep student(s) and staff safe.

SHORT-TERM (1-5 Days) OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

School Administration may impose a short-term suspension on a student as a consequence of certain inappropriate behaviors. Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Dean of Culture or his/her designee will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the

student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. The Dean of Students or his/her designee will conduct any investigation necessary to determine what occurred before suspending a student except in the case of an emergency where the safety of the student, other students, or staff is at risk. Short-term suspensions will be recommended by the Dean of Students and must be approved by the School Principal or his/her designee. Once the decision to suspend has been made and approved, the Dean of Culture or his/her designee will contact the student's parent or guardian by telephone on the day that the infraction occurs. In addition, school Administration will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing that the student has been suspended from school. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident, or incidents, which resulted in the suspension and shall offer the opportunity for a conference with the school Administration.

Only the Dean of Culture may recommend short-term suspensions and they must be approved by the School Principal or his/her designee. There is no right of appeal for short-term suspensions. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the School from immediately removing a student from Paul PCS property and activities when there is a reasonable belief that the student's continued presence may endanger either the health or safety of any individual or the effective operation of the School.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS (6 Days or more)

A student who is determined by school administration to have committed a Level 4 infraction listed may be subject to a long-term suspension, unless the school Administration determines that an exception should be made based on the circumstance of the incident and the student's disciplinary record. Such a student may also be subject to any of the disciplinary measures outlined elsewhere in this document; referral to law enforcement authorities; and/or expulsion.

Only the Principal may recommend a long-term suspension. Such a recommendation may be made final only after a hearing and determination by a preponderance of the evidence that the student violated the Code of Conduct Policy in a way that warrants long-term suspension. Long-term suspension hearings are presided over by the Head of Schools.

Upon determining that the student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Principal or his or her designee will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. The Principal or his or her designee shall immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing of any suspension or pending investigation. The school will endeavor to conduct and conclude its investigation within 2-3 business days after the occurrence of the alleged infraction. The School shall give parent(s) and guardian(s) of the student written notice by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 48 hours of the suspension at the parent(s) or guardian(s) last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident, or incidents which resulted in the proposal of a long-term suspension and shall propose two dates for a suspension hearing. The notification and hearing shall be conducted in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardians(s). All relevant information will be provided to the parent and student at least 48 hours before the suspension hearing. At the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee, students who are

recommended for long-term suspension and awaiting a hearing will not be permitted to return to school or participate in school activities. At the suspension hearing, the Principal or his or her designee will present the information relied on to support the recommendation for the long-term suspension; the student will be given an opportunity to fully respond to that information; the student may present any information that he/she wants the decision maker to consider. The Head of Schools will serve as the impartial decision maker and issue a final decision regarding long-term suspension after considering all of the information presented at the hearing. The final decision will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian within 48 hours of the hearing.

In the event of an incident for which a student is assigned a long term suspension, before the student may resume attending classes, the Dean of Culture or her or his designee shall hold a re-entry conference with the student and his parent(s) or guardian(s) to discuss: 1) expectations regarding transitioning back to school; and 2) review of a mandatory Formal Behavior Contract. Attendance by the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) is suggested. If the student violates the provisions of the Formal Behavior Contract, the student may be recommended for expulsion and will not be allowed to re-enroll for the next school year. Paul PCS will follow mandated due process procedures, in accordance with DC and other applicable law, to address any infractions.

EXPULSION HEARINGS

Expulsion from Paul PCS will be the last step in a process that aims to correct a student's poor behavioral habits. If a student commits frequent and/or serious infractions, that student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the behavioral problems and a conference with the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be requested for purposes of creating an intervention plan designed to correct the student's behavior.

If an intervention plan fails to improve the student's behavior, or if a student commits a Level IV infraction, the Principal may recommend such student for expulsion. Before issuing a recommendation for expulsion, however, the school shall take the following steps to ensure due process:

- The Principal or other school leader (the "School Leader") shall meet with the student, notify the student that a recommendation for expulsion is being considered and why, and give the student an opportunity to present his or her side of the story or explanation for his or her behavior. The School Leader will conduct any investigation necessary to determine what occurred before making a recommendation for expulsion. At the School Leader's sole discretion, a student facing possible recommendation for expulsion may be suspended pending the investigation and recommendation. The school will endeavor to complete the investigation within 3 days after the notice of the recommendation is given to the student.
- The School shall provide written notice of the recommendation for expulsion and basis for that recommendation to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
- The School Leader shall notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing of any suspension and/or pending investigation. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 48 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident, or incidents, which resulted in the proposal of expulsion and shall propose two dates for the expulsion

hearing. The notification and formal conference shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

- The School shall notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the scheduled expulsion recommendation hearing date and time. The expulsion recommendation hearing must be held within ten (10) school days of delivery of the notice of the recommended expulsion to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
- The School shall provide a copy of all relevant information to the parent(s) or guardian(s) and student at least 3 days before the expulsion hearing. Students who are recommended for expulsion and awaiting a hearing will not be permitted to return to school or participate in any school activities. At the expulsion hearing, the School Leader will present the information relied on to support the recommendation for expulsion; the student will be given an opportunity to fully respond to that information; and the student may present any information that he or she wants the decision-maker to consider. The Head of Schools shall serve as the impartial decision maker, along with an independent hearing officer, and will issue a final decision regarding the expulsion after considering all of the information presented at the hearing. The final decision regarding the expulsion shall be provided in writing to the parent(s) and guardian(s) within 72 hours after the hearing concludes.
- If a parent or guardian and/or the student do not attend the expulsion recommendation hearing, the hearing will be held without the students and the decision made will be final.
- A scholar who is expelled may not apply for readmission into Paul PCS.
- When appropriate and feasible, the School will assist an expelled student with arrangements for an involuntary transfer to another school.
- Parents who wish to appeal an expulsion decision can submit that appeal to the CEO.
- Students on suspension pending a hearing are not permitted on the Paul PCS campus to attend school activities or functions. They will be granted access to virtual instruction for each of their classes for that period of time.

Disciplinary Actions Involving Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to adhere to the behavioral expectations outlined in the Paul PCS Code of Conduct. At Paul PCS, our goal is to proactively manage student behavior using a full system of positive behavioral supports. Should a student with a disability engage in behaviors that result in out of school suspension, our LEA adheres to the following procedural guidelines as described in federal regulations governing the discipline of students with disabilities. Should a student be removed from school for more than 10 days, this immediately constitutes a change of placement which requires a manifestation determination review meeting. Parents and guardians will thus be immediately notified of the change in placement, provided a copy of the procedural safeguards and invited to attend the Manifestation Determination Review.

Manifestation Determination Process for Student with Disabilities

When a student with a disability engages in a behavior that warrants a 10 consecutive day suspension, or 10 cumulative day suspensions in a school year, the Student Support Coordinator will notify the parent/guardian to schedule a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting. At the MDR meeting, the LEA representative (Special Education Compliance Officer or Director of Student Support Services), the parent, and IEP Team will determine the following:

    - If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.
- If the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability.

When must the MDR team consider a behavior as a manifestation of the student's disability?

The MDR team must find a behavior as a manifestation of a student's disability, if the MDR team determines that either the conduct in question was:

- The direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP. OR
- The conduct was by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability.

When must the MDR team determine that the behavior of the child was not a manifestation of such child's disability?

The MDR team must find a behavior is NOT a manifestation of a student's disability, if the MDR team determines that either the conduct in question was NOT:

- The direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the AND
- Caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability.

What happens if the MDR team determines that the student's misbehavior was a manifestation of their disability?

- The IEP must be reviewed and revised as appropriate. The team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the local educational agency had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- In the situation where a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior
- Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the local educational agency agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

- If the school believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the school may request a due process hearing to remove the student to an interim alternative educational setting.

Special Circumstances

There are situations when a student with a disability can be removed from school for up to 45 school days without regard to whether their behavior was a manifestation of their disability. These situations include:

- Possession of a weapon on school premises or during a school function
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises or during a school function
- Infliction of serious bodily injury on school premises or during a school function

With parent consent, the IEP team reserves the right to change a student's placement at any time.

What happens if the MDR team determines that the student's misbehavior was not a manifestation of their disability?

- The relevant disciplinary procedures applicable to children without disabilities may be applied to the child in the same manner in which they would be applied to children without disabilities.
- If the school initiates disciplinary procedures applicable to all children, the school shall ensure that the special education and disciplinary records of the child with a disability are transmitted for consideration by the person or persons making the final determination regarding the disciplinary action.
- The school must continue to make FAPE available to the student.

- If the parent does not agree, the parent may exercise their right to request a hearing.

What decisions does the Hearing Officer make when an appeal is made:

- Return a child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed; or
- Order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate alternative interim educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

Where is the student placed during the appeals?

- When a parent requests a hearing regarding a disciplinary action or to challenge the interim alternative educational setting, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the LEA agree otherwise.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Social-Emotional Learning and Counseling Support

At Paul Public Charter School, we believe in nurturing the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally. Our counseling and social-emotional learning (SEL) supports are designed to help all scholars succeed in school and in life. We are committed to building a strong foundation of mental wellness and emotional intelligence for every scholar, every day. Our counselors and social workers are essential partners in that mission.

SEL Education

Our school counselors lead SEL education across both campuses, delivering lessons and supports that build key social and emotional skills. In addition to our in-house team, we partner with community-based organizations to provide additional counseling and therapeutic support at both the middle and high school levels.

School Counselors

Each grade level is assigned a dedicated school counselor who provides support in three main areas:

- Academic guidance
- Behavioral support
- Social-emotional development

Counselors are available to all students and serve as their primary advocates alongside teachers. They work with students individually, in small groups, and in classroom settings. Their services may include:

- Check-ins and wellness monitoring
- Academic counseling and goal-setting
- Group or individual counseling
- Family support sessions
- Classroom SEL lessons
- Post-secondary and college planning (especially at the high school level)

Counselors also collaborate closely with families and staff to ensure each student is supported holistically.

Social Workers

Each campus has a school social worker who primarily supports scholars receiving special education services. They focus on helping students meet their behavioral goals and provide:

- Individual and group counseling
- Classroom-based (push-in) support
- Crisis intervention services for any scholar when needed

Telehealth and Virtual Support

For scholars participating in distance learning or those who need additional flexibility, telehealth counseling services are available on an as-needed basis. These services help ensure that every scholar can access emotional and behavioral support—even remotely.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AT PAUL PCS

Paul PCS believes all students, including those with disabilities, can achieve at high levels. We are committed to ensuring our students receive exceptional instruction in the least restrictive environment. Based on this commitment, we provide a range of support services in the general education setting to ensure that our students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) remain in that setting and are only removed when necessary to meet their learning needs. Our special education program is designed to provide access to our students with disabilities through IEPs and 504 plans.

As of July 1, 2017, Paul PCS became its local education agency (LEA) for Special Education. We are responsible for all aspects of Special Education, including testing, classification, and provision of services to students with disabilities. The Special Education team comprises a diverse range of skilled professionals, including, but not limited to, inclusion teachers, social workers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and psychologists. These team members collaborate with general education teachers, English Learner teachers, and one another to provide students with disabilities the necessary instructional environment, tools, and support to benefit from their special education program and access the general education curriculum.

The top priorities of Paul PCS's Special Education Program are:

- To identify students with disabilities through a rigorous and timely referral, evaluation, and eligibility process; and;
- To provide exemplary services to students with disabilities so that they may meet their IEP goals.

Special education services can be provided for students through distance learning. Paul PCS works diligently to ensure that students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) receive special education services in conjunction with general education services to the greatest extent possible.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

When a student with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) faces disciplinary action that results in a change of placement for more than ten consecutive or cumulative school days within a school year, it triggers the need for a **Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)**. This review is essential to determine whether the behavior that led to the disciplinary action is related to the student's disability.

Notification and Meeting:
Upon deciding to take disciplinary action, the school will notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) on the same day. A meeting will then be scheduled as soon as possible, bringing together the IEP Team—which includes a representative of the LEA (Local Educational Agency), the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), and other relevant members—to assess the relationship between the student's behavior and their disability.

Criteria for Determination:
During the MDR, the IEP Team will consider:

- Was the behavior in question caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?
- Whether the behavior directly resulted from the LEA's failure to implement the IEP.

If either of these criteria is met, the behavior is considered a manifestation of the student's disability.

The outcome of Behavior is a Manifestation:
If the MDR concludes that the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP Team must:

1. **Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** If an FBA has not been conducted previously, it must be completed, and a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) must be implemented.
2. **Review and Modify the BIP:** If a BIP was already in place, the IEP Team must review and modify it to address the behavior.
3. **Return to Placement:** The student must be returned to their previous placement unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the LEA agree to a different placement as part of the BIP modifications.

Outcome if Behavior is Not a Manifestation:
If the MDR determines that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability:

- The school may apply the same disciplinary procedures as it would for students without disabilities.
- However, the student must continue to receive FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), which includes access to the general education curriculum and services outlined in their IEP during the period of disciplinary action.

Post-MDR Actions:

- **For Manifestation:** If behavior is found to be a manifestation, the IEP Team will review and revise the IEP as appropriate and initiate or update the FBA and BIP.
- **For Non-Manifestation:** If behavior is not a manifestation, disciplinary action may proceed, but the student's education must continue under the provisions of FAPE.

Appeals Process:
If there is disagreement with the MDR outcome, the parent(s) or guardian(s) can request a hearing before a Hearing Officer. The student may remain in an interim alternative educational setting pending the Hearing Officer's decision or until the expiration of the disciplinary period, whichever comes first unless an alternative arrangement is agreed upon.

Hearing Officer's Decision:
The Hearing Officer has the authority to:

- **Return the student** to their original placement.
- **Order a change in placement** to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days if the current placement is deemed substantially likely to injure the student or others.

If you have any questions about our Special Education Services, please contact Caitlin McGinnis, our Assistant Director of Special Populations, at cmcginnis@paulcharter.org.

ENGLISH LEARNERS SUPPORT

Paul PCS provides quality instructional language assistance to students identified as English Learners. Our program model is designed to meet the individual needs of each student and ensure that English Learners are held to the same high standards as native English speakers. The English Learner Instructional model combines three approaches: Sheltered Content Instruction, Inclusion, and English Language Development classes. In its English Language Development classes, Paul PCS uses the English Language Development (ELD) standards created by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium.

The mission of our English Learner Program is to ensure that all English Learners develop the linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and self-concept skills to participate fully and successfully academically and socially at Paul PCS and beyond. The English Learner Program is equally committed to creating a safe and positive environment that respects, understands, and celebrates the diverse languages and cultures of our community.
The English Learner team is responsible for and committed to providing English Learner services that are both adequate and appropriate. This is achieved by careful screening and close monitoring of all English Learners. The language development of English Learner students is the responsibility of both English Learner teachers and general education teachers. The English Learner Team provides the following specific services:

- Support general education teachers in determining the educational goals and learning outcomes of English learners.
- Support general education teachers with curriculum materials and instruction (based on the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards) on teaching the four components of English Learner literacy: Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Listening.
- Provide direct instruction, based on the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards, through ELD course offerings.
- Collaborate with general education teachers to interpret state, local, and classroom assessments and help teachers structure their instruction to support language and academic growth as identified through these assessments.
- Provide general education teachers with background information on the emotional and social needs of students and families, especially students who have experienced interrupted formal education due to trauma.

If you have questions about our English Learner Services, please contact our Manager of English Language Instructions, Leandra Gonzalez - lgonzalez@paulcharter.org.

STUDENTS WITH 504 PLANS

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with disabilities are entitled to accommodations and services that enable them to access grade-level curriculum without discrimination. This law prohibits public schools from discriminating against individuals with disabilities and guarantees them equal access to all school programs and activities. Additionally, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends these protections by prohibiting discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities by public entities, including public schools, regardless of whether they receive federal financial assistance.

Eligibility and Services:

Section 504 defines a disability as any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as learning, reading, concentrating, or interacting with others. Unlike the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 does not require that the disability have an adverse educational impact; it only requires that the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Students eligible under Section 504 are provided with a written plan that outlines the necessary accommodations, services, and supports designed to meet their individual needs as effectively as those of students without disabilities. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- School health services
- Counseling services

Implementation and Monitoring:

All staff members responsible for students under a 504 Plan must be informed and trained on their responsibilities to ensure proper implementation. Failing to implement the plan can have legal implications. Schools must periodically review and update 504 Plans at least once per year to ensure that they continue to meet the students' needs effectively.

Distance Learning:
Paul PCS will provide accommodations and services to the greatest extent possible for students participating in distance learning under Section 504. The school is committed to ensuring that all students with 504 Plans receive the support they need to access the curriculum and participate fully in their education, even in a remote setting.

Child Find Obligation:
Paul PCS has an affirmative obligation under Section 504 to identify and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities that require special education or related services. If you believe your child could benefit from a 504 Plan, or if you have any concerns about your child's access to education due to a disability, please immediately contact your Student Support Coordinator.

For more information or questions regarding our Section 504 services, please contact our Assistant Director of Special Populations, Caitlin McGinnis, at cmcginnis@paulcharter.org.

- Mahko Connard (Middle School - 5th to 8th grades)- mconnard@paulcharter.org
- Kimberly Mims (High School- 9th and 10th grades) - kmims@paulcharter.org
- Nicolas Sardella (High School- 11th and 12th)- nsardella@paulcharter.org

Home and Hospital Instruction

If your child is facing a physical, mental health, or medical condition that prevents them from attending school in person for 10 or more days, they may be eligible for Home and Hospital Instruction (HHI). This program enables students to continue receiving instruction in core subjects while recovering at home or in the hospital, ensuring they stay on track with their learning and can transition smoothly back to school.

To apply, families should contact their grade-level Student Support Coordinator (SSC) for assistance. A written application and medical certification from a licensed provider are required. Once submitted, families will be notified of the decision within five calendar days. If approved, a plan will be created outlining the instruction schedule and services.

For students with an IEP or suspected disability, the appropriate team will ensure services meet special education requirements. If families disagree with a decision, they have the right to appeal through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

If you believe your child may qualify, please reach out to your SSC as soon as possible to begin the process.

OSSE School Bus Parent Portal

Families of students with active IEPs that include transportation services will now use the OSSE Parent Portal to submit transportation preferences. This online platform enables parents and guardians to select and update their child's transportation arrangements to and from school.

What Families Need to Do:

Log in to the OSSE Parent Portal and choose one of the following transportation options:

1. Will Not Need Transportation – Your child will not use OSSE-provided transportation.

2. Parent Stipend Program – You will transport your child and receive a monthly stipend. (Note: Supporting documentation is required, and student attendance will be verified.)

3. OSSE-DOT Bus Transportation – Your child will ride an OSSE bus. You must provide accurate home and school addresses.

Need Help?

Families can request support from their grade-level Student Support Coordinator (SSC) or access resources provided by OSSE, including step-by-step training videos available within the portal.

For additional questions, call the OSSE Parent Resource Center at (202) 576-5000 or email osse.parentportal@dc.gov.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

PAUL PCS FIELD TRIPS

Teachers are encouraged to use the resources of the city and surrounding areas to enhance learning by organizing field trips. Student participation in field trips is mandatory except in cases where student conduct is not acceptable or the signed permission of a parent or guardian has not been received. Students are expected to return their permission slips at least 2 days prior to the day of a trip. Only those students who have returned a completed and signed permission slip authorizing them to attend the field trip may participate.

All Paul PCS Scholars, including students over the age of 18, must have parental or guardian consent to attend a field trip.

Note: At the school's sole discretion, a parent/guardian chaperone may be required as a condition for allowing any student to attend a field trip. If a parent/guardian is not able to accompany the student, the student will not be allowed to attend the field trip.

ACADEMIC FIELD TRIP CRITERIA

All academic field trips must meet the minimum criteria established below to be considered for approval.

- Trips must align to content-specific standards. Note: Exceptions for incentive field trips will be approved by a school administrator and Head of Schools.
- Teachers must follow the Paul approval process and timeline outlined in ***the Paul PCS Employee Handbook and Paul PCS Operations Handbook.***
- ***Planning should never begin for any field trip until all required signatures have been obtained on the Field Trip Request Form. A copy of all field trip request forms will be kept by the school administration. Out-of-state field trips must be approved by the Head of Schools, and international field trips must be approved by the Head of Schools and CEO (or designated Executive director)***
- Teachers cannot schedule trips during blackout dates (i.e. assessment windows)

MERIT SCHOLARS FIELD TRIP EXPECTATIONS

Field trips are an extension of the Paul Public Charter School learning experience. Participation is both a privilege and a responsibility. Scholars are expected to embody the school's core values of MERIT — Motivated, Empowered, Responsible, Independent Thinkers — throughout all field trip experiences.

In order to participate in school-sponsored field trips, scholars must demonstrate positive behavior and uphold the following expectations:

Paul PCS Scholars Will:

- Use an appropriate noise level at all times, as directed by Paul staff or designated chaperones.
- Follow all directions given by Paul staff and parent chaperones promptly and respectfully.
- Remain with their assigned group at all times unless granted permission by a chaperone.
- Demonstrate respect and courtesy to all adults and community members encountered during the trip.
- Use appropriate language and gestures at all times.
  Avoid any behavior that could be perceived as violent, including physical aggression, threats, or intimidation.
- Refrain from taking or handling others' belongings without permission.
- Remain with their assigned group at all times

Accountability and Consequences

Scholars who fail to meet field trip expectations may face disciplinary action. This may include:

- Parent contact and removal from the trip
- Loss of privilege to be with their group and reassigned to another group
- Assigned to a system of accountability depending on the nature of the violation
- Ineligibility to participate in the next scheduled field trip or other school-sponsored activities

Note: Any decision regarding disciplinary action will be made by school administration, based on the nature and severity of the behavior.

Upholding Our Reputation

Field trips offer a valuable opportunity for scholars to learn beyond the classroom and represent our school community in the broader world. It is imperative that all Paul PCS scholars conduct themselves with integrity, respect, and responsibility during these experiences. A single group's behavior has the power to impact the reputation of our entire school community.

We ask families to review these expectations with their scholars before each field trip to ensure a safe, respectful, and enriching experience for all.

Field Trip Attendance

Scholars who are not attending a scheduled field trip are still required to report to school. Field trip days are considered instructional days.

Any scholar who remains home on a field trip day without an approved excuse will receive an unexcused absence, which may negatively impact their academic standing and eligibility to participate in future school events and activities.

Field Trip Days/Half Days

Scholars are required to attend school every day, including on **field trip days** and **half days**. **Missing school on these days will be marked as an unexcused absence** and can impact both attendance records and academic grades. We appreciate your partnership in ensuring consistent attendance and academic success.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

The mission and purpose of our extended day program, which includes all clubs and activities, is to provide engaging and enriching activities to help your scholar discover her or his talents and improve on skills needed to be well-rounded, college-prepared, and globally competent. Scholars can showcase their

talents by participating in various culminating school-wide functions to inform parents and guardians of those skills and experiences learned and acquired from the activities.

Program Benefits:

- Exposes your child to various skills and trades
- Enables your child to explore possible activities not covered during the instructional day
- Facilitated by dedicated teaching staff at no additional cost to families
- Provides a well-structured environment for your child during after-school hours
- Builds positive relationships between students and staff in a safe and nurturing environment
- Targets the school's core values: Achievement, Addressing the Needs of the Whole-Child, Collaboration, Community, Diversity, and Responsibility

Through the Extended Day Program, scholars can have a quiet place to study and work, the time to develop special skills and interests, and the chance to explore meaningful relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults. These 21st-century skills give our scholars an advantage as they continue to develop an understanding of themselves as ambassadors of their communities. Therefore, our programs are designed to expand students' knowledge of the activities they are enrolled in and to build a greater interest in new activities and experiences.

Each year, clubs and activities may vary. Please see the Extended Day packet (distributed at Back-to-School Night) or view the website for detailed information. Families will complete a club and activity agreement to ensure that all students maintain attendance, academic, and culture standards. A student's participation in extended day activities can be suspended due to academic or behavioral status.

ATHLETICS

Scholar-athletes at Paul PCS learn the importance of leadership, thinking critically, building team/community, and developing a healthy sense of self. As ambassadors of our school, our scholars have come to see that participation in competitive sports facilitates understanding of the values of other cultures and their own. The athletic program will require school, coaches, teachers, and students accountability. The initial criteria for participation in the Athletics Program are below:

- Maintain a minimum GPA of *at least* 2.0, earn *at least* 200 merit points, and stay in good behavioral standing. Have at least a 2.0 from the previous marking period for initial eligibility, except for Q1.
- Maintaining an in-seat attendance of 90%
- Undergo an annual physical examination by his or her own physician or medical professional and submit a valid Universal Health Certificate before the season begins.
- Submit all required documents and waivers signed by parent(s) or guardian(s) and register for athletics using the DragonFly Max athletic management platform.

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT (SYEP)

Program Objectives:

The Paul Community School Pantry Project is designed to empower scholars by providing a hands-on learning experience in community engagement, business operations, logistics, and service leadership. This initiative will establish a student-led community store that offers food and clothing donations to those in need, sourced through partnerships with local vendors, businesses, and non-profits. The store will operate every Thursday during the 2025-2026 school year, ensuring a sustainable and impactful service to the school and the surrounding community.

Objectives & Goals

1. **Develop Leadership & Professional Skills**
2. **Enhance Community Engagement & Social Responsibility**
3. **Provide Real-World Business & Operational Experience**
4. **Strengthen Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking**
5. **Integrate OSSE Financial Literacy Standards**
6. **Encourage Collaboration & Teamwork**
7. **Create a Lasting, Sustainable Impact**

FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Parent Code of Conduct is established to ensure a positive working relationship between the School, parents/guardians, and the general community. It sets forth the expected behaviors of parents/guardians and visitors when on School property or when engaging with School personnel.

As a parent/guardian or visitor I agree to:

1. Be courteous in speech and actions;
2. Be supportive of the efforts of the School to educate my child(ren) or ward(s);
3. Meet with School staff when requested to discuss the education or behavior of my child(ren) or ward(s);
4. Contact my child/ward's teacher first regarding classroom matters before attempting to discuss such matters with other School personnel or official;
5. Sign in at the office upon entering the School and seek permission prior to going to other areas of the building;
6. Refrain from the use of profanity, verbal abuse or abusive language when talking with my child(ren) or ward(s) and School personnel;
7. Refrain from use of physical contact or force when meeting with school personnel or when on school property at all times;

8. Follow the School's chain of command when working with a School department regarding a concern related to my child(ren)/ward(s);
9. Provide a place for study at home, and ensure homework assignments are completed and turned in on time;
10. Inform School officials of changes in the home situation that may affect my student's conduct or performance;
11. Support the School's Code of Conduct Policy and its efforts to encourage an alcohol-free, drug-free, and smoke-free environment;
12. Attend Parent Action Group meetings and special events that support my child(ren) or ward(s);
13. Give 10 volunteer hours per school year; and
14. Support the Annual Fund and other development efforts of Paul PCS.

CONSEQUENCES: There are consequences when the Parent Code of Conduct is not followed. Any abusive or profane language or inappropriate physical contact on School property may result in charges being filed and offenders may be issued a no-trespassing notice. Additionally, the Metropolitan Police may be contacted in the event of any physical or verbal abuse directed at a member of the Paul PCS staff. Other consequences may include: a conference with the Chief Executive Officer, a written warning from the Chief Executive Officer and/or a meeting with the Chair of the Board of Trustees to discuss the inappropriate action(s).

Paul Public Charter School
Parent Code of Conduct
Signature Release Form

We, the Paul PCS student and parent(s)/guardian(s), understand that a failure to follow the expected policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Throughout the year, the handbook may be adjusted to meet the needs of students, parents, staff, and the school. Agreement with this handbook also means agreement with the possibility for handbook changes. If changes happen, we will notify parents and students through parent notes and during the school year. Paul PCS will also post these changes online for easy access. By signing the handbook agreement page, you are acknowledging that the handbook may change at any time.

We have read the Paul PCS Family Handbook, and we accept the policies and procedures contained within it and agree to abide by them. We expressly give our permission to Paul PCS and authorize Paul PCS to use our student's photograph and Paul PCS Photos for its authorized purposes.

_____
Printed Name of Student

_____
Signature of Student

_____
Date

_____
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

_____
Date

SUPPORTING SCHOLAR'S ACADEMICS

Parent Expectations for Scholar Office Hour Attendance

At Paul PCS, office hours are an essential opportunity for scholars to receive additional academic support, clarify misunderstandings, and strengthen their skills. To ensure scholars take full advantage of this resource, we ask that parents support in the following ways:

- **Monitor and Encourage Attendance**: Stay informed about your scholar's academic progress and encourage them to attend office hours when recommended by a teacher or when they are struggling in a subject.

- **Communicate with Teachers**: Maintain open communication with your scholar's teachers to understand when office hour attendance is necessary and how it supports your child's learning.

- **Help with Scheduling**: Ensure that your scholar's schedule allows for timely attendance at office hours, including transportation if needed.

- **Promote Accountability**: Follow up with your scholar after office hours to ask what they worked on and how it helped, reinforcing the value of seeking help when needed.

When families partner with the school in this way, it greatly increases the chances of scholar success.

PowerSchool Parent Portal

How to Monitor Your Child's Grades via PowerSchool

All Parents/Guardians must have a PowerSchool Parent Portal account. This account will be utilized for student registration, viewing grades, assignment tracking, attendance tracking, and document communication, etc. regarding their Student(s). This account will be accessed on either a website or app on their phone, computer, tablet, etc.

If a Parent/Guardian does not have access to their Parent Portal account, they can reach out to their school's administrators for assistance..

Monitoring your child's academic progress is easy and accessible through the **PowerSchool Parent Portal**. PowerSchool allows you to view real-time updates on your child's grades, attendance, and teacher comments.

Why It's Important to Monitor Grades

- **Stay Informed Early:** You can catch academic or attendance concerns before they become serious.
- **Support at Home:** Knowing what your child is working on allows you to support them with homework and studying.
- **Encourage Accountability:** When children know their parents are engaged, they're more likely to stay motivated and take school seriously.
- **Improve Communication:** It helps you have informed conversations with your child and their teachers.

Parent Event Requirements

At Paul Public Charter School, we envision our parents as vital collaborators in their child's academic and personal development. To foster this partnership, we require all parents to participate in **at least three school events** throughout the year. These events may include Student-Led Conferences (SLCs), parent workshops, or other school-sponsored activities.

Parent Orientation is a required event for all families to ensure a strong start to the school year.

Additionally, the following **three major events are required** for all families:

- **Back to School Night**
- **Winter Celebration**
- **Cecile Middleton Day**

Your active involvement helps strengthen our school community and directly contributes to your child's success. We look forward to partnering with you throughout the school year!

Parent Grade Appeal

We recommend parents review their scholar's grades at least once per week in Powerschool.
At the end of the advisory, parents should receive their child's report card within the last 10 days of the advisory. If a parent has a concern about a child's grade, the parent should reach out to the Principal to schedule a parent conference to discuss grades. A parent only has 5 days after the release of report cards to appeal a grade.

REPORT CARD AND PROGRESS REPORT GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

At Paul Public Charter School, we aim to ensure fair and transparent grading practices in adherence to our official grading policy. Appeals can only be made for grades on official report cards or progress reports. If you believe there has been an error in the grade earned by your child, please follow the steps below to appeal the grade:

1. **Review the Grading Policy:**
    - Before initiating an appeal, review the course syllabus and grading policy to understand the grading criteria and procedures. This information can be found in the Family Handbook.
2. **Discuss with the Instructor:**
    - Schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss your grade. This step allows for clarification of how the grade was calculated and potentially a direct resolution. Provide any evidence or documentation that supports your case.
3. **Discuss with the Principal**
    - If the issue remains unresolved after discussing it with the instructor, schedule a meeting with the school principal or designee. This step allows for the school principal to review provided documentation and address the concern.
4. **Prepare a Formal Appeal:**
    - If the issue remains unresolved after discussing it with the instructor and principal, prepare a formal appeal. Include the following in your appeal:
        - A detailed description of the issue
        - Any supporting evidence (e.g., graded assignments, emails)
        - A summary of your discussion with the instructor and principal
        - Note: Any formal appeal must be made within ten business days of report cards or progress reports being issued.
5. **Submit the Appeal:**
    - Submit your formal appeal to the Head of Schools (swalker@paulcharter.org) via email.
    - Ensure all required documentation is included and adhere to any deadlines.
    - The Head of Schools will reach out to you to schedule a hearing within five business days of your submission.
6. **Attend a Hearing (if applicable):**
    - If a hearing is scheduled, attend the meeting and present your case. Be prepared to answer questions and provide additional evidence if requested.
7. **Receive and Review the Decision:**
    - After reviewing your appeal, the Head of Schools will provide a written decision within five business days.
    - The decision of the Head of Schools will be final.
    - If the appeal is approved, the grade change will be reflected in PowerSchool within seven business days.

Important Notes:

- Appeals should be submitted within ten days after receiving the grade in question.
- Be sure to follow all school-specific procedures and deadlines to ensure your appeal is considered.

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

Details on topics not included in this handbook can be found on our website: www.paulcharter.org. Go here for things like: Our School Calendar, Breakfast and Lunch Menus, and other family resources.

Building Operations

The Executive Director of Operations determines the school's operating status in the case of emergencies like weather. In an effort to eliminate the need to add days to our calendar at the end of the year, Paul will use virtual learning for inclement weather when possible. Although less likely, it is possible that delayed openings and early closures may be used in order to prioritize the safety of our students, families, and staff.

Parents will receive notification of the school's operational status via email. Information will also be available on social media and via the DC Public Charter School Board's school status list shared in local news sources.

SAFE PASSAGE

The Petworth/Brightwood neighborhood, inclusive of Paul, remains one of the 12 priority areas for the Safe Passage Program. In each of the Safe Passage Priority Areas, regular calls or meetings are held between school leaders, MPD, DDOT, and Metro Transit Police to discuss student safety concerns, plan assistance that is provided to areas, and share strategies for improving safety. Feedback from each meeting is used to determine what additional support are needed. When needed, government agencies participate in citywide safe passage campaigns by adopting an area and providing physical support during student arrival and dismissal. We have strong working relationships with our Safe Passage partners and regularly share information.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

SAFETY & SECURITY PROTOCOLS

Safety officers help ensure the safety of scholars, staff, visitors and the school buildings. Failure to comply with their instructions will result in referral to the Principal of the student's school (i.e., Middle School or PIHS or designee.)

Emergency Response Plan

Paul PCS has an Emergency Response plan that will be used to identify, assess, and manage situations that pose a threat to our school environment. We conduct monthly fire safety drills and emergency or lockdown drills throughout the year.

Communication During Emergencies

In an emergency our priority is to focus on the immediate safety of everyone on campus at Paul PCS. Communication to families will follow the necessary steps we need to take depending on the situation we are experiencing at school. Paul uses the same established incident command structure and communication procedures for all types of emergencies.

In the event of an emergency, Paul PCS will communicate to parents and families through robo-call to the primary telephone number(s) on file and email to families who have addresses on file. Necessary action to be taken by families will be clearly communicated as it becomes available. For your safety and the safety of our scholars and staff, please wait for instructions and follow them as provided.

We will send bilingual communication to families via the following sources:

- Powerschool
- Whats App
- Email

Messages to families will include a brief summary of the building status and any next steps that parents should take. This may include the instruction to stay away from the building and await guidance on an alternate location to be reunited with your student.

Our policy will help students, staff, and families understand the status of the building and the way they should respond.

	HOLD	***SECURE***	***LOCKDOWN***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (following Lockdown)***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (independent threat)***
What is happening?	*A student has a seizure in class. In order to keep the hallways clear and maintain the student's privacy, the students present may be evacuated to a nearby location and*	*An active shooter was reported in the neighborhood.* *Exterior doors are locked, no one from off campus is permitted into the building. The absence of immediate*	*An active shooter was reported on campus*	*An active shooter was reported on campus, police have arrived and have determined that there is no longer an*	*A tornado warning (not watch) has been issued for the immediate area of Northwest DC. A tornado formation is not*

	HOLD	***SECURE***	***LOCKDOWN***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (following Lockdown)***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (independent threat)***
	the classrooms in the vicinity will be asked to briefly Shelter in place.	*physical danger in the building is confirmed.*		*immediate threat.*	*only possible but extremely likely.*
What it looks like at Paul	*The classroom with the student should have only minimal personnel (nurse, AD of student culture and required staff, ED of Ops and required security staff) Culture and security staff will ask classrooms nearby to "please hold briefly" and then post in the hallways to ensure no traffic in the hallway. EMTs are immediately escorted to the location, and the nearby classrooms remain sheltered until the student is out of the building.*	*Classes and meetings may continue as planned, but everyone must stay in their current location. No one is permitted in areas open to the outside.*	*All individuals hide, silently, out of site until the lockdown has been canceled. Lights are off, everyone is silent for the entire duration of a lockdown.* *A lockdown, in most cases, should not exceed 15 - 30 minutes. The campus is in lockdown ONLY until law enforcement neutralizes the threat.*	*Classes and meetings may continue as planned, but everyone must stay in their current location. No one is permitted in the hallways, bathrooms, or other open areas.*	*Classes and meetings may continue as planned, but everyone must stay in their current location. No one is permitted in the hallways, bathrooms, or other open areas.* *Anyone outside is brought in and moved away from exterior windows.* *Everyone awaits further instructions from the incident commander.*

	HOLD	***SECURE***	***LOCKDOWN***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (following Lockdown)***	***SHELTER IN PLACE (independent threat)***
What this means for family members	*The family of the involved student(s) will be notified regarding the incident and any necessary next steps.* *Families will not receive notification of HOLD actions unless the HOLD lasts an excessive amount of time or directly impacts a large number of students.*	*The family of the involved student(s) will be notified regarding the incident and any necessary next steps.* *Families will only receive notification of SECURE actions when the larger community is impacted or the action will impact arrival, dismissal, or other operations.*	*Families of all students will receive a notice of a lockdown as soon as the incident commander has the immediate response to the situation addressed.* *Initial messages will be brief and provide only the status of the campus. This will allow us the opportunity to focus on our response to community members with the highest needs.* *Families should never come to campus during an emergency unless instructed to do so. Your presence during an ongoing lockdown can put you and our community at risk.*	*Families of all students will receive detailed instructions during a post-lockdown shelter in place.* *This is when we will provide information about what happened, the continued status for the day, and how to reunite with your student.*	*Families of all students will receive instructions on how to respond to the given situation.*

HEALTHY AND SAFETY

Continued Safety Measures for In-Person Instruction at Paul PCS

School Year 2025-2026

Paul PCS meets the highest standards for safety and cleanliness protocols in our building to ensure the safety of your child and our staff. Please take note of the following structures that are in place that are in accordance with best practices in health and safety.

Building Cleanliness

- Pur building's HVAC system utilizes MERV-13 filters, the highest recommended filtering level for our system.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located at all building entrances and additional sources are available throughout the building.
- All classrooms and offices are cleaned nightly by our cleaning crew.

Entry into the building

- It is your responsibility, daily, to ensure that your student feels well and has not had any known risk of exposure to communicable diseases before they come to school. **Students with a fever, regardless of the cause, must stay home for at least 24 hours.**
- If a student is ill due to a communicable disease like COVID; Chickenpox; Pink eye; Hand, Foot, and Mouth; Meningitis; or others you must notify the school immediately. You can do this when you notify the school of your student's absence by emailing llong@paulcharter.org

Meals

- Students are allowed to bring food to be consumed at breakfast or lunch hours (in accordance to typical Paul PCS standards for food in the building]ie: no large chips or soda containers]). This food will be kept with them at all times, but may only be consumed at designated times to ensure safety of our technology.
- Scholars must be mindful of Peanut Free areas.
- Microwaves are not available for students.

Transport

- Scholars who are traveling on public transportation are expected to abide by DC Health and WMATA safety regulations, mask mandates, and social distancing protocols to and from school.
- Eligible scholars can receive transportation services provided by OSSE's DoT. Safety guidelines and expectations for OSSE's transportation services can be found on their website.

Communications Regarding Exposure Risk that Occurs at Paul

In the instance that an exposure of a communicable disease occurs, you can expect the following communication:

- Paul will share any outbreaks (connections of multiple related cases) with the community

- If outbreaks at Paul or in the city necessitate a change in masking or other policies, families will be notified immediately.

SCHOOL EVENTS: PAYMENT AND REFUNDS

Payments:
We accept cash (exact amount only; we do not provide change), credit/debit cards through the MySchoolBucks app, and money orders.

MySchoolBucks:
Parents can conveniently use MySchoolBucks to pay for student field trips, 8th grade and senior dues, and computer fees via credit card. Ms. Kirk has set up MySchoolBucks to sync with PowerSchool, allowing families to use their existing PowerSchool login credentials for easy access.

For more information or to make a payment, please visit MySchoolBucks.

Refunds:
At Paul, refunds are issued only when approved in advance by the principal. All refunds are processed as manual checks, regardless of the original payment method. Checks must be signed for in the Business Office by the payee or a designated representative authorized via email to business-office@paulcharter.org. Please note that scholars under 18 years of age are not permitted to sign for checks.

KIDS RIDE FREE

The *Kids Ride Free* (KRF) program is a regional initiative in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that allows eligible youth to use public transit at no cost.

How to Request a KRF Card:

To request a KRF card for your student, please email **business-office@paulcharter.org** with the following information:

- Student's full name
- Date of birth
- Grade level

Requests are processed in the order they are received. Typically, cards are processed within **2 business days**; however, processing may take longer if we are waiting to receive cards from DDOT.

You will receive an email notification when your student's card is ready for pickup at the Business Office.

FOOD POLICY

At Paul Public Charter School, our food policies are designed to promote a safe, healthy, and inclusive learning environment. These policies help ensure that all scholars have access to nutritious meals, reduce potential allergens, limit distractions during instructional time, and support overall student wellness and equity.

Paul Public Charter School is a nut free facility. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of allergic reactions related to nuts and nut-based products and to foster an inclusive, safe learning environment for all students.

As a Nut-free facility, the following items are prohibited on campus:

- Nuts of all kinds including peanuts and tree nuts like almonds, walnuts, cashews, pistachios, etc.
- Foods containing peanuts, tree nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews, etc.), or peanut/nut by-products are allowed on school premises.

This policy applies to everyone on campus including students, staff, and visitors. And includes, but is not limited to:

- Student lunches and snacks brought from home/outside school
- Staff meals brought from home/outside school
- Staff and student food for celebrations, bake sales, and classroom activities
- School provided meals for students and staff

In addition to this annual notification in our annual family handbook, signs will be placed around the school campus, with an emphasis on areas where food is likely to be, including but not limited to the cafeterias, staff lounges, and entrances.

Foods with nuts will be confiscated and may be reclaimed by a parent or guardian at the end of the day. Anything not claimed will be safely disposed of each day.

In the event of a breach of the policy followed by an allergic reaction, trained staff may provide care to an individual in anaphylaxis with one of our undesignated Epi-pens, or a student's approved self-carry Epi-Pen. All other treatments for students must be provided in the health suite with approved medication administration plans. An incident report must be completed in the case of an allergic reaction.

Students do not have access to a microwave on campus. When packing a lunch with your scholar, please keep in mind that they will not have access to a microwave during lunch time. Unless a student has a formal medical plan in place requiring the use of a microwave, staff are not permitted to heat food for scholars.

No Food Delivery for Scholars. Scholars are not allowed to order (or have someone order for them) food delivery at school. Scholars will not be allowed into the front lobby where delivery companies leave food for staff. If an item has been delivered for them, it will be held there until dismissal, and be disposed of as soon as dismissal is over.

Parents may deliver food in person BEFORE the scholar's lunch period. Food delivered by parents after the lunch period will be held until dismissal.

PARTNERSHIP AND GIVING

Paul PCS has a number of strategic alliances with companies and community organizations which provide the School with many different forms of assistance. We also ask our stakeholders to invest in Paul PCS financially by helping us establish more partnerships and strategic alliances with third parties. We invite you to join us as we prepare our M.E.R.I.T. scholars to thrive in middle and high school, college, and in life thereafter by supporting Paul PCS in one or more of the ways described below:

> ***DONATE ONLINE***: You can access our secure online donation platform through our website www.paulcharter.org/donate. For questions or issues, please contact the Business Office at business-office@paulcharter.org
>
> ***DONATE VIA MAIL***: You can send your donation to use through the mail to:
> Paul PCS
> Attention: Business Office
> 5800 8th Street, NW
> Washington, DC 20011
>
> ***DONATE IN PERSON***: You may also make your donation in person at our Business Office between 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 PM each weekday.
>
> Please make checks payable to: Paul Public Charter School

Please note: Donations are tax-deductible and may be made via cash, money orders and credit card (Visa and MasterCard). Donations made via our website will automatically email you a receipt.

To request an end of the year gift statement, please email business-office@paulcharter.org between Jan 1st and Jan 15th to receive by Jan 31st. Any requests received after Jan 15th, will be processed within 4 business days.

We know that it takes the collective efforts of families, partners, teachers, administrators, community leaders and members, local and national organizations and businesses to ensure that all of our students at Paul PCS are successful. We thank you in advance for your support.

For more information on becoming a donor please contact Ms. Cheryl Cunningham, Assistant Director of Business and Finance via email at ccunningham@paulcharter.org.

For additional ways to support Paul , including a being a partner or volunteer, please contact Ms. Kristin Yochum, Executive Director of Operations, via email at kyochum@paulcharter.org.

Key Policies and Procedures

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Paul PCS will not tolerate any type of discrimination or harassment of the School's students or staff based on characteristics protected by local, state or federal law, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or marital status (each, a "protected characteristic"). This specifically includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment.

Regardless of whether the discrimination or harassment in question amounts to a violation of the law, it may amount to a violation of the School's policies.

Unfair discrimination or harassment based on any protected characteristic is absolutely prohibited. Paul PCS will not tolerate exclusion of any student from participation in, subjecting any student to unfair or unequal treatment during, or denial of the benefits of any academic, extracurricular, or other educational program or activity, on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or marital status. Nor will the School tolerate conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's education or extracurricular performance, creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment, or retaliation against the student for having reported or participated in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment based on the student's sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or marital status.

Paul PCS's prohibition against unfair discrimination and harassment applies to everyone at the School. The School will not tolerate harassment of students or staff by other students, officers, teachers, volunteers, Board members, or third-parties over whom the School has control. None of the School's employees, officers, Administrators, volunteers, Board members or students is authorized to engage in conduct that amounts to unfair discrimination or harassment. The School's policy is to exercise reasonable care to prevent any unfair discrimination or harassment and, if such misconduct occurs, to investigate and take prompt remedial action – regardless of whom is involved. In cases where Board members or officers are accused of discrimination or harassment, the School will take all reasonable steps to ensure the fairness and evenhandedness of its investigation and may bring in outside investigators as appropriate.

1. The School's Complaint Procedure

Any student who believes that he or she is being or has been subjected to unfair discrimination or harassment should immediately bring such acts or conduct to the attention of any teacher, counselor, Administrator or officer of the School. This procedure is designed to allow a student to bypass anyone whom the student believes has caused or is responsible for the discrimination or harassment and to allow the presentation of complaints to a teacher, counselor, Administrator or officer with whom the student is comfortable speaking.

Contact Process for Complaints

Step 1:
HS Principal- Georgia Kirby gkirby@paulchater.org
Middle School Principal- Whitney Lane, wlane@paulcharter.org
Assistant Director of Culture, Climate and Support- NaKeisha Jones-Helton, njones-helton@paulcharter.org
Assistant Director of Student Support Services: Caitlin McGinnis, cmginnis@paulcharter.org

Step 2:
Head of Schools- Shendrina Walker, swalker@paulcharter.org (you may skip this step if your complaint pertains to Operational Staff or Student Support/ SPED staff)

Step 3:
Chief Executive Officer: Tracy Wright twright@paulcharter.org or the CEO's designee.

Step 4:
School Concerns that have not been resolved by School Leaders, School Directors, or the Chief Executive Officer: Erin Albright, Board Chair ealbright@paulcharter.org

2. The School's Response to Complaints
Any teacher, counselor, Administrator or officer of the School who receives or otherwise learns of a complaint of unfair discrimination or harassment shall immediately report the complaint to the CEO or, if the complaint is against the CEO, to any member of the Board of Trustees who, in turn, shall report the complaint to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Upon receiving a complaint, the CEO or the Board shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the allegations. During such investigation, the School will make all reasonable attempts to protect the confidentiality of the complaining student and the investigation process.

3. No Retaliation
The School prohibits retaliation against any person on the basis of such person having complained of unfair discrimination or harassment. All staff and Administrators of the School have been made aware of the prohibition against retaliation. Any student who complains of unfair discrimination or harassment and later believes he or she has been retaliated against for making a complaint should immediately report the suspected retaliation to any teacher, counselor, Administrator or officer of the School. The School will act promptly to ensure compliance with the policy prohibiting retaliation.

Any student found to have violated the unfair discrimination or harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Conduct Policy, up to and including the possibility of expulsion. Any officer, teacher, volunteer, Board member, or other employee of the School who is found to have violated the unfair discrimination or harassment policy is subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the School's Personnel Policies and Procedures, up to and including possible termination, separation or discharge from the individual's position with the School. The School shall report any incidents of harassment to the appropriate legal authorities if there is a reasonable suspicion or belief that a student has been subjected to child abuse or neglect.

TITLE IX

Title IX is a federal law that was passed in 1972 to prohibit gender discrimination in any federally funded education program or activity. It protects students and employees from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and retaliation.

Title IX applies to everyone, regardless of their real or perceived sex, gender identity, or gender expression. This includes female, male, and gender non-conforming students, faculty and staff, pregnant and parenting students, and women.

Restroom Accommodations
Paul PCS policy allows all students to use the restrooms consistent with their gender identity. Students with a need or preference to utilize individual restrooms can work with school level staff to do so. As needed, individual plans will be created for students regarding bathroom location and usage. At Paul PCS some of our bathrooms do not have doors and for those with doors they will be locked at certain times of the day to ensure safety of all.

School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act Parent Information and Training Policy

Pursuant to the School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018 ("School Safety Act"), PCS provides parent information and training as follows:

Student Abuse

At least once a year, PCS provides training and information for parents regarding sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse, and child abuse. The training includes the following:
1. Recognizing and reporting sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse and child abuse;
2. Receiving disclosures of such abuse in a "supportive, appropriate and trauma-informed manner;"
3. Prevention, warning signs and effects of such abuse;
4."Effective, developmentally-appropriate methods" for discussing such abuse;
5.School and community resources available to assist with the prevention of and response to such abuse.

Student-on-Student Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Dating Violence
At least once a year, Paul PCS provides students, families and school staff, contractors and volunteers with its Student on Student Sexual Harassment Policy and information about where complaints of sexual harassment, sexual assault and dating violence can be submitted. This policy is also available in the following locations: on the school's website, in the main office, in the school health suite, in the office of the school counselor and/or school social worker, in the office of the Title IX Coordinator and in the parent/student handbooks. Paul PCS also informs students about this policy in a developmentally appropriate manner.

At least once a year, Paul PCS also provides training and information for parents on recognizing the warning signs of student-on-student acts of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and dating violence as well as effective, age appropriate methods for discussing such topics with students.
Paul PCS will maintain a record of the following for each training:

- Date of training;
- Substance of training;
- Dates and methods of notifying parents of the training;
- Parent participation at the training

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Paul Public Charter School is committed to building strong partnerships with families to support student achievement and well-being. This Family Engagement Policy outlines how the school involves parents and families in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

This policy was developed jointly with, and agreed upon by, families of participating children. We held engagement sessions with the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and family focus groups in Spring 2025. It will be distributed to all families at the beginning of the school year, posted on the school website, and made available in English, Spanish, and Amharic.

Paul PCS hosts its Annual Title I Meeting in September at our Back to School night, to inform families of our participation in Title I and explain the requirements of the program. Families will learn about their rights, the curriculum, academic assessments, proficiency expectations, and how Title I funds are used. Families have opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs and policies. This includes:

- Hosting quarterly PAC meetings with family input on school improvement plans and engagement strategies
- Conducting annual family engagement surveys
- Holding flexible family forums (morning, evening, virtual) to accommodate schedules

To ensure full access for all families:

- Information will be translated into major languages spoken in the community
- Interpreters will be available at all major meetings
- Printed materials will be available in accessible formats upon request

At Staff development institute in August educators, office staff, and school leaders participate in sessions on effective family engagement strategies, with an emphasis on:

- Culturally responsive communication
- Partnering with families to support learning at home
- Recognizing and addressing barriers to engagement Training will occur annually during staff development week and be revisited through mid-year PD sessions.

If there is any reason to believe there has been a violation of the law in the administration of ESEA programs, please refer to the Policy for Complaint Procedures for Elementary & Secondary Education Act Programs and Competitive Grants at https://osse.dc.gov/publication/policy-complaint-procedures-elementary-secondary-education-act-programs-and-competitive.

Building Capacity for Families

To support families in understanding academic content and standards, we will provide:

- Family workshops on curriculum and assessments
- Access to student progress via PowerSchool and regular grade updates
- One-on-one conferences to discuss academic planning and student support
- Resources through our Family Engagement Center

Coordination with Other Programs

We will coordinate our family engagement activities with other programs such as:

- After-school programs and SYEP
- Local adult education and ESL programs
- Community-based organizations and health providers like Latin American Youth Center and Mary's Center.

Each year we jointly develop and distribute a School-Family Compact that outlines shared responsibilities for improving student academic achievement. The Compact will be reviewed at the Annual Title I Meeting and discussed during parent-teacher conferences. Each spring, the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its family engagement efforts through:

- Annual family surveys
- Focus groups
- Attendance and participation data We will analyze the data to identify barriers to participation (e.g., transportation, scheduling, child care) and implement strategies to overcome them. Policy updates based on these findings will be shared with families in our end-of-year PAC meeting and posted publicly.

In order to support these goals we will use Title I, Part A funds to support family engagement, including:

- Translation and interpretation services
- Childcare during meetings
- Light refreshments for family events
- Printed resources and take-home materials
- Transportation vouchers for families with need

We will provide timely information to families through:

- Weekly school newsletter
- Email and text alerts
- Phone calls and home visits when necessary
- The school website and bulletin boards

HOME VISIT POLICY OVERVIEW

To ensure our staff and families safety and health integrity, school staff will no longer conduct home visits. This policy applies to all types of home visits, including but not limited to student-led conferences, culture and attendance meetings, and other related activities.

Alternative Meeting Locations:

To facilitate necessary meetings and maintain open communication, we have designated the following alternative locations where staff can meet with families outside of the school building:

1. Virtually via Zoom or Google Meet

2. Lamond-Riggs/Lillian J. Huff Neighborhood Library
   5401 South Dakota Ave NE, Washington, DC 20011

3. Petworth Neighborhood Library
   4200 Kansas Ave NW, Washington, DC 20011

4. Juanita E. Thornton/Shepherd Park Neighborhood Library
   7420 Georgia Ave NW, Washington, DC 20012

These locations have been chosen for their accessibility, safety, and convenience for staff and families. We encourage families to utilize these spaces for any meetings that would have previously taken place at home.

Scheduling Alternative Location Meetings

Families can contact the main school office to schedule meetings with school staff at any designated location. All meetings will adhere to national and local health and safety guidelines to protect families and staff. If families have concerns or need assistance with transportation to these locations, they should contact the school office for support options.

HOME OR HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION POLICY

The purpose of the Home or Hospital Instruction Policy is to provide academic instruction and support to students who have been or will be absent from school for 10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days during a school year due to a health condition. **Paul Public Charter School,** Home or Hospital Instruction program is designed to provide academic instruction in core subjects to the greatest extent possible as well as the provision of special education and related services as appropriate.

Eligibility for Home or Hospital Instruction

Any **Paul Public Charter School** student who has been or is anticipated to be absent from school, on a continuous, partial, or intermittent basis, for **10 or more consecutive or cumulative school**

days during a school year due to a health condition may be eligible for home or hospital instruction. The following steps must be taken before home or hospital instruction is provided:

- A parent/guardian, or adult student, is responsible for requesting home or hospital instruction. This request may be written or oral and must be submitted to **NaKeisha Jones-Helton**.
- Upon receipt of a request for home or hospital instruction, **Paul Public Charter School** will document and acknowledge the request within 2 school days and will provide the parent with information on how to submit a completed medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction;
    - If the student has a known or suspected disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504") or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), the acknowledgement will include a notice of the parent/student's rights under the IDEA or Section 504.
- The parent must submit a completed medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction.
- Within 5 school days of receiving the medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction, **Paul Public Charter School** will issue a written decision approving or denying the request and explaining the basis for that decision;
    - A request will only be denied if the medical certification of need is missing or incomplete;
    - In the event that a request is denied, the written explanation will state specifically that the basis for the determination was a missing or incomplete application or medical certification of need;
    - In the event that a request is denied, **Paul Public Charter School** will include in the written decision how the parent may appeal that decision.

Medical Certification of Need

The medical certification of need must be signed by a licensed physician, licensed nurse practitioner, licensed clinical psychologist, licensed mental health counselor or therapist, or physician's assistant and must include the following:

- Diagnosed health condition and explanation of how the health condition has caused or is anticipated to cause the student to be absent, on a continuous, partial, or intermittent basis, for 10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days during a school year;
- Recommendation that student receive home or hospital instruction to the extent permitted by the student's health condition;
- Anticipated duration of the student's health condition and need for home or hospital instruction;
- Whether the student's health condition is anticipated to cause continuous, partial, or intermittent absence from school.

While home or hospital instruction is being provided, **Paul Public Charter School** may request updated information related to the student's continued medical need and work with the parent to

develop a plan that would permit the student to return to school.

Duration of Home or Hospital Instruction

Approval of home or hospital instruction requests are expected to last no longer than 60 days or the duration estimated in the medical certification of need, whichever is less. A parent may extend the program for periods of up to 60 days by submitting a medical recertification of need at least 5 days before the date that the parent requires for the extension to begin.

Proposed Accommodations to Allow Student to Remain in School

Before or after a request for home or hospital instruction is granted, **Paul Public Charter School** may propose accommodations to allow the student to remain in school but will only proceed with such accommodations if the medical professional that signed the medical certification of need agrees in writing that such accommodations meet the medical needs of the student and permit in-school instruction.

Delivery of Instruction

Home or hospital instruction will begin within 5 school days of the request being approved. Instruction will be provided in core academic subjects to the greatest extent possible. Special education and related services will also be provided to the greatest extent possible in accordance with an IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Instruction will be provided in-person by a home or hospital instructor unless the parent consents to virtual instruction via real-time videoconferencing. Instruction may be provided virtually without a parent's consent in the following circumstances:

- During a public health emergency;
- When the student has been diagnosed with a communicable disease;
- When a household member has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, if the student is to receive instruction at home; or
- When **Paul Public Charter School** determines safety concerns prevent the delivery of in-person services.

Home or hospital instruction will include a minimum of **six (6) hours** direct instruction in each core subject. Additional instruction, special education, and/or related services will be individualized based on student need.

Instruction will be provided during regular school hours at times determined by **Paul Public Charter School** unless the parent and instructor agree otherwise. Failure of students to attend or participate in scheduled sessions will not result in additional time allotted or make-up sessions.

If instruction takes place in the home, the student's parent/guardian is responsible for being home during the entirety of the instructional period. Parents/guardians must be 18 years of age or older. A quiet, designated space must be provided for instruction to occur.

A regular program of study and preparation of lessons and materials, by their teachers, is required

for each student. Substitute assignments may be provided if regular assignments or activities cannot take place outside of the classroom. In addition to the weekly instructional sessions, the student is expected to complete assignments on his or her own time. Assignments must be completed by the designated due date and are returned to the school for grading. Failure to complete or turn in assignments on time will result in zeros for those assignments and reflected in the grade accordingly. Grades earned during hospital and homebound instruction will be adding to any current grades and calculated towards the final grade for the quarter/year. For all content not covered through home or hospital instruction, the student will be given alternative assignments for credit recovery

For hospitalized students, **Paul Public Charter School** will work with the hospital to coordinate appropriate services.

If a student with a disability is found eligible for home or hospital instruction, the responsibilities for planning, implementing and monitoring the academic program remain with the student's IEP or 504.

FOSTER CARE POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that scholars in foster care attending Paul Public Charter School receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), maintain school stability whenever possible, and receive the academic, social-emotional, and transportation supports required under federal and local law.

At Paul Public Charter School, scholars in foster care are guaranteed equal access to all academic, extracurricular, and support services available to the broader school community. The school is committed to prioritizing educational stability to minimize disruptions to scholars' learning experiences, recognizing the critical role that consistency plays in their academic and social-emotional success.

All decisions regarding placement, services, and support for scholars in foster care will be made collaboratively with the appropriate agencies and caregivers, ensuring that the scholar's best interests are always at the center of the process. In addition to receiving the same rights and protections as all other scholars, those in foster care will benefit from targeted supports designed to address their unique needs and promote their overall well-being and success.

Foster Care Point of Contact (POC)

Paul PCS will designate a Foster Care Point of Contact (POC**)** to serve as liaison between the school and CFSA. The POC will:

- Coordinate enrollment, records transfer, and transportation arrangements.
- Attend best interest determination (BID) meetings.
- Communicate with school staff and CFSA to support the scholar's educational stability.
- Monitor the scholar's academic and behavioral progress.
- Serve as the internal point of contact for staff with questions or concerns regarding foster care procedures.

The designated Foster Care POC will be submitted annually to OSSE and CFSA.

School Stability and Enrollment

At Paul Public Charter School, scholars in foster care will remain enrolled in their school of origin whenever possible, unless a Best Interest Determination (BID) concludes that a transfer to another school better serves the scholar's needs. In cases where remaining at Paul PCS is determined to be in the scholar's best interest, the school will work collaboratively with the Child

and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to ensure that transportation and any other necessary support are provided to maintain the scholar's enrollment and continuity of learning.

If a transfer to a new school is required, Paul PCS is committed to facilitating a seamless transition by ensuring immediate enrollment at the new school, even if all educational records are not yet available. Additionally, the school will promptly transfer all relevant educational records within two school days to support the scholar's continued academic progress and stability.

Transportation

Paul Public Charter School will ensure that scholars in foster care receive prompt and reliable transportation whenever it is necessary for them to remain in their school of origin. Transportation procedures will be developed in coordination with the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure clarity and effectiveness. Decisions regarding funding for transportation will be made collaboratively with CFSA, in alignment with the guidance outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Academic and Behavioral Support

Scholars in foster care will be provided with appropriate academic and behavioral supports to promote their success. The Foster Care Point of Contact (POC), working in collaboration with school counselors, mental health staff, and the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), will actively monitor each scholar's attendance, academic performance, and overall engagement. They will coordinate interventions and make referrals to both internal and external services as needed to address scholars' individual needs. Additionally, the Foster Care POC will facilitate clear and ongoing communication between school staff and caregivers to ensure that scholars receive consistent support across all environments.

Records and Documentation

All determinations, communications, transportation arrangements, and interventions related to scholars in foster care will be thoroughly documented in each scholar's secure record. The Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) will maintain a detailed log that includes Best Interest Determination (BID) meetings, transportation agreements, academic and support interventions provided, and all communications with CFSA and caregivers. This documentation will ensure accountability, continuity of support, and clear records of all actions taken on behalf of the scholar.

Confidentiality

All information regarding scholars in foster care is considered highly confidential. Such information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis with staff members who require it to provide appropriate educational support and services. Staff are expected to handle this information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as any applicable local privacy laws, ensuring the protection of scholars' personal and educational records at all times.

Staff Training and Awareness

Paul PCS is committed to ensuring that staff are knowledgeable and prepared to support scholars in foster care. To this end, relevant staff will receive annual training that covers the legal rights of scholars in foster care, the roles and responsibilities of the Foster Care Point of Contact (POC), procedures for BID meetings, transportation protocols and timelines, and trauma-informed practices for effectively supporting foster care scholars. This training is designed to promote consistent, informed, and compassionate practices across the school community.

Collaboration with CFSA and OSSE

Paul PCS is committed to maintaining strong partnerships with the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to ensure full compliance with all foster care provisions. The Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) will actively participate in regular check-ins and technical assistance sessions offered by CFSA and OSSE. Additionally, Paul PCS will utilize the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact Directory to facilitate effective cross-agency communication and collaboration, ensuring that scholars in foster care receive coordinated and timely support.

Monitoring and Review

The Student Support Services leadership team at Paul PCS will review this policy on an annual basis. Updates will be made as needed to ensure continued alignment with current laws, OSSE guidance, and best practices, maintaining effective and compliant support for scholars in foster care.

Foster Care Point of Contact:
Njones-helton@paulcharter.org

ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Paul PCS complies with admission policies established by the DC Public Charter School Board and applicable federal and DC laws and regulations. Specifically, enrollment at Paul is open to all students who are residents of the District of Columbia and, if space is available, to non resident students who fulfill the tuition requirements established by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Paul participates in the My School DC common lottery. As a participating school, we will only accept new students via the My School DC application available at MySchoolDC.org.

Paul does not limit enrollment on the basis of a student's race, color, gender identity, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

Current students have the option to re-enroll each year and do not need to reapply. To secure their seat, they must complete their enrollment paperwork, including but not limited to the online registration form and providing proof of DC residency by the published enrollment deadline. After the deadline, returning families will lose their ability to re-enroll and must reapply through the lottery; seats are available on a first come, first serve basis until the grade level is full.

Eighth grade students who wish to attend Paul International High School (PIHS)do not need to apply through the MySchoolDC lottery. They are eligible for re-enrollment according to the procedures above.

Proving DC Residency

To be enrolled in any DC public school, for each school year a parent/guardian must show original documents as proof of DC residency for each student assigned to or wishing to attend a traditional public or public charter school in the District. A completed DC Residency Verification (DCRV) Form must be completed to determine residency.In addition to completing the DCRV form, families must provide supporting documentation from the chart below to establish DC residency.

Immunization Requirements

DC law requires that all students be current on immunizations to attend school. This policy will be enforced for attendance at all schools. **If proof of immunization is not submitted to the school, your child risks not being allowed to attend school or participate in any school sponsored activities until Paul PCS has received documentation of the required immunizations.** Families should talk with their child's health care provider about their

child's immunization history and what is needed to be able to start school. For more information on the School Immunization Requirements, we encourage you to read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document published by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

Enrolling person, follow ONE of the methods (A-C) to verify your DC residency.

A

Verify with a school official. If you are experiencing homelessness, a ward of the District and/or a participant of a District public benefits program, such as Medicaid, SNAP, or TANF–your school may already have your information. Check with your school official or the school's homeless liaison.

Verify through the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR). Re-enrolling families/students are often able to verify residency using OTR residency verification process. The enrolling person must have paid taxes in DC during the previous fiscal year and have the student's Social Security number. The student must be re-enrolling in the same local education agency and enrolling in grades K-12. Login to the system at osseotax.com. If successful, your verification will then be available for your school to confirm.

B

Verify by submitting supporting documentation. *All* items must include the same name and address of the enrolling person as completed on the DC residency verification form and school-based enrollment documents.

ONE item is needed from this list.

- A valid **pay stub** issued within 45 days of the school's review of this form. Must contain withholding of only DC personal income tax for the current tax year and no other states listed for deduction, even if the amount is zero. It must also show a DC personal income tax withholding amount greater than zero for both the current tax year and current pay period.
- **Unexpired official documentation of financial assistance from the Government of the District of Columbia,** issued to the enrolling person within the past 12 months and current at the time presented to the school, including, but not limited to, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, housing assistance or other programs.
- **Certified copy of Form D40** by the DC Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR), with evidence of payment of DC taxes for the current or most recent tax year and must bear the OTR stamp.
- **Military housing orders or statement on military letterhead**, issued within the past 12 months and current at the time presented to the school. The housing order must be an official correspondence and cite the specific DC address of residence. The order must indicate that the enrolling person is currently residing and not an intent to reside.
- **Embassy letter** issued within the past 12 months. Must contain an official embassy seal and signature of embassy official; and indicate that the enrolling person currently resides, or will reside, on embassy property in DC during the relevant school year.

OR

TWO different items are needed from this list.

- **DC motor vehicle operator's permit** or official government-issued non-driver identification that is valid and unexpired.
- **DC motor vehicle registration** that is valid and unexpired. Temporary registrations are not acceptable.
- **Lease or rental agreement (including a military lease)** that is valid and unexpired **with a separate proof of payment of rent**, such as receipt of payment, money order, or copy of cashed check.
  The lease must contain the start date, monthly rent amount, name of landlord, and be signed by the enrolling person and landlord.
  The separate proof of payment must be for a period within two months immediately preceding the school's review of this form and match the monthly rent amount stated on the lease.
- **Utility bill** (***only gas, electric, and water bills are acceptable***) **with a separate paid receipt showing payment of the bill**, such as receipt of payment printout, money order, or copy of cashed check.
  The utility bill must be for a period within the two months immediately preceding the school's review of this form.
  The separate proof of payment must be for the specific bill submitted. The most common submission is two consecutive bills where the second bill shows payment on the first bill. A credited amount on a bill and government agency letter subsidizing payment for utility are also acceptable proofs of payment. All payments must be confirmed and not scheduled for a future date.

C

Verify through a home visit. If you are unable to verify through one of the above methods, speak with your school official about a home visit. The visit must occur inside the residence and demonstrate that the enrolling person and the student reside in the home.

Enrolling as a non-resident student

Non-resident students are only eligible to attend a District public school if there are no eligible DC residents on the waitlist, the LEA agrees to enroll the student, there is a signed tuition agreement in place with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and an initial tuition payment has been made. To complete a tuition agreement and tuition payment, please email osse.residency@dc.gov. Non-residents are not eligible for enrollment through the District's Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Funding Program.

Persons eligible to enroll a student.

- **Parent** - a natural parent, stepparent, domestic partner, or parent by adoption who has custody or control of a student, including joint custody.
- **Guardian** - an appointed legal guardian of a student by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- **Custodian** - a person to whom physical custody has been granted by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- **Other Primary Caregiver** - is a person other than a parent or court-appointed custodian or guardian who is the primary provider of care or control and support to a student who resides with him or her, *and* whose parent, custodian, or guardian is unable to supply such care and support due to serious family hardship.
- **Adult Student** - A student who is 18 years of age or older, or who has been emancipated from parental control by marriage, operation of statute, or the order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

STUDENT RECORDS RELEASE AND ACCESS POLICY

1. Policy Statement:
   Paul PCS safeguards and monitors access to all student records to protect our students' right to privacy.

2. Overview:
   The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to monitor access to and release of student records and to safeguard students' right to privacy and parent/guardian rights to access. As records are kept indefinitely, it is critical that parents and students know that even after graduation or withdrawal, only authorized persons may have access to a student's records. Authorized persons means the parent or legal guardian of the student, the principal of the school where the student is enrolled, the assistant principals of the school where the student is enrolled, registrars, special education directors and coordinators, college and guidance counselors, English Language Learner coordinators, teachers, related service providers, Paul network leaders, and other Paul PCS personnel authorized by applicable District of Columbia law or by a written document signed by the students' parent or guardian. An authorized person who wishes to see records of a student must submit a request to the Data and Admissions Coordinator and sign a log that discloses the name of the requesting person, the purpose of the request, and the time and date of the request. The foregoing procedures do not apply to parent(s) or guardian(s) requesting records of their child's academic performance (e.g., a report card, standardized testing results, etc.). They may make such requests from the front office of the school in which their child is enrolled.

3. Policy Guidance:
   A. Release of Student Information
      1. Paul PCS's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or her or his designee is responsible for ensuring that procedures for releasing student information complies with the provisions of all DC laws and regulations.
      2. No Paul PCS employee shall release the name of a student to the Paul PCS Parent Action Group or other parent group without the express written permission of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
      3. Parents and guardians may request in writing submitted to the CEO or her or his designee that information relating to their student not be released to any outside individuals, groups, or agencies. The CEO and her or his designee shall abide by such requests unless compelled by law to release such information.
      1. Any outside individuals, groups, or agencies seeking student information must submit a request to the CEO or her/his designee.
      2. The CEO or her/his designee is responsible for securing a signed statement from any such individuals, groups, or agencies which:
         a. States the purpose for which the information will be used;
         b. Promises that information will not be rented, sold, or otherwise made available to any other group or used for any other purpose; and
         c. Accepts responsibility for payment of Paul PCS's costs for copying or producing the requested information.

   B. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Rights to Access

1. Except in cases where the school has been advised by court order or decree that a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) does not have legal authority with respect to such student, Paul PCS shall permit parents, guardians and/or authorized persons to inspect and review any education records related to their children. The right of parents and guardians to inspect and review education records includes the right:

a. To receive a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of any record;
b. To request that the school provide copies of the records containing the information sought; and
c. To have a representative inspect and review such records.

2. The School shall keep a record of every person who receives access to a student's educational records, including such person's name, date of access, and the purpose for which the person is authorized to use the records.

3. Authorized requesting parties must:

a. If an agency, identify himself/herself, the agency worked for and the relationship of the agency to the student's family;
b. Provide valid positive identification; and
c. If authorized by a parent or guardian, provide written evidence of his or her authorization from the parent or guardian (i.e., notice from the parent or guardian with his or her signature and parent or guardian contact information).

4. If any education record includes information on more than one child, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or authorized representatives of those children have the right to inspect and review the information related to their child and to be informed of the request for that information.

5. A parent or guardian who believes that information in the education records collected, maintained or used is inaccurate, misleading and/or violates the privacy or other rights of the child may request that the school amend the information.

a. The Executive Director of Accountability and Organizational Improvement (or her/his designee) shall decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time of receipt of the request.
b. If the request is refused, the principal of the school where the student is enrolled or her or his designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the refusal and advise the parent or guardian of the right to a secondary review that will be conducted by the Chief Executive Officer
c. If it is decided that the information IS inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, the school shall amend the information accordingly and so inform the parent or guardian in writing.
d. If it is decided that the information is NOT inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, the school shall so inform the parent or guardian of his or her right to place in the records maintained on the child a statement commenting on the information or setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decision of the school.

6. Any explanation placed in the records of the child must:

a. be maintained by the school as a part of the records of the child as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by the school; and

b. If the records of the child or the contested portion is disclosed by the school to any party, the explanation must also be disclosed to the party.

Comprehensive FERPA Notification of Rights
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents, guardians, and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Paul PCS receives a request for access.
Parents, guardians or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records shall submit to the School's Principal or Admissions Coordinator a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent, guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent, guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
Parents or eligible students who wish to amend their child's or their education record shall write the school's Principal or Admissions Coordinator, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be amended, and explain why it should be amended. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent, guardian or eligible student, the school shall notify the parent, guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent, guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from a student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without such consent.
FERPA permits disclosure of PII to any Paul PCS school official who has a legitimate educational interest. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school's Board of Trustees. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request by officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or

transfer, Paul PCS may discloses a student's education records without consent of the parent(s), guardian(s) or eligible student.

4. Parents, guardians, and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Paul PCS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

See the list below of the disclosures that secondary schools may make without consent. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent, guardian or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents, guardians and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parent(s), guardian(s) or the eligible student –

· To other school officials, including teachers, within the LEA or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))

· To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))

· To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent's, guardian's, or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

· In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))

· To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

· To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6)
· To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
· To parent(s) or guardian(s) of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
· To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
· To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10)
· Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
· To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
· To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

Notice to Opt Out of Directory Information
Paul Public Charter School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student name
- Grade
- School/Homeroom
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Parent/guardian name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Honors and awards received
- Date of birth
- Dates of attendance

If you do not want Paul PCS to disclose any of the above-listed directory information about your child, please contact your students' Principal to opt out no later than September 18, 2023, otherwise you do not have to take any action. If you do not notify us we will assume you are giving permission.

BACKGROUND CHECK AND CREDENTIAL REQUEST

Staff Background Check Access and Credentials

Parents who have questions about background checks or academic credentials of teachers or staff members can email our Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources, Pamela Merkerson (pmerkerson@paulcharter.org). Certification and licensure confirmation for all teachers is available upon request.

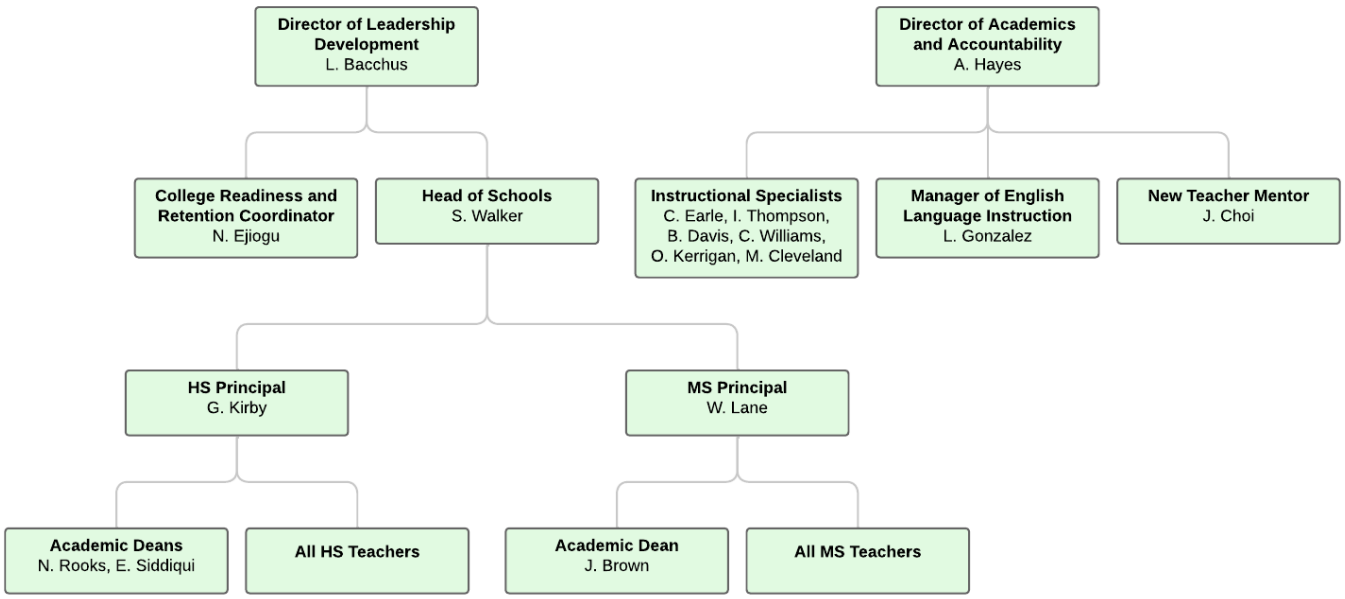
LOGISTICS

WHO SHOULD I TALK TO?

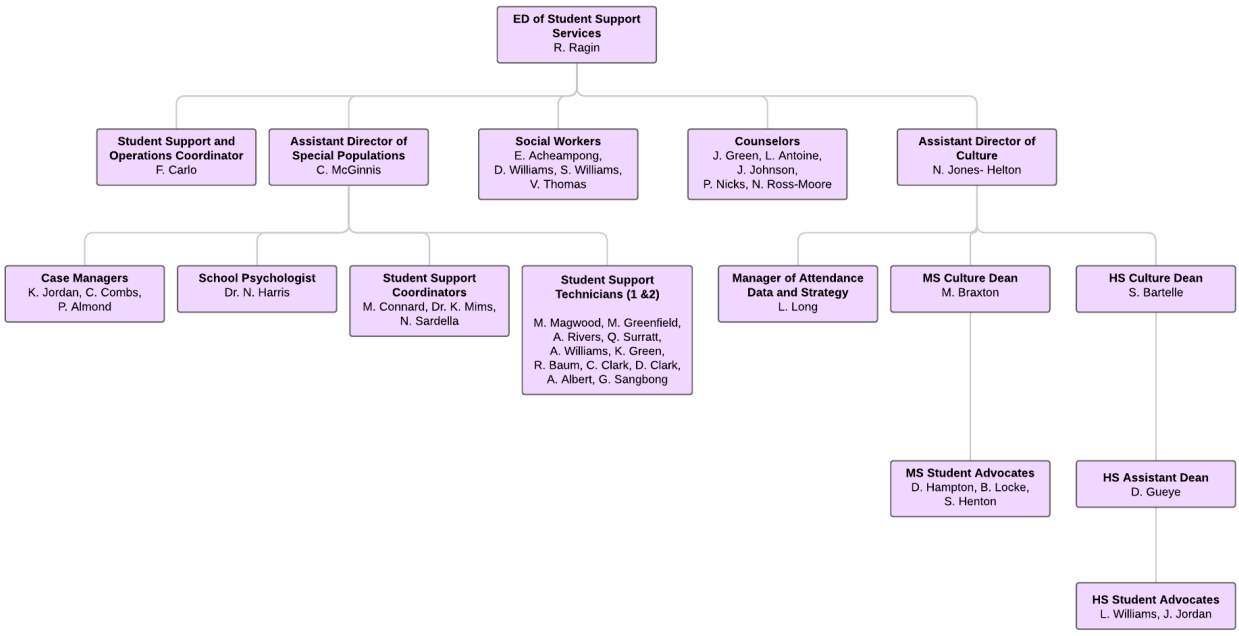
5th – 8th Grade Questions	Whitney Lane, Principal wlane@paulcharter.org Jene' Brown, Middle School Academic Dean jbrown@paulcharter.org Martellus Braxton- Dean of Culture, Middle School mbraxton@paulcharter.org
9th- 12th Grade Questions	Georgia Kirby, High School Principal gkirby@paulcharter.org Nya Rooks, HS Lower Academy Academic Dean nrooks@paulcharter.org Erum Siddiqui, HS Upper Academy Academic Dean esiddiqui@paulcharter.org Shawanda Bartelle Dean of Culture, High School sbartelle@paulcharter.org
Special Education	Caitlin McGinnis, Assistant Director of Special Populations cmcginnis@paulcharter.org Mahko Connard, MS Student Support Coordinator Grades 5th-8th mconnard@paulcharter.org Kimberly Mims, HS Student Support Coordinator Grades 9th- 10th kmims@paulcharter.org Nicolas Sardella,HS Student Support Coordinator Grades 11th- 12th nsardella@paulcharter.org
English Learners	Leandra Gonzalez- Manager of English Language Services lgonzalez@paulcharter.org
Behavioral and Socio-emotional Support Questions	NaKeisha Jones-Helton- Assistant Director of Culture, Climate and Support, njones-helton@paulcharter.org Johnelle Green-Middle School Counselor jogreen@paulcharter.org Lincy Antoine- 10th and 12th Grade Counselor lantoine@paulcharter.org Jahnea Johnson- 9th and 11th Grade Counselor jjohnson@paulcharter.org Nina Ross-Moore-9th and 11th Grade- nross-moore@paulcharter.org Parris Nicks- High School and Middle School- pnicks@paulcharter.org
MS & HS Curriculum	Olivia Kerrigan- Science Instructional Specialist okerrigan@paulcharter.org Caitlin Earle- Math Instructional Specialist cearle@paulcharter.org Imani Thompson, Math Instructional Specialist ithompson@paulcharter.org Bess Davis- ELA Instructional Specialist bdavis@paulcharter.org Michaela Cleveland - Social Studies Instructional Specialist mcleveland@paulcharter.org Casia Williams - Special Education Instructional Specialist cwilliams@paulcharter.org
Attendance and Truancy	Linda Long - Manager of Attendance Data and Strategy llong@paulcharter.org
Lunch and Kids Ride Free	Business Office, business-office@paulcharter.org
General Questions	Main Office at 202-291-7499

Organizational Charts

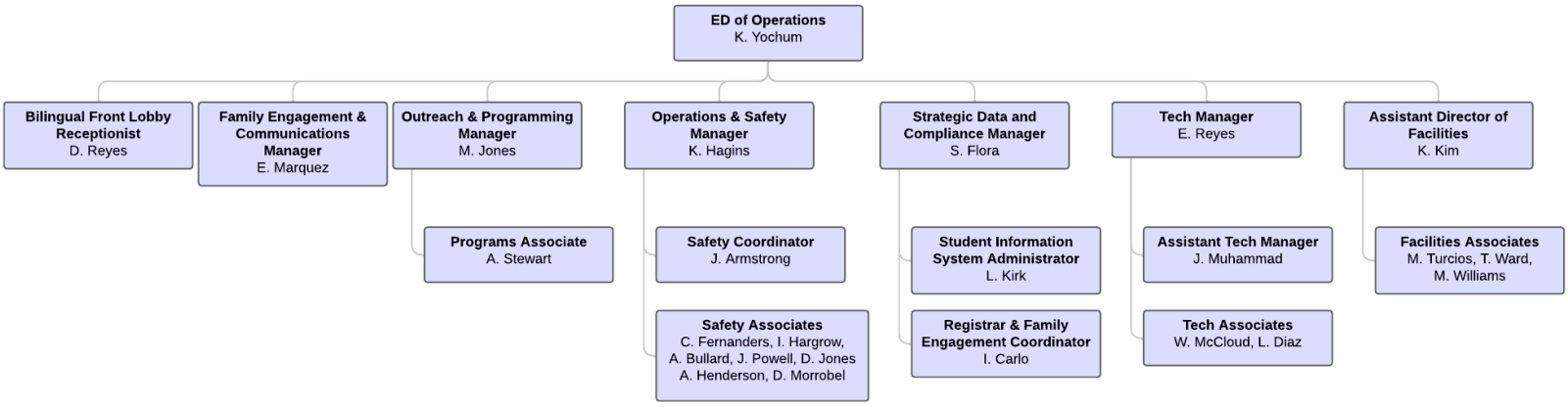
School Leadership



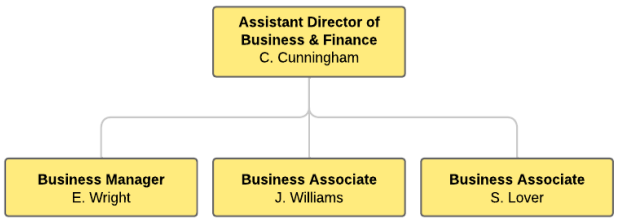
Student Support Services



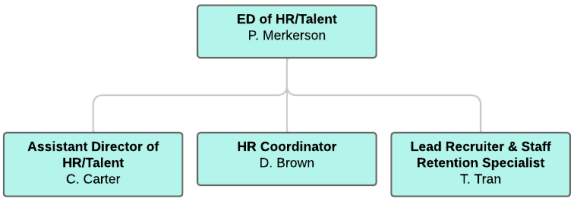
Operations



Business Office



Human Resources



Board Meetings

Paul PCS Board Calendar SY 2025-2026

August 26, 2025
September 23, 2025
November 18, 2025
January 27, 2026
March 24, 2026
April 28, 2026 (FY26-27 Budget Proposal)
May 26, 2026 (Approval of FY26-27 Budget)
June 9, 2026

All meetings are open to the public.

Let this calendar also serve as an assurance that the number of official meetings (180) is no fewer than what is stated in the school's bylaws (8).