



Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas  
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# **Student Handbook**

# **2022-2023**

## ***Mission***

The mission of Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas is to provide students with a safe, positive, trauma-centered academic environment that will nurture their love for learning and confidence in life.

## ***Vision***

The vision of Hope Academy is that all students realize their true value and worth and are successful advocates and learners, contributing meaningfully to society by building healthy relationships with others.

## ***Core Values***

- Every child can succeed when they feel safe.
- We will Honor the needs of every family.
- We will strive for innovation in education to strengthen our community.

## ***Welcome to Hope Academy***

Welcome to Hope Academy! We are so excited to serve your child and family for the 2022-2023 academic year. This student handbook contains information regarding Hope Academy's academic procedures as well as our various policies on discipline, student safety, parent/student expectations etc. Please utilize the table of contents for quick navigation and feel free to use this document as a reference for any questions you may have regarding Hope Academy policy.

We want to encourage all parents and families to play an active role in their child's education. Your involvement is a key component to your child's success. If you have any questions about Hope Academy, this handbook, or the specifics of your child's education please feel free to contact us.

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## **Academics**

Young children are not naturally equipped to act with integrity in the academic setting; integrity must be taught. Significant and pervasive trauma affects the communication and executive functioning portions of the brain in young children. As a result, the journey toward living a life of integrity may be more challenging for a student who has experienced trauma compared to a typically developing student. The staff at Hope Academy will model academic integrity as we seek to build intrinsic motivation in our students.

Our children learn with integrity when they:

- understand that their work is their own
- understand that classmates deserve credit for their own work
- give credit to others who may have contributed to their efforts
- collaborate positively and honestly with peers
- take responsibility for their successes and mistakes
- act honestly in all efforts toward mastery of academic goals

Teachers will use continual guidance and modeling for students who do not understand that:

- cheating by using source material, the work of others, or any unauthorized aide does not demonstrate integrity.
- using the work of classmates to meet academic standards and requirements does not demonstrate integrity.
- assisting a classmate in using dishonest methods to meet academic standards and requirements does not demonstrate integrity.

## **Attendance**

Research shows that in order to reverse the effects of trauma, a child needs consistency, boundaries, and a sense of safety. These needs will be met by providing a consistent, daily routine for your child. Part of that routine is ensuring that each child attends school on a daily basis. If your child is absent due to sickness or some other unavoidable circumstance, please notify the school by 9 A.M. on the day of the absence.

Students are considered tardy if they arrive after the instructional day begins. Students who are tardy must check in at the school office and be accompanied by a parent.

A student must be present for 3 consecutive hours of instruction to be considered present for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  day. A student must be present for 6 hours to be considered present for a full day. In order to keep our children safe, teachers and administration will not release a child who has not been properly checked out through the office.

### **Reasons for excused absences include**

1. When attendance by the student or the student's illness could jeopardize the health of other students, a maximum of five (5) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal.
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family, i.e. – spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, any relative who lives in the same household as the student
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student's faith
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency
5. Attendance at a medical appointment
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal

### **Unexcused Absences**

Absences not defined above or not having an accompanying note from the parent; legal guardian; person having lawful control of the student; or person standing in loco parentis, presented in the timeline required by this policy, shall be considered as unexcused absences. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student. When a student has four (4) unexcused absences, his/her parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day. When a student has eight (8) unexcused

absences, his/her legal parents, guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day. Whenever a student has accumulated eleven (11) unexcused absences or has violated the conditions of an agreement granting special arrangements, in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, legal guardian, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law. At any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student or his/her parent, legal guardian, persons having lawful control of the student or person standing in loco parentis may petition the school or District's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, legal guardian, persons having lawful control of the student or person standing in loco parentis, and the school or school administrator or designee.

### **Inclement Weather-Transportation**

In the event of inclement weather, Hope Academy may choose to run limited bus routes. The pick-up and drop-off times and locations will be developed by transportation and posted on the school website. Even if you are not in an area prone to travel problems, often the bus routes include areas that may pose a challenge to bus transportation. Please be timely upon arrival at the designated pick up location. Buses will not be able to return for those running late. Your student will be returned to the same location for the afternoon route. If you are unable to meet the bus at the drop off site your student will be returned to the school that he/she attends. Regular bus service will resume as soon as it is determined that all routes can be run safely in their entirety.

## **Bus Routes**

Hope Academy strives to make transportation to our campus as easy as possible. Due to the large geographic region that we serve, multiple bus routes have been designed to help bring all students in need to Hope Academy. Each bus route will have designated pick up points that are conveniently located within a short drive of each student's home. Before the school year begins, if a parent decides to take advantage of bus transportation, they will be informed of their pick up point and time they need to be there. These routes are subject to change. Any changes made will be communicated to parents immediately.

## **Bus Policies and Student Expectations**

Hope Academy will offer morning and evening transportation to all students. This service will be provided consistently throughout the whole year unless one or more of the following occurs:

- A parent is unable to bring their child(ren) to their assigned bus stop. In order for buses to maintain a consistent schedule, parents will be unable to bring their children to any other bus stop besides the one they have been assigned to. If a parent/guardian would like to formally change their bus stop to a different preset bus stop they may do so by contacting the school.
- A student is unable to follow bus riding safety procedures (see section below).
- A student presents a physical threat to other students and or the bus driver.

**Riding the bus is a privilege not a right.** Hope Academy will remove students from the bus at the discretion of the school principal for a period of time deemed necessary up to and including a permanent ban.

Bus stops will be assigned to each family based on the location of their residence. Buses will not go to individual residences unless a residence is a specific pickup point for students. Buses will drive to central pickup points

that parents will bring their children to. If a parent wishes to switch to a different pre-established bus stop they may do so by submitting a request by phone or email to Hope Academy.

No new bus stops will be created once the routes are set. Any new students who join the school late in the year will be added to a pre-established bus stop.

While riding the bus students are expected to:

1. Remain seated for the entire duration of the bus route.
2. Keep their seatbelt secured.
3. Use kind words and quiet speaking voices.
4. Keep their hands and feet to themselves.

If these expectations are not met and become a consistent issue the offending student may lose bus privileges.

Bus maintenance is a necessary part of our transportation services. Occasionally a morning or an evening route may have to be closed due to necessary vehicle maintenance. We strive to get all maintenance done between routes so our buses can run normally. However, there may be a rare instance that a route will have to be closed. All parents will be notified as soon as possible if this occurs.

## **Weather**

When weather conditions are hazardous for buses to travel safely, school may be dismissed. On mornings in question, the local radio and TV stations will announce the decision as early as possible. School closings are also posted on the district web site ([www.hopeacademynwa.org](http://www.hopeacademynwa.org)) Parents may also sign-up for text or email notification by going online and filling out the Student Profile/Bus Request. This can be found by going to the Parents section of the district website then to the Student Info link. If weather conditions become bad enough during school hours to require buses to

make their runs before the regularly scheduled time, radio and television stations will be notified. Parents are encouraged to discuss alternate plans with their children in case of such an emergency.

### **Snow Days**

Hope Academy will monitor changes in the weather as needed. Because our students reside in such a broad geography across Northwest Arkansas, our policy for snow days is in tandem with the Bentonville, Rogers, Springdale and Fayetteville public school systems. If any of these schools are closed Hope Academy will close or convert to virtual learning.

### **Make up days**

If snow days or days where the weather has canceled school, these days will be made up at the end of the school year.

## ***Student Safety/Discipline Procedures***

Hope Academy is committed to providing a safe campus for all students and faculty. We recognize that in order for a child to succeed academically they must be in an environment that feels comfortable and welcoming. Hope Academy teachers and faculty promise to uphold the outlined safety standards.

### **Visitors**

Parents are welcome at school, but they should understand that prolonged visits in a classroom are not in the best interest of their child. As a courtesy and as a safety measure, parents should make an appointment with the principal in advance and notify the office before going to the classroom. All visitors must register in the school upon arrival at the school. Visits to a given classroom should not be for more than a one-hour duration. Children visitors are not allowed.

Parents are allowed to take their child offsite at their discretion but it may result in docked attendance. Exceptions to this include but are not limited to:

- Student birthdays
- Medical appointments
- Family emergencies
- Preplanned vacations
- Any other extenuating circumstance approved by the principal

### **School Bus Safety**

Students that use our bus transportation are expected to adhere to proper transportation etiquette:

- While the vehicle is in motion all students are expected to remain seated.
- Students are allowed to talk quietly, but we expect the noise level to remain low to ensure that our drivers are not distracted.
- Students may not stick arms, legs, head, or any other part of the body outside of the vehicle at any time.
- All buses stop at train crossings and students are expected to be quiet during these stops.
- In the event of a breakdown the driver and or vehicle aide will call the school and organize a solution.
- An aide will ride the bus each morning and evening to ensure that the child's safety needs are met.
- If a field trip is scheduled all parents must authorize their child's participation to attend said field trip and all bus safety rules still apply.
- Parents with students that fail to adhere to the safety standards may be asked to organize a different transportational method.
- Students shall be instructed in all safe riding practices.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-19-119(b), A.C.A. § 5-60-122

### **Custody of Child**

Unless a school is provided legal documentation that denies a parent of their custodial rights, either parent or guardian may pick their child up at

school. A school must have a court order that indicates a parent does not have the right to take their child from the school. When a non-custodial parent or adult requests to have copies of their child's school records, they should be provided these records unless there is a court order indicating otherwise. In order for an adult that is not a child's legal guardian/parent to pick a child up from school, Hope Academy must receive written and/or spoken confirmation from the parent that the adult is allowed to remove the child from the school. Parents may provide a list of approved adults that are allowed to remove their child from school. This list must be submitted to the principal and all adults on the list will be required to show proper identification upon arrival.

### **Medication at School**

Any medication to be administered at school must be brought to the school by a parent in the original prescription container. The parent will need to complete a medicine dispensation form. The medication will be kept in the nurse's station under lock and key. All medication will be administered by school personnel and documented in writing. Hope Academy will only dispense medications that are required to take during school hours. Any medications that can be passed at home will not be accepted by Hope Academy. See "Health Services" (50-56) for more.

### **Accidents**

Accidents involving injury must be reported to the principal. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. The supervising teacher will send for the nurse/aide and/or the principal to assist the child to the office or the nurse's station.
2. The nurse/aide will proceed as follows:
  - a. by inspecting injury, cleansing wound, and applying first aid;
  - b. by calling parents (or authorized person) if deemed necessary;
  - c. by calling doctor (listed on enrollment card) if condition is believed to be serious (ambulance if necessary) and parent is not available;

- d. by following procedure outlined by medical authorities;
- e. by providing enrollment card to doctor's office to provide emergency permit;
- f. by filing an injury report in the principal's office

### **Hope Academy Property Destroyed by Student**

Due to the nature of our academic environment Hope Academy assumes that some destruction of school property by our students may occur. In the event of a child destroying school property, Hope Academy will notify the child's legal guardian. Our faculty will handle the situation and process the event with the child. Parent's will not be responsible for compensating the school for damage. A parent may be asked to pick their child up from school only if the damage has injured a child or faculty member or if the damage goes beyond minor destruction and puts other students at a severe risk.

### **Student Aggression Towards Self and Others**

Due to the nature of our academic environment, Hope Academy assumes that some students may show aggression towards themselves and/or others. Hope Academy teachers and faculty are trained to handle these events. Legal guardians will be asked to pick up their child only if the child proves to be a severe threat to the health of others. Hope Academy is dedicated to handling these events and keeping the child in school for the duration of the day. If a child causes severe harm to themselves or to another student, and this incident requires medical attention, Hope Academy will notify the child's legal guardian and may request permission to send the child to a hospital.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-502, A.C.A. § 6-17-113

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

A student with a disability, as defined in state standards, who engages in inappropriate behavior is subject to normal school disciplinary rules and procedures, provided the student's right to a free and appropriate public education is not violated. The following provisions will apply:

The individualized education plan (IEP) team for a disabled student should consider whether particular disciplinary procedures should be adopted for that student and included in the IEP, and if a disabled student's placement is to be changed for a period of time exceeding ten (10) days, District special education personnel will be consulted to assure that proper due process procedures are followed.

### **Tobacco/Alcohol Products**

Smoking or use of tobacco or products containing tobacco in any form (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff) in or on any real property owned or leased by a District school, including school buses owned or leased by the District or other school vehicles, or property utilized for school sanctioned events is prohibited. Students who violate this policy, at any school sanctioned event, may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures. With the exception of recognized tobacco cessation products (nicotine patches), this policy's prohibition includes any tobacco or nicotine delivery system or product. Specifically, the prohibition includes any product that is manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under any other name or descriptor.

Hope Academy and the Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter is a tobacco and alcohol free campus. Any individual found with either substance may be asked to leave the campus. Any tobacco products must be kept in the owner's vehicle before they are allowed to enter the school. Under no circumstances will alcohol be allowed within school grounds. Any parent, teacher, administrator, visitor, or volunteer who enters the school grounds under the influence of alcohol may face legal repercussions.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-21-609

## **Student Sexual Harassment**

The District is committed to having an academic environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. Student achievement is best attained in an atmosphere of equal educational opportunity that is free of discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that undermines the integrity of the educational environment and will not be tolerated. Believing that prevention is the best policy, the District will periodically inform students and employees about the nature of sexual harassment, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the possible redress that is available. The information will stress that the District does not tolerate sexual harassment and that students can report inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature without fear of adverse consequences. The information will take into account and be appropriate to the age of the students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to be subjected to, or to subject another person to, sexual harassment as defined in this policy. Any student found, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion. Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other personally offensive verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone under any of the following conditions:

- Submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education;
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; and/or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct of a sexual nature which has the effect of humiliation or embarrassment and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits the student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, an educational program or activity.

Actionable sexual harassment is generally established when an individual is exposed to a pattern of objectionable behaviors or when a single, serious act is committed. What is, or is not, sexual harassment will depend upon all of the surrounding circumstances. Depending upon such circumstances, examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwelcome touching; crude jokes or pictures; discussions of sexual experiences; pressure for sexual activity; intimidation by words, actions, insults, or name calling; teasing related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether or not the student self-identifies as homosexual; and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

Students who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment, or parents of a student who believes their child has been subjected to sexual harassment, are encouraged to file a complaint by contacting a counselor, teacher, Title IX coordinator, or administrator who will assist them in the complaint process. Under no circumstances shall a student be required to first report allegations of sexual harassment to a school contact person if that person is the individual who is accused of the harassment. To the extent possible, complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation. Students who file a complaint of sexual harassment will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. Students who knowingly fabricate allegations of sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Individuals who withhold information, purposely provide inaccurate facts, or otherwise hinder an investigation of sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC 1681, et seq. A.C.A. § 6-15-1005(b)(1)

## **Weapons and Dangerous Instruments**

“Firearm” means any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or any device readily convertible to that use.

“Possession” means having a weapon on the student’s body or in an area under the student’s control.

“Weapon” means any: Firearm; Knife; Razor; Ice pick; Dirk; Box cutter; Nunchucks; Pepper spray, mace, or other noxious spray; Explosive; Taser or other instrument that uses electrical current to cause neuromuscular incapacitation; or any other instrument or substance capable of causing bodily harm.

If a student discovers prior to any questioning or search by any school personnel that he/she has accidentally brought a weapon, other than a firearm, to school on his/her person, in a book bag/purse, or in his/her vehicle on school grounds, and the student informs the principal or a staff person immediately, the student will not be considered to be in possession of a weapon unless it is a firearm. The weapon shall be confiscated and held in the office until such time as the student’s parent/legal guardian shall pick up the weapon from the school’s office.

Repeated offenses are unacceptable and shall be grounds for disciplinary action against the student as otherwise provided for in this policy. Except as permitted in this policy, students found to be in possession on the school campus of a firearm shall be recommended for expulsion for a period of one (1) year. The Superintendent shall have the discretion to modify such expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis.

Parents or legal guardians of students expelled under this policy shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental

responsibility for allowing a child to possess a firearm on school property. Parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to readmitting the student. Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a firearm policy violation shall also be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a firearm on school property. The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws. The District shall report any student who brings a firearm to school to the criminal justice system or juvenile delinquency system by notifying local law enforcement.

If a parent, volunteer, faculty member, or visitor has a concealed carry license we request that they still leave their firearm outside of the campus grounds. All incidents of firearms within school grounds must be reported to the ADE.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-502(c)(2)(a)(b), A.C.A. § 6-18-507(e)(1)(2), A.C.A. § 6-21-608, A.C.A. § 5-4-201, A.C.A. § 5-4-401, A.C.A. § 5-27-210, A.C.A. § 5-73-119(b)(e)(8)(9)(10), 20 USC § 7151

### **Dress Code**

Students shall not practice a mode of dress, style of hair or standard of personal grooming that will present a health or safety hazard or cause disruption or disturbance to the educational process. The following dress code is prescribed for all students, grades K-6:

Students will not be permitted to wear:

- Shirts with straps that are less than two inches wide, cut-off T-shirts, midriff shirts/blouses, netted shirts, muscle shirts, cutoffs (pants).
- Shirts, hats, buttons, etc. displaying obscene or inappropriate printing; or advertising of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products, either explicit or implied.

- Offensive clothing and offensive writings and drawings on the body, books, and clothing.
- Rips, tears, or holes in clothing must not expose skin or undergarments above mid-thigh.
- Short shorts or dresses/skirts, including splits, must extend below mid-thigh.
- Head coverings (including bandanas) worn during the school-day in the buildings.
- Sunglasses, inside the school building, unless medically required.
- Clothing which sags (the waistband of pants, shorts, skirts, or jeans must be above the hip bones).
- Clothing which shows underwear or lack thereof when doing normal school activities (including, but not limited to, leggings, tights, yoga pants, and jeggings). If these items are worn, there must be sufficient coverage to a minimum of mid-thigh.
- Rolling or wheeled shoes.
- Pajamas or any other sleepwear except when authorized by the building administration.
- Blankets

The final decision regarding wearing apparel will be at the discretion of the school principal.

### **Safety and Welfare of Students**

School personnel should make every effort to ensure the safety and welfare of all students. Communication between school and home is needed to promote this goal.

1. Students on errands – Teachers may not send students on errands away from the building during school hours.
2. Leaving the building – Under no circumstances should a student be sent home without permission from the office and then only when the parent is notified.

3. Appointments – The school must be notified of any offsite appointments during school hours. These appointments will not count against school attendance.
4. Parents/Guardians must report to the office when checking a student out of school. Parents/Guardians will be asked to identify themselves in order to confirm their identity and relationship to the student.

To ensure the health and safety of all students:

1. All teachers and faculty will be CPR certified.
2. Nurses will work with the building principal to schedule state mandated screening for vision/hearing/scoliosis/BMI. Due to state reports, the nurses have a time frame to complete the designated screenings.

## **Disaster Drills and Student Safety**

### Emergency Communication

In the event of an emergency, the staff involved shall notify the Shift Supervisor/Hope Academy Principal via walkie-talkie, and request communication be moved on the radio to Channel 2 in order to maintain confidentiality.

### **Emergency Codes**

Hope Academy utilizes two emergency codes:

1. Code Red (indicates behavioral emergency requiring immediate assistance): staff calls code plus his/her location over walkie-talkie and the school principal initiates a switch to Channel 2 and proceeds accordingly. Situations that warrant the call of a Code Red would be but are not limited to:
  - o A Student running away from the facility and to the road
  - o Two or more students fighting
  - o Major property destruction

2. Code Blue (indicates medical emergency requiring immediate assistance): staff calls code plus his/her location over walkie-talkie and the principal/school nurse initiates switch to Channel 2 and proceeds accordingly. Situations that warrant the call of a Code Blue would be but are not limited to:
  - Student goes unconscious
  - Student has a seizure
  - Student has a serious physical injury
  - Student experiences a severe allergic reaction

## **Evacuation Plan**

All school areas will have evacuation maps available for reference. The following information will be marked on all evacuation maps:

1. Emergency exits.
2. Primary and secondary evacuation routes.

## **Scheduled Drills**

- Emergency drills shall be unannounced and conducted as required and timed to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency procedures.
- Emergency Drill Forms shall be completed by the designated faculty member conducting the drill(s) and returned to the Principal for submission.
- Special Drills (earthquake, medical emergency, threat of violence, and utility failure) will be conducted on an as needed basis.

## **Fire**

Hope Academy has a plan for evacuating the building in case of fire, and a plan for positioning students away from the building. Fire drills should be held on a monthly basis, and a record kept of the evacuation time. Monthly fire drill dates and evacuation times should be reported to the superintendent and the state compliance authorities.

Hope Academy's fire procedure is as follows:

When fire or smoke is discovered: The nearest fire alarm must be activated.

A key is required to activate any fire alarm located on the school property.

*Upon being notified about the fire emergency:*

1. Teachers/paraprofessionals will maintain supervision of assigned students at all times.
2. Teachers/paraprofessionals will evacuate assigned students, volunteers and visitors in his/her area, following the determined evacuation route for that area.
3. While exiting the building, a designated staff member will check each room for occupants.
4. Teachers/paraprofessionals will assemble and remain with assigned students at the designated assembly point until further instruction is given.
5. One faculty member for each assigned area will keep a walkie-talkie at all times during the emergency in order to maintain contact with the principal and other designated staff members.
6. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that each child is present and accounted for at the designated meeting zone.
7. The principal will ensure that no one reenters the building.
8. In the event of a fire every classroom and faculty member will evacuate the building and head to the front parking lot.
9. In the event of fire in both the main building and gymnasium/recreation building, the assembly point will be the baseball field behind campus.
10. In the case of inclement weather or other outdoor threat children will proceed to the gym building.
11. Once attendance is taken to determine if anyone may be remaining in the building, all staff, students, volunteers and visitors will evacuate to the subdivision across the street from the school campus.

Hope Academy staff will ONLY fight the fire if:

1. The fire alarm has been activated, and all students are being evacuated to the designated assembly point.
2. The fire is small and is not spreading to other areas.
3. The fire extinguisher is in working condition and staff is trained to use it.
4. Escaping the area is only possible by backing up to the nearest exit.

## **Tornado**

Hope Academy has a plan to be followed in case of a tornado alert. Hope Academy will conduct four tornado safety drills each year.

Hope Academy's Tornado procedure is as follows:

*When a watch is issued:*

- The Principal will instruct everyone to remain in the building until the watch/warning is over.

*When a warning is issued by sirens, announcement or other means:*

- Teachers/paraprofessionals will maintain supervision of assigned students at all times.
- Teachers/paraprofessionals will assemble assigned students, volunteers, and visitors in the nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area.
- One teacher/paraprofessional for each assigned area will keep a walkie-talkie at all times during the emergency in order to maintain contact with the school principal.
- The principal will be responsible for ensuring that all students, teachers, paraprofessionals, faculty, visitors, and volunteers are present and accounted for. Attendance will be taken once all individuals are secure in a shelter.
- All occupants will remain in the Severe Weather Shelter Area until further instruction is given.

## **Threatening Telephone Calls**

In the case of threatening telephone calls, school and public authorities will be notified.

Hope Academy's procedure for threats of violence is as follows:

When a serious, direct threat is made during a telephone call (i.e. "I am coming to NWACS/Hope Academy with a gun," "I will kill you," etc.) Hope Academy personnel will:

1. Remain calm and speak courteously.
2. not challenge, agitate or interrupt the caller.
3. Listen carefully and gather as much information as possible.
  - Complete the Telephone Threat Checklist, located at the front desk and each of the supervisor's office.
4. If the telephone call is received by any person other than the principal, the school principal and NWACS supervisor will be immediately notified.
5. Shift Supervisor/principal will notify the appropriate authorities.

**Threat of violence made by a person on campus:**

1. If a threat is made and witnessed by, or made toward any person other than an NWACS Shift Supervisor/ Hope Academy principal, the staff member involved will notify the Shift Supervisor/principal immediately if possible.
2. The principal or NWACS Shift Supervisor (or other designated person) will make the following announcement over the intercom/walkie-talkie – "All staff report to the nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area."
3. Teachers/paraprofessionals will assemble assigned students, volunteers and visitors in the Severe Weather Shelter Area located in his/her current area.
4. Teachers/paraprofessionals will maintain supervision of assigned residents at all times.
5. One teacher/paraprofessional for each assigned area will keep a walkie-talkie at all times during the emergency in order to maintain contact with the principal and other designated staff.
6. Teachers/paraprofessionals are only to use walkie-talkies to respond to a Shift Supervisor's/principal's request for information or to report

an additional emergency. This will ensure an organized transfer of information.

7. All occupants will remain in the Severe Weather Shelter Area until further instruction is given.
8. The Shift Supervisor/school principal will call 9-1-1 and provide information. Any person may call 9-1-1 if it is not possible to notify a Shift Supervisor safely.
9. After appropriate action has been taken, the Shift Supervisor/principal will notify the appropriate authorities.

### **Bomb threat**

During a telephone bomb threat Hope Academy staff will:

1. Remain calm and courteous to the caller. They will not challenge, agitate, or interrupt the caller.
2. Listen carefully and gather as much information as possible.
3. If possible, communicate to another person in the area (without alerting the caller) to call 9-1-1. If that is not possible, call 9-1-1 immediately after the call has ended.
4. If the bomb-threat communication is received by any person other than an NWACS Shift Supervisor or the Hope Academy Principal, the staff member will notify a Shift Supervisor/principal immediately and provide any information gathered.
5. Any search for a bomb will be conducted by the appropriate law enforcement agency, and NOT STAFF. Staff shall not:
  - o Touch any light switch, electrical appliance or radio.
  - o Transmit any message over the 2-way radios or cellular phones.
  - o Touch or open any mail or packages.
  - o Touch or open any suspicious item. Any such item(s) shall be reported to the investigating law-enforcement agency.

During a bomb threat situation.

1. The Shift Supervisor/school principal will make the announcement over the intercom for staff to report to the nearest storm shelter and await further instruction.
2. Walkie-talkies & cell phones are to be shut off immediately.
3. Teachers/paraprofessionals will assemble assigned students, volunteers and visitors in the nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area.
4. Hope Academy faculty will be alert for any items that look out of place along the evacuation route. Such items are not to be tampered with but reported to the Shift Supervisor/school principal.
5. Teachers/paraprofessionals will maintain supervision of assigned students at all times.
6. All occupants will remain in the Severe Weather Shelter Area until further instruction is given.
7. A Shift Supervisor/principal will call 9-1-1 via a land-line phone and provide information. Any person may call 9-1-1 if it is not possible to notify a Shift Supervisor safely.
8. After appropriate action has been taken, the Shift Supervisor will notify the appropriate authorities.

## **Earthquake**

Hope Academy staff will follow the procedure below:

1. Teachers/paraprofessionals will maintain supervision of assigned students at all times.
2. Teachers/paraprofessionals will assemble assigned students, volunteers, and visitors in the nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area.
3. One teacher/paraprofessional in each shelter will keep a walkie-talkie with him/her at all times during the emergency, in order to maintain contact with NWACS Shift Supervisor/Hope Academy Principal.
4. Teachers/paraprofessionals are only to use walkie-talkies to respond to a Supervisor's/principal's request for information or to report an additional emergency. This will ensure an organized transfer of information.

5. All occupants will remain in the Severe Weather Shelter Area until further instruction is given.
6. After appropriate action has been taken, the Shift Supervisor/Hope Academy principal will notify the appropriate authorities.

### **Medical Emergency**

Medical emergencies include but are not limited to accidents/injuries, medication overdose or adverse reaction, anaphylaxis/severe allergic reaction, and complications arising from chronic health conditions (asthma, heart disease, etc.). In the event of a medical emergency, an employee shall remain with the person and direct another employee to call a “Code Blue” plus his/her location or call 9-1-1 (depending on the severity of the situation). The school nurse and school principal must be notified of the situation.

### **Utility Failure**

1. If there is a power outage, the generator to the emergency building will activate. The generator will allow the door locks, lights, heat/air and the kitchens on each wing to remain in operation. The gymnasium building and the warehouse will not be in operation when the generator is activated.
2. If the generator does not come on, and it does not appear that there is any immediate danger, the NWACS shift supervisor/school principal will contact the utility company to ensure the company is aware of the outage and then assess the best action to take.
3. If the generator does not activate, the school principal will ensure all exterior doors are locked.
4. If the power has been off for more than 30 minutes, the Shift Supervisor shall contact the Director of Residential Services for instructions. Some appropriate actions may be: contacting the utility company, taking the children on an outing or locating an alternate setting where the children can be best served.

## **Sex Offenders**

Building administrators should keep a notebook of all notifications of registered level 3 and 4 sexual offenders. The notebook should be available to office personnel.

Registered sex offenders are prohibited from entering a school campus with the following exceptions:

1. is a minor and is a student.
2. They can come for a public event where admission is charged, a graduation ceremony, or a baccalaureate ceremony.
3. They can come on a non-student contact day.
4. A sex offender who is a parent of a student can come for a parent-teacher conference but must be escorted around the school by a designated school official or employee.
5. A parent sex offender can come to deliver food, medicine, or personal items but must come directly to the school office.
6. A school official may allow a parent sex offender on campus if there is reasonable notice and someone is available to escort them. If a designated escort is not available, the parent sex offender shall not enter the campus until he or she is notified that a school official or employee is Available. (See Commissioner's Communication COM-08-027 for additional information.)

## **Illegal Drugs**

In compliance with applicable state and federal laws, the unlawful use, possession, dispensation, or manufacture of illegal drugs or illegal possession of controlled substances or paraphernalia, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including a student's termination from the school, the employee's or volunteer's termination and may also have other legal consequences. If a parent, volunteer, or visitor enters the school with illegal substances the proper authorities will be notified and the adult will be removed from the campus.

If such illegal item(s) are discovered:

1. The employee or volunteer who discovers the item(s) will notify the school principal and remain in sight of the item(s) until the principal arrives.
2. The principal will secure the illegal item(s) in a locked cabinet that has limited staff access.
3. The principal will notify the NWACS team of the situation.
4. The principal will contact the legal authorities and request the immediate removal of the illegal substance.
5. The principal and/or the staff member/volunteer who discovered the item(s) will document the incident on the appropriate Accident/Incident Report.
6. The Shift Supervisor will contact the legal guardian of any student(s) involved.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Hope Academy will not tolerate any instance of bullying. However, we recognize that bullying may have underlying causes that need to be addressed. Hope Academy is dedicated to solving bullying issues with each child in order to create a safe and comfortable environment.

A building principal, or designee, who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall:

1. As soon as reasonably practicable, but by no later than the end of the school-day following the receipt of the credible report of bullying:
  - a) Report to a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student that their student is the victim in a credible report of bullying; and b) Prepare a written report of the alleged incident of bullying;
2. Promptly investigate the credible report or complaint of bullying, which shall be completed by no later than the fifth (5th) school-day following the completion of the written report.

3. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student who was the alleged victim in a credible report of bullying whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true and the availability of counseling and other intervention services.
4. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person acting in loco parentis of the student who is alleged to have been the perpetrator of the incident of bullying: a) That a credible report or complaint of bullying against their student exists; b) Whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true; c) Whether action was taken against their student upon the conclusion of the investigation of the alleged incident of bullying; and d) Information regarding the reporting of another alleged incident of bullying, including potential consequences of continued incidents of bullying;
5. Make a written record of the investigation, which shall include: a) A detailed description of the alleged incident of bullying, including without limitation a detailed summary of the statements from all material witnesses to the alleged incident of bullying; b. Any action taken as a result of the investigation; and
6. Discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services with students involved in the incident of bullying.

Notice of what constitutes bullying, the District's prohibition against bullying, and the consequences for students who bully shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, cafeteria, restroom, gymnasium, and school bus. Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of a student, persons standing in loco parentis, students, school volunteers, and employees shall be given copies of the notice annually.

The superintendent shall make a report annually to the Board of Directors on student discipline data, which shall include, without limitation, the number of incidents of bullying reported and the actions taken regarding the reported incidents of bullying. Copies of this policy shall be available upon request.

### **Arkansas Mandated Reporter**

State law requires all teachers and faculty to register as mandated reporters for child abuse. Any Hope Academy team member that suspects possible child abuse is required by law to report it to the Child Abuse Hotline. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and any other Hope Academy team member does not have to investigate any suspicion of child abuse before calling the hotline.

### **Communications to Parents**

Teachers should believe that parents are doing the best they can for their children in terms of what they know, the resources they have at their command, and the values and beliefs of their social group. Any communication should be objective and realistic, and at the same time, courteous and considerate. In lieu of a long, involved note, it is better to ask for a conference. All delicate information should be communicated in person or by phone. Arkansas Standards require each elementary classroom teacher to make personal contact with parents or guardians at least once each semester.

Parents will be notified if any of the following events occur with a student:

- Firearm/illegal substance/tobacco/alcohol possession
- Police intervention
- Severe violence towards self and/or others
- Severe property damage
- Runaway attempt
- Medical emergency

## **Runaway Attempt**

In the event of a student runaway:

- The teacher/paraprofessional/faculty member involved with the incident will notify the school principal immediately.
- Teachers/paraprofessionals will make sure all other children are in a secure location.
- If the child is redirected back to the school without leaving the property the incident will be documented and the child's legal guardian will be notified.
- If the child leaves the property the principal may contact law enforcement to assist as needed.

## **Loss or Theft**

Teachers cannot be responsible for toys or personal belongings or student personal communication devices brought to school by students. Money or valuables should not be left in the teacher's desk. Students who bring these items take the risk of losing them. Hope Academy will not take responsibility for these lost items. If there is suspicion of theft, Hope Academy will investigate but if no evidence is found and the items are not recovered, the matter will be considered resolved.

## **Food and Beverages in Schools**

According to the ADE rules governing nutrition, students will not have access to vended food and beverages anytime, anywhere on school premises during the declared school day. A school may not serve; provide access to, through direct or indirect sales, or use as a reward, any food of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) or competitive food. This includes FMNV and competitive foods given, sold, or provided by school staff, students or student groups, parents or parent groups, or any other person, company or organization associated with the school.

The ADE does allow the following exceptions to the guidelines above:

1. Parents Rights – Parents are not restricted in what they can provide for their own child's lunch or snack but they may not provide restricted items to other children at school.
2. School Nurses – School nurses may use FMNVs or candy during the course of providing health care to individual students.
3. Special Needs Students – If a student's IEP indicates the use of a FMNV or candy for behavior modification, it is permissible.
4. School Events – Students may be given any food and/or beverage items during the school day for up to nine different events each school year to be determined and approved by the administration. These items may not be given during meal times in the areas where school meals are being served.
5. Snacks – Snacks may be provided or distributed by the school as part of the planned instructional program (ex. kindergarten snack).
6. Foods for Instructional Purposes – Foods integrated as a vital part of the instructional program are allowed at the discretion of the building principal (ex. edible manipulative, a nutrition food experience, food production in family and consumer science units, and food science units). All food used for instructional purposes must be approved by the building principal.

## **Staffing**

It is the principal's responsibility to work with the Human Resources Department to fill vacated and new positions, following the procedures outlined by the HR Department. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following: notifying the HR department of resignations and retirements; reviewing transfer/applicant electronic applications; interviewing and checking references; making hiring recommendations and completing appropriate forms and paperwork.

Each teacher is responsible for finding a substitute in the event of their absence. All other staffing needs will be addressed by the principal.

## **Kitchens**

The main kitchen in the cafeteria is off limits to all students. It is impossible to closely monitor all the items that could be dangerous to the residents.

## **Locked Items**

Doors, cabinets, and drawers that have locks must be kept locked at all times. Chemicals must always remain in a locked area. When students participate in an activity that requires cleaning supplies, staff will handle all chemicals and will not allow the children to handle them. It is each staff member's responsibility to dispense the cleaning supplies in or on objects to be cleaned, and then return the cleaning supplies immediately to the locked areas.

## **School Access**

- All exterior doors shall remain locked at all times. All students, employees, volunteers, and visitors shall enter and exit the facility through the school entrance and sign in/out.
- All Hope Academy visitors and volunteers must present a valid form of identification and a legitimate purpose for visiting before being granted access to the school.
- Volunteers and specific approved visitors (therapists, etc.) will be issued a volunteer badge upon entrance, which will allow these visitors limited access to specific areas of the building. All other visitors must be accompanied by a staff member at all times.

## **Security Cameras**

For the safety of all faculty and students Hope Academy has installed security cameras in all public areas. These are recording cameras that are used to witness critical incidents and investigate allegations made against faculty or other students. The cameras are reviewed on a case by case basis. They are not located in restrooms.

## **Raptor System**

- NWACS/Hope Academy has initiated a screening program called Raptor that identifies sex offenders. The purpose of the program is to keep sex offenders away from the children. All guests 18 years of age or older will be required to scan an ID upon each visit. In addition, such visitors will receive a printed badge to wear while at Hope Academy.
- Guests will be expected to provide a valid driver's license or a valid state ID and will not be able to enter the facility without a scanned license or ID. If a visitor's identification is scanned in Raptor and the person is listed in the database as a sex offender, the receptionist will ask the individual to leave the premises and report the finding to the principal or NWACS shift supervisor, who will then report the situation to law enforcement. If such a person becomes irate, follow the procedure for threats of violence made by a person on campus.

## **Sign-in/out for Staff and Visitors**

All staff, volunteers, parents/legal guardians, and visitors must sign in and out before entering the school common grounds. Having an accurate record of the arrivals and departures of all staff, volunteers and visitors allows Hope Academy to better account for each person's whereabouts, in the event of an emergency.

## **General Discipline Procedures**

Hope Academy is an organization that utilizes progressive forms of discipline when interacting with students exhibiting challenging behaviors. These methods are non-invasive and utilize evidence based therapeutic approaches to work with children struggling to regulate themselves. The main purpose of these strategies is to keep children regulated throughout the school day and help these instances of challenging behavior become less frequent.

## **School Suspension**

Students not present at school cannot benefit from the educational opportunities the school environment affords. Administrators, therefore, shall strive to find ways to keep students in school as participants in the educational process. Hope Academy faculty and administration set a high threshold for behaviors that would constitute an out of school suspension. It is our goal to handle the vast majority of disruptions/challenging behavior that may be exhibited by a child. There are instances, however, when the needs of the other students or the interests of the learning environment require the removal of a student from school. The Board authorizes school principals or their designees to suspend students for disciplinary reasons for a period of time not to exceed three (3) school days, including the day upon which the suspension is imposed. A student may be suspended for behavior including, but not limited to that which:

- Substantially interferes with the ability to maintain a safe educational environment for the other students.
- Involves severe violence or aggression towards the self or others.
- Involves overt sexual behavior that jeopardizes the safety and security of other students and faculty.
- Is the act of bringing a firearm or other deadly weapon on school campus.

OSS shall not be used to discipline a student for skipping class, excessive absences, or other forms of truancy.

The school principal or designee shall proceed as follows in deciding whether or not to suspend a student.

- The principal/designee will review the incident warranting suspension on the schools camera systems.
- He/she will then consult with the teacher/faculty member involved with the incident.
- He/she will then speak with the student to gather all necessary evidence needed in order to make an appropriate decision.

- If the principal finds the student guilty of severe misconduct, he/she may be suspended.

When possible, a notice of the suspension, its duration, and any stipulations for the student's readmittance to class will be given to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) prior to the suspension. Such notice shall be handed to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), person(s) with lawful control of the student, person(s) standing in loco parentis, or mailed to the last address reflected in the records of the school district.

Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence severely endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as possible. Out-of-school suspensions shall be treated as excused absences, and during the period of suspension, students shall not be permitted on campus except to attend a student/parent/administrator conference.

It is the responsibility of the student's parents, legal guardians, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to provide current contact information to the district, which the school shall use to immediately notify the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis upon the suspension of a student. The notification shall be by one of the following means listed in order of priority:

- A primary call number; (the contact may be by voice, voicemail, or text message.)
- An email address;
- A regular first-class letter to the last known mailing address

The school shall keep a log of contacts attempted and made to the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis.

The school shall establish programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during a student's period of Out of School Suspension (OSS). During the period of their suspension, students serving OSS are not permitted on campus except to attend a student/parent/administrator conference or when necessary as part of the District's engagement or access to education programs.

A parent/guardian may appeal suspension decisions to the building principal. If the principal upholds the suspension, the parent may make a second appeal to the Superintendent/Superintendent Designee.

At each level of appeal, the person or group hearing the appeal may affirm, revoke or alter the decision made at the previous level. Procedural due process, as defined by statutes and court decisions, will be followed at the stage of the suspension process.

Please note that Hope Academy strives to avoid any out of school suspension. Our faculty are trained and prepared to handle the majority of concerns that may arise with the students we serve. Suspension is one of the last resorts and will be only used in the most extreme of circumstances.

### **School Expulsion**

Hope Academy may expel a student for a period longer than three (3) school days for a violation of the most severe nature. The Superintendent or school principal may make a recommendation of expulsion to the Board for student conduct deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate, or where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the safe learning environment or would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff. Hope Academy has no

intention of expelling any student. Expulsion will only be considered in the most strenuous of circumstances. The school faculty are dedicated to taking all necessary steps to keep each and every child enrolled at Hope Academy.

Expulsion shall not be used to discipline a student in kindergarten through fourth (4th) grade unless the student's behavior:

- a. Poses a severe physical risk to himself or herself or to others;
- b. Causes a serious disruption that cannot be addressed through other means; or
- c. Is the act of bringing a firearm or other deadly weapon on school campus.

Prior to any expulsion recommendation being forwarded to the Board, the case will be reviewed by the Administrative Disciplinary Hearing Team (ADHT) composed of three current administrators who will hear the case as presented by the Principal or designee. The Principal will also make a recommendation at the hearing for action to be taken. At the conclusion of the hearing, the ADHT will issue its decision based on the information presented by the Principal or designee.

After reviewing the decision of the ADHT, the Superintendent may recommend to the Board that the student be expelled for the specified length of time. In this event, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardian (mailed to the address reflected on the school's records) that he/she will recommend to the Board that the student be expelled and state the reasons for the recommendation. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the Board will consider and vote to affirm, reject or modify the recommendation.

If the parent or legal guardian of the student, involved in the disciplinary actions, wishes to appeal the expulsion to the Board, the parent or legal guardian may request an appeal hearing through the Superintendent.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of the Board and student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The President of the Board, Board attorney, or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The parent/legal guardian and/or student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. Both the District administration and Board also may be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the Board unless the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, person standing in loco parentis, or older requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the Board shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Superintendent, or designee, or representative will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses that gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross examination will not be permitted. However, any member of the Board, the Superintendent, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm prohibited on school campus by law. The Superintendent shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis. Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of a student, or persons standing in loco parentis of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a

weapon on school property. The parents, or legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The Superintendent and the Board shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.

The District shall establish programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during a student's period of expulsion. The District's program shall include offering an expelled student an opportunity for enrollment in digital learning courses or other alternative educational courses that result in the receipt of academic credit that is at least equal to credit the expelled student may have received from the District if the student had not been expelled. Parents/legal guardians, teachers, and the school principal can collaborate to ensure this requirement is carried out and the child is still receiving the education he/she deserves.

Please note that Hope Academy has no intention of expelling any of its students, nor do we believe that a situation will come up that requires expulsion. The school faculty are committed to handling and processing every situation that comes up with the child and are dedicated to keeping each child in school throughout the entire year. That being said, we do reserve the right to expel any student that poses a severe threat to other students.

### **Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)**

Every Hope Academy teacher, paraprofessional, and faculty member will be trained in Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). This groundbreaking child support strategy is evidence based and has produced incredible

results in children who come from traumatic backgrounds. TBRI looks at the root causes of a child's behavior and recognizes that in order for a child to properly regulate, they must first overcome the emotional and social barriers put in place by their trauma. TBRI looks at the ways trauma negatively affects a child's brain development and social progress, and implements behavioral strategies to combat these negative effects. The ultimate goal of TBRI is to connect with vulnerable children and give them the tools they need to live productive and meaningful lives.

### **Conscious Discipline (CD)**

Every Hope Academy teacher, paraprofessional, and faculty member will use principles of Conscious Discipline (CD) when interacting with Hope Academy students. These principles are designed to help children unlock their decision making skills and help them interact with others in a safe and progressive way. Conscious discipline is an evidence based intervention model that helps adults (parents/legal guardians/teachers) teach their children the best ways to handle difficult situations. It is a highly successful intervention method that has helped thousands of vulnerable children.

### **Trauma-Centered Care**

Hope Academy's educational model focuses on Trauma-Centered Care. Trauma-Center Care works with children who come from difficult backgrounds and helps reverse the negative effects of their trauma. A major component of this educational model is recognizing that trauma hinders a child's brain development and social functioning. Through intensive care and consistent educational support, each child will be given the opportunity to thrive regardless of the barriers placed before them by their traumatic experiences.

### **Child Restraints and Escorts**

For the safety and wellbeing of all students and faculty, Hope Academy utilizes child restraints and escort holds. These will only be used when a child is exhibiting severe physical aggression. As soon as a child displaying

aggressive behavior is removed and relocated to a safe space, the restraint/escort hold will no longer be used unless the child continues to show serious aggression.

## *Complaints/Concerns/Grievances*

It is the goal of Hope Academy to be responsive to the community it serves and to continuously improve the educational program offered. Hope Academy welcomes constructive criticism when it is offered with the intent of improving the quality of the educational program or the delivery of the school's services.

The School Board formulates and adopts policies to achieve the School's vision and hires a Superintendent to implement its policies through administration and supervision of the School. In order to secure prompt and equitable resolution of any student/parent complaints, students and/or parents must comply with the following steps to ensure the complaint can be properly addressed. A student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

If the complaint involves a problem with a teacher, the student/parent must discuss the matter with the teacher before requesting a conference with the principal. If the complaint does not involve a teacher, the student/parent must request a conference with the principal who shall schedule and hold a conference with the student/parent.

If the outcome of the conference with the Principal is not to the student/parent's satisfaction, the student/parent may request a conference with the Superintendent/Superintendent Designee who shall schedule and hold a conference. The Superintendent/Superintendent Designee shall listen to the student/parent's complaint and take whatever action is deemed appropriate.

If a parent/legal guardian or student believes they have been victims of discrimination by any member of the Hope Academy team we ask that they make this issue known to the principal immediately. The claim will be investigated and disciplinary action will occur if the claim is proved true.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

It is the policy of Hope Academy not to discriminate against any student, employee, parent/legal guardian on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its practices as required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Hope Academy will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

## **Admission**

Hope Academy is a public open enrollment charter school. Due to our status as a public school, any and all children in the Northwest Arkansas area are eligible to apply. Hope Academy does not discriminate in student choice based on sex, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or nationality. Any and all parents/legal guardians are welcome to apply for our academy.

However, the mission of our school is to provide a safe academic environment for children who have experienced trauma. Through our outreach, social media, and policies the Hope Academy team has tried our best to make clear the demographics we wish to serve. We humbly ask that any interested parents/legal guardians should only apply if their child fits the demographic we hope to serve. We ask that no parent admit their child without first considering this qualification. Our ultimate goal is to help these

impacted children and families find a state of normalcy and return to the community enriched and ready to contribute.

### **Open Admission Lottery**

Before the beginning of each school year Hope Academy will hold an open admission lottery for the selection of its students. The lottery is open to the public and will be held onsite at Hope Academy. Parents/students/legal guardians are not required to attend in order to receive a seat in the school.

A lottery is only necessary if the amount of applications exceeds our student capacity. If we are under capacity or directly at capacity at the close of the enrollment period, we will waive the lottery and all applicants will be admitted to the school.

If the amount of applications exceeds our student capacity the lottery will commence. A designee not affiliated with Hope Academy will be responsible for conducting the lottery. Once the application pool is closed the designee will take each application and assign it a random code. Next, the designee will place each code within the matching grade level. Finally, all of the codes will be sorted through a random algorithm and select ten codes for each grade. The ten selected codes represent the ten students that will receive direct seats at Hope Academy. The remaining codes will be placed randomly on a waitlist.

Once the lottery is completed the results will be posted online and the principal or other designee will contact each family about the results. The principal/designee will ask each family that has received a slot at Hope Academy to confirm their slot and accept their admission. If a parent/legal guardian chooses to decline admission or fails to respond in a timely manner, the slot will go to the first student on the waiting list.

All families and students are eligible to participate in the lottery and this system ensures that no bias whether based on sex, race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, religion etc. takes place.

## *Enrollment*

### **Residence Requirements**

Definitions:

"In loco parentis" means relating to the responsibility to undertake the care and control of another person in the absence of:

- Supervision by the person's parent or legal guardian
- Formal legal approval.

"Reside" means to be physically present and to maintain a permanent place of abode for an average of no fewer than four (4) calendar days and nights per week for a primary purpose other than school attendance.

"Residential address" means the physical location where the student's parents, legal guardians, persons having legal, lawful control of the student under an order of a court, or persons standing in loco parentis reside. A student may use the residential address of a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis only if the student resides at the same residential address and if the guardianship or other legal authority is not granted solely for educational needs or school attendance purposes.

Hope Academy shall be open and free through the completion of the secondary program to all persons between the ages of five (5) and nine (9) years whose parents, legal Elementary guardians or other persons having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis reside within the state of Arkansas and to all persons between those ages who have been legally transferred to the state for educational purposes.

In order for a person with a child eligible for K-3 to establish a residence for the purpose of attending Hope Academy said person and their legal guardians must reside within the state of Arkansas.

Children whose parent or legal guardian relocates within the state due to a mobilization, deployment, or available military housing while on active duty in, or serving in the reserve component of a branch of the United States Armed Forces or National Guard may continue attending school at Hope Academy. A child may complete all remaining school years at Hope Academy regardless of mobilization, deployment, or military status of the parent or guardian.

Any change of address within the state of Arkansas must be made known to Hope Academy immediately.

### **Enrollment Requirements**

To enroll in Hope Academy, the child must be a permanent resident of Arkansas. Unfortunately, Hope Academy is unable to serve students from surrounding states.

Students may enter kindergarten if they will attain the age of five (5) on or before August 1 of the year in which they are seeking initial enrollment. Any student who has been enrolled in a state accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state for at least sixty (60) days, who will become five (5) years old during the year in which he/she is enrolled in kindergarten, and who meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon written request to Hope Academy. Any student who was enrolled in a state-accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state or in a kindergarten program equivalent in another country, becomes a resident of this state as a direct result of active military orders or a court-ordered change of custody, will become five (5) years of age during the year in which he or she is enrolled in kindergarten, and meets the basic residency requirement for

school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon a written request to Hope Academy.

Any child who will be six (6) years of age on or before October 1 of the school year of enrollment and who has not completed a state-accredited kindergarten program shall be evaluated by Hope Academy and may be placed in the first grade if the results of the evaluation justify placement in the first grade and the child's parent or legal guardian agrees with placement in the first grade; otherwise the child shall be placed in kindergarten.

Any child who has been enrolled in the first grade in a state-accredited or state-approved elementary school in another state for a period of at least sixty (60) days, who will become age six (6) years during the school year in which he/she is enrolled in grade one (1), and who meets the basic residency requirements for school attendance may be enrolled in the first grade.

Students who transition mid year to Hope Academy from a state-accredited school shall be assigned to the same grade as they were attending in their previous school. Private school students shall be evaluated by Hope Academy to determine their appropriate grade placement. Home school students enrolling or re-enrolling as a public school student shall be placed in accordance to the pre-assessment results.

Hope Academy shall make no attempt to ascertain the immigration status, legal or illegal, of any student or his/her parent or legal guardian presenting for enrollment.

Prior to the child's admission to Hope Academy:

- The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall furnish the child's social security number, or if they request, the school will assign the

child a nine (9) digit number designated by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall provide Hope Academy with one (1) of the following documents indicating the child's age:
  - A birth certificate
  - A statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child's date of birth
  - An attested baptismal certificate
  - A passport
  - An affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis
  - United States military identification
  - Previous school records.
- The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding. This helps the school board know which children may need enhanced services.
- The child shall be age-appropriately immunized or have an exemption issued by the Arkansas Department of Health.

## **Registration Packet**

Before the beginning of a given school year Hope Academy will give all new students/legal guardians a registration packet that must be complete at least two weeks before the beginning of the school year. Parents with students transferring to our school will be asked to fill out sections of our registration packet. This should be completed before the transfer student begins his/her first day.

# *Nutrition Service*

Hope Academy has declined participating in the state school meal program. Fortunately, our facility is equipped with a state of the art kitchen and nutrition program. Breakfast and lunch are both prepared onsite under the direction of a professional culinary chef. The meals provided will include produce grown onsite, a fully stocked salad bar, and every essential need necessary to make your child's meals as healthy and enjoyable as possible. These meals will be of no cost to the child's parents/legal guardians.

## **Meal Pattern/Offer vs. Serve**

Breakfast at a minimum will include: a grain option, dairy, protein, and fruit. Each child will receive a portion of each food item. They are in no way required to eat each food item but we encourage all of our children to practice healthy nutritional choices when eating their meals.

Lunch at a minimum will include: a protein option, vegetables, a grain option, and a fully stocked salad bar containing fruits and vegetables. Dessert will be included at the chef's discretion.

Snacks will be provided regularly throughout the day to meet a child's physical needs. Research has shown that keeping a child well hydrated and giving them regular snacks can be very beneficial to their overall development.

If your child has any dietary needs/restrictions or food allergies they must be reported to the school. Once reported they will be relayed to our culinary team who will try to make the necessary adjustments. Due to the amount of food necessary to feed the entire campus it may be required for children with severe food allergies to bring their own breakfast/lunch items.

## **Nutrition Rules/Guidelines**

Arkansas ACT 1220 established certain rules regarding student nutrition as well as the existence and limitation of foods and beverages in the public schools. As part of these rules, parents may provide foods of minimal nutritional value or candy to their own child but may not provide these foods to other children. Each school may provide any food or beverage item to students during the school day for up to nine different events each school year. These nine events are determined by the campus administration. Foods or beverage items that are a part of the instructional program and used to promote student learning are allowed.

## ***Health Services (ARK. Code 6-18-706)***

Hope Academy is proud to have a Registered Nurse that can assist you in meeting the health needs of your child during the school day. If you have any questions after reading this information, please contact the school nurse.

### **Hope Academy Health History Form (HIPPA/FERPA)**

A student Health History form must be completed annually and updated as needed by the parent. It is important for the parent to bring to the nurse's attention any medical concerns either physical or emotional. The nurse may need to consult with the teacher/staff on an "as need to know basis" to not only ensure the safety and welfare of your child but to possibly modify activities if needed. District supplied "over the counter medications" will NOT be given without a parent signed health history form.

### **Health Pass**

The health pass is a legal document and should be treated accordingly. All students must have a pass to come to the health office. The only exceptions are emergencies or the teacher escorting the student. After each visit, the yellow portion will be given to the student to take home. Visits between

classes are not allowed without a pass. At the end of class, a student may request a pass from their instructor.

### **Health Screenings (state mandated)**

#### **Vision:** (A.C.A. 6-18-1501)

Act 1438 of 2005 requires students in grades K, 1-2 and transfer students to have an eye and vision screen. Only failure notifications will be sent home. A child who does not pass the screening shall be required to have an exam conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist within 60 days of receipt of the screening report and show proof of the exam. Parents needing financial assistance should contact the school nurse.

**Hearing:** Hearing screens are mandated for students in grades K-2 and transfer students. Only failure notices will be sent home. Parents have 60 days to show proof that a doctor or audiologist examined their child.

**Students covered under Medicaid/Arkansas Kids 1st will be billed, where applicable, for hearing and vision screenings conducted at school unless notified, in writing, by parents to decline within 60 days of receipt of this handbook.**

#### **BMI:** (ARK Code 20-7-133 and 3.04)

Act 1220 requires students in grades K and 2nd shall have their height and weight assessed. A parent who refuses to have their child assessed must provide written documentation of the refusal to the school. Parents of participants will be sent results.

### **Illness**

**Chronic Illness:** (A.C.A. 6-18-1005) Contact your school nurse if your child has a diagnosis of Asthma, Diabetes, Seizures, Anaphylaxis, or any other medically diagnosed health condition. An Individual Health Care Plan (IHP) will be developed and kept on file. Information is shared with staff on an “as

needed basis." Check with the school nurse to see if your child's condition qualifies for this. In order to receive care, all medications, medical treatments and procedures must have medical orders which are signed within a year.

### **Acute Illness**

If a student develops a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above, or is vomiting, and/or has diarrhea, the school nurse or nurse delegate will notify parents to promptly, (within the hour), remove the child from school. Students should be symptom free for 24 hours, which is one entire school day from the day of dismissal, without requiring medication for fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms prior to returning to school. If a student was ill and should not participate in physical activities, a note is required from the parent. Continued limitations, (over 3 days), will require a medical doctor's written excuse and kept on file. If a student requests an illness dismissal from school, and does not go through the nurse, the absence will not count as medically excused unless an MD note is obtained.

### **Communicable Diseases**

When your child is absent due to a communicable disease diagnosed by a medical professional, the parent should call the office with that information. This is particularly important if the child has chicken pox, measles, influenza, pertussis, etc. A written excuse, preferably by the doctor, should accompany your child when he/she is medically cleared to return to school. The school nurse will inform the Arkansas Department of Health of all cases of reportable communicable diseases and will follow their protocol.

### **Head Lice**

It is common for children to bring head lice to school. Parents are urged to occasionally inspect the heads of their children. If nits are found, the student will remain in school, but a note will be sent home. Students will be removed from school if live lice are present. The parent will be required to return with the student and proof of treatment accomplished, preferably within 24 hours of dismissal. The school nurse or nurse delegate will re-examine the student

and once determined the student no longer has live lice, the student is readmitted to class. Mass screenings are strongly discouraged. It is not necessary to send letters home or do mass screenings unless evidence of classroom outbreak includes three or more students with no close contact in school within a consecutive 2-week period.

## **Immunizations**

(Ark. Code Ann. § 20-7-109, 6-18-702, 6-60-501 - 504, and 20-78-206) In order for a student to attend school, the following immunization guidelines must be followed. Failure to meet these requirements will result in your child's exclusion from school.

## **Immunization Requirements**

Kindergarten through 3rd grade:

- DTaP/DT/Td: 4 doses- with 1 on/after 4th birthday
- Polio: 3 doses- with 1 on/ after 4th birthday
- MMR: 2 doses- with 1 on/after 1st birthday and at least 28 days between doses
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses ( 2 or 3 doses with specified age and spacing-see law or call 501 661-2169 )
- Varicella: 2 doses-1 after 1st birthday and second dose at least 28 days after dose 1 OR a note from a medical professional with proof / statement of disease history

In addition students meeting the age or grade level criteria below are required to have the following additional immunizations:

- Kindergarten and First Grade: Hepatitis A: 1 dose on/after 1st birthday

Provide an updated copy of your child's immunization record to your school nurse or registrar before the first day of attendance.

For questions, please contact your health care provider or school nurse.

## **Immunization Exemption in the State of Arkansas:**

Parents may obtain information from the Arkansas Department of Health at [Arkansas.gov](http://Arkansas.gov) or call (501) 537-8969 or email [Immunizaton.section@arkansas.gov](mailto:Immunizaton.section@arkansas.gov)

- Application for an Arkansas exemption must be completed annually, preferably in June or July or any time a student enrolls; allow 2-4 weeks for processing.
- Provide a copy of the ADH application to the school registrar/nurse.
- When a parent receives the ADH Immunization Exemption Approval Letter, please provide a copy to the school nurse/registrar.
- All exemptions must be renewed before the beginning of each school year and are due the first day of school
- An exemption letter from another state is not acceptable.
- An exemption letter from your physician is not acceptable.
- Failure to comply with timelines will result in the student's exclusion from school.

## **Medications**

The administration of medication will follow guidelines of ACT 1146 of 1995, Arkansas State Board of Nursing – School Nurse Roles and Responsibilities and BSD Medication Policy.

All medications given during school hours require prescriptive authority and parent/guardian signed permission. This is required for both over-the-counter (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.) and prescription drugs. Any medications given at school must be dispensed through the nurse's office. Students are forbidden to self-medicate at school with prescription or non-prescription medications. Students are forbidden to carry any medications on their person. Parents are to administer prescription and non-prescription medication to their child at home whenever possible. Prescription medications and certain nonprescription medications, which the school does not supply, must be supplied by the parent and need a physician's written order. A RN or nurse delegate administers medications.

All requirements listed below must be completed by parent and building RN before any medication can be administered.

- Prescription and non-prescription medications must be prescribed by an Arkansas Licensed Health Care Provider.
- Medications must be in the most recent, up to date, original container with the pharmacy prescription label on the container.
- A physician signed written prescription, prescribing medical professional's signed note, or doctor signed "Hope Academy Permission Form for Prescribed Medication" must accompany the pharmacy labeled medication bottle.
- Any change to a medication, feeding orders, or medical procedures will require new written orders from the physician.
- Parent/guardian is responsible to transport medicine to and from school. Students are not to transport or deliver any medications. Failure to abide by this will result in student's exclusion from school.
- Parents are expected to administer the "once daily" or "morning/a.m." dose at home. This includes medications, medical procedures, tube feeds, etc.
- Medication administration forms must be updated at the beginning of each school year and as needed.

### **Inhalers: A.C.A 6-18-707**

Students with the diagnosis of asthma and require the use of an inhaler, must keep an inhaler in the health office. Inhalers must be in the pharmacy labeled box and also have a written doctor's prescription/note. A doctor's signed Asthma Action Plan can be used in Lieu of a written prescription/note. A parent must also sign the Asthma Action Plan. Qualified students will be allowed to carry their inhalers with appropriate documentation signed by the student, parent, and physician. (See school nurse.) It is recommended that an additional inhaler be kept in the health office but not required.

### **Epi-Pens: (A.C.A. 6-18-707)**

Students with the diagnosis of anaphylaxis require a physician signed Life-Threatening Allergies Plan on file along with the emergency medication(s) prescribed. These must be kept in the health office. Epinephrine must be in the pharmacy labeled box and also have a written doctor's prescription/note. A doctor's signed Life Threatening Allergies Plan can be used in Lieu of a written prescription/note. The plan must also be signed by a parent. Qualified students will be allowed to carry their epi-pen with appropriate documentation. (See school nurse.) It is recommended that an additional epi-pen be kept in the health office but not required.

### **Schedule II Medications**

The RN or nurse delegate will administer only methylphenidate and amphetamine sulfate medications (ADD and ADHD meds) specifically prescribed to be administered during the school day by an Arkansas Licensed medical professional.

### **Disability/Assisted Devices**

A student returning to school with sutures(stitches, staples), ace bandage (elastic bandage, slings), casts, splints, crutches, cane, walker, knee scooter or wheelchair must have a licensed health care provider's written permission to attend school that includes: diagnosis/description of problem, duration of limitation, any recommendations and/or restrictions related to physical activity, mobility, and safely. (See school nurse for form.)

Please contact the school nurse if you have questions regarding your child's health and school attendance.

# ***Parent/Community Involvement***

Parental involvement is an essential part in the students educational experience. We expect all of our parents/legal guardians to be actively involved in their child's education. Hope Academy has a family engagement plan in place that outlines the ways parents/legal guardians can interact with their child's learning experience. The desire of Hope Academy is to be a partner in the growth of each child and to assist the parents/legal guardians in any way possible. In response, we ask that each family make a strong effort to support their children and to add to our holistic approach by working directly with our academic experience. We encourage all our parents/legal guardians to provide constructive feedback and give us suggestions to make your family's experience even better.

## **Hope Academy Parent and Family Engagement Plan**

Hope Academy has developed a Parent and Family Engagement Plan to address the individual needs of each family and ensure that parents/legal guardians are actively involved in the education of their children. This holistic approach to parental engagement will utilize evidence based tools to determine the needs of each household and child we serve. Through intentional training of Hope Academy staff and parents, we hope to see measurable growth in child academic success and family engagement. This plan is reviewed yearly, and with the input of parents/legal guardians may be changed to better suit the evolving needs of our school community. This plan will also create and foster relationships with community partners to identify and address ways local businesses and organizations can assist our students and their families. Our ultimate goal is for Hope Academy to be a beneficial place not just for our students but for each and every family we have the honor of serving.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Teachers will schedule conferences with parents/legal guardians at least once a semester. However, at the teachers discretion more conferences may

be necessary. These conferences are designed to help parents see their child's progress and make them aware of ways their child needs to improve. Parents/legal guardians will be notified at least two weeks before formal conferences take place. Emergency conferences or conferences that are outside of the 1 per semester quota may be scheduled in a less timely manner.

### **Community Partners**

Hope Academy plans to involve the entire community of Northwest Arkansas to achieve its mission. We hope to incorporate local nonprofits and businesses into our educational model. By doing so we believe that our students will become more aware of their place in the surrounding community and foster a love towards their neighbors. This in turn will develop their responsibility towards the society they reside in. Our community partners will help develop projects that our students can complete that will then be used in the surrounding community.

### **Parties**

Birthday parties are allowed at the school's discretion. We want to celebrate the child while also maintaining a proper amount of instructional time. Homemade birthday treats are prohibited due to state guidelines as set forth in ACT 1220 of 2003. Hope Academy may, at its discretion, plan social events/parties throughout the year. All food and drink will be prepackaged and home made items will not be allowed. All food and drink allergies must be reported to the school.

### **Non-School Parties**

Non-school events or birthday party invitations or advertisements distribution is not condoned, assisted or facilitated by Hope Academy is not responsible nor can we guarantee the welfare of your child at a non-school sponsored event.

## **Teacher Qualifications**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives parents the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher who instructs their children. Specifically, the parents can request the information listed below:

- Has the teacher met Arkansas qualifications and licensing criteria to teach the grade level and/or subject area to which he/she is assigned?
- Has the state waived its qualifications and licensing criteria to permit the teacher to teach on an emergency or provisional license?
- What is the teacher's college major, graduate certification or degrees, and the field or discipline for those certificates or degrees?
- What are the qualifications of a teacher's aide or similar paraprofessional providing instructional assistance to your child?

Parents may request the above information by completing in writing a request form that can be obtained from the Human Resources Department. Requests will be fulfilled in a timely manner.

## **Curriculum/Academics**

Hope Academy's curriculum and academic standards are state approved and provide a well rounded educational experience for every student.

### **Progress Reports/Grading System**

Grades assigned to students for performance in a course shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Educational objectives are those contained in the Arkansas Standards and the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. Hope Academy will utilize Wilson Fundations for Language arts and Engage New York for Mathematics.

### **Progress Reports Grades K-3**

Student progress will be reported to parents on a regular basis.

- A standards-based report card (Kindergarten – 3rd grade) will be issued at the end of each grading period.
- Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at least once a semester; however, conferences may be requested at any time a need arises.
- If a student retention is being considered at any time, that information will be communicated and regular progress reports will be made regarding possible retention.

Kindergarten – 3rd grade report cards reflect the learning goals of the Arkansas Standards and the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks as required by the state of Arkansas. Students should master these goals by the end of each grade level. If a student has not met mastery of a skill it will be reassessed at the next grading period.

Hope Academy uses the standard 100 point grading scale for all grades. The breakdown of the grading is as follows:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 59 and below

For K-3 this grading scale will be used to track the students mastery of any given skill. It will not be used as a rigorous display of direct knowledge as shown by the students independant results. Our grading takes into consideration the emotional conditions that may hinder a student's ability to complete or master a certain skill. Hope Academy is first concerned with children mastering their skills in emotional regulation before their mastery in academics. A balance between the two will be taken into account at the conclusion of each grading period.

## **Student Performance**

As mentioned before, Hope Academy is an educational institution dedicated to assisting children and families negatively affected by traumatic events. The students we serve may display a range of behaviors that could be

considered outside the realm of typical child development. Taking this into consideration, Hope Academy's academic expectations for students will be different from a typical public educational institution.

Our educational environment will focus both on emotional/cognitive growth and academic growth. The state has been made aware of this intention and has approved in support of our endeavors. First and foremost we want to see each student show growth in both of these fields of concentration, but in order to see proper academic growth, strides must be made in the students emotional/cognitive functioning. Each teacher will strive to improve both areas of growth in each student.

### **Homework Expectations**

Homework will be assigned to each student at the teacher's discretion. It is expected that each student complete their assigned homework in a timely manner and submit it when it is due. Parents are encouraged to assist their children when necessary. Homework will not be a primary element in the students academic experience, but will be given out as needed. Each teacher will set their own expectations for homework.

### **Promotion and Retention**

Hope Academy shall, at a minimum, evaluate each student annually in an effort to help each student who is not performing at grade level. Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons acting in loco parentis shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice of a student's possible retention shall be included with the student's grades sent home to each parent/guardian of the student. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student's academic success.

At least once each semester, the parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or person acting in loco parentis, and teacher(s)

of a student in kindergarten through third (3rd) grade shall be notified in writing of the student's independent grade-level-equivalency in reading.

Promotion or retention of students shall be primarily based on their ability to succeed in the next grade. The parents or guardians of any student who is to be retained at any grade level (K-3) shall be given written notice for possible retention in writing prior to February 15. If a student enrolls after February 1, a written notice will be given as soon as possible regarding possible retention. If a deficiency of at least one full year exists in both literacy and mathematics for students in K-3, the student's teacher, the school principal, and any other designated school faculty member will discuss the case and come to a conclusion. The conclusion will be communicated to the child's parent/legal guardian.

If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student, a conference shall be held, before a final decision is made, that includes the following individuals:

- The building principal or designee
- The student's teacher(s)
- School counselor
- A 504/Special Education representative (if applicable) and
- The student's parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis.

The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non- participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement or receipt of course credit, the final decision shall rest with the principal or the principal's designee.

Each student shall have a student success plan (SSP). The SSP shall be developed by school personnel, in collaboration with the student's parents and the student. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually. A

student's SSP shall use multiple academic measures to personalize learning in order for students to achieve their grade-level expectations and individual growth. The SSP will identify if the student is in need of additional support or acceleration. Academic measures to be used in creating and updating a student's SSP shall include, but are not limited to:

- Statewide student assessment results
- Subject grades
- Student work samples
- Local assessment scores.

By the end of grade six (6th), the student's SSP shall:

- Guide the student along pathways to graduation
- Address accelerated learning opportunities
- Address academic deficits and interventions

A student's individualized education program (IEP) may supersede the student's SSP if the IEP addresses academic deficits and interventions for the student's failure to meet standards-based academic goals at an expected rate or level. Promotion/retention or graduation of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) shall be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP or completion of the Alternate Pathway to Graduation when applicable.

### **Graduation/Grade Completion**

In order for a child to be eligible for grade advancement and/or graduation they must reach certain standards of competency in multiple areas of academic study. These competency standards are designed to give students the adequate educational foundation needed in order to be successful in future grades and life in general.

For K-3rd grade the two primary subjects of competency are language arts/reading and mathematics. Each grade has certain skills that must be mastered in order to be considered proficient. If the student is unable to master certain skills it may be in their best interest to be retained and

repeat the grade level. Retention is designed with the interest of the student in mind. Every student needs to be set up for success in order to advance to the next grade and/or grade level.

Teachers will communicate with parents what the necessary skills are and will strive to prepare each child to master these skills. At the beginning of each school year students will be assessed on certain skills to give teachers a better idea of what skills need to be focused on.

Hope Academy is committed to taking the emotional and cognitive development of a child into account when making grading decisions, but ultimately the considerations for advancement will be based upon academic achievement. We do not want to see a child placed in a grade that they are not prepared to succeed in. If a parent/legal guardian has questions about their child's academic standing please feel free to contact the child's teacher and/or the school principal.

### **Recess**

Hope Academy recognizes that physical activity and imaginative play is a vital part of a child's proper cognitive and physical development. Each student will have the opportunity to enjoy recess at least two times each day. If inclement weather keeps our children indoors we will make use of our fully serviced gym area.

### **Internet/Technology**

Hope Academy will make use of technology in the classroom at the discretion of our teaching staff. Students will not be given individual internet access and we ask that all devices (cell phones, tablets, handheld game systems) be left at home. If your student uses these devices as a coping mechanism, a collaborative effort between the parents/legal guardian, teacher, and school counselor to decide whether or not the child will be able to have access to these items.