



Student Handbook 2019-2020

College Achieve Central Charter School
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WELCOME TO College Achieve Central Charter School (CACCS)

College Achieve Central Charter School's vision and core academic mission emphasizes high expectations for all students to successfully complete a rigorous curriculum and meet high academic standards for graduation and preparation for post-secondary educations and 21st century careers, including certified health-related professions. Through the transformation of our students the school will change the face of health care in our community. This handbook was created as a resource for families and staff to turn to when they have questions about basic policies and procedures

I. OVERVIEW

Welcome to the College Achieve Central Charter School. CACCS congratulates each student on his or her decision to join the College Achieve Central Charter School. The School trusts that this decision will prove beneficial to each student, the College Achieve Central Charter School and the families and staff the School serves. The School wants its students to be informed about many opportunities provided by the College Achieve Central Charter School, as well as relevant policies and procedures.

Students at College Achieve Central Charter School will participate in a wide-ranging array of core courses and elective courses in order to provide them with a comprehensive program so that students' can make informed choices in choosing a potential career pathway and/or a postsecondary program of student at the college level. All courses will have written curriculum aligned with the requirements of the Common Core State Standards/NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards.

A. MISSION STATEMENT

College Achieve Central Charter School will prepare students to excel at and graduate from the top colleges and universities in the nation.

B. VISION STATEMENT

We - the parents, teachers, and administrators of College Achieve Central - pledge to achieve this mission by honoring and developing each student's gifts and talents. Through encouragement, high expectations and a rigorous course of study, College Achieve Central will fulfill its purpose by successfully educating our students to one day become college graduates, informed citizens, and future leaders of our society.



12 Pillars of a College Achieve Education

1. **GRACE: Grit, Resiliency, Agency, Character, and Excellence**
2. **Rigorous instructional program backward mapped from college standards**
3. **Elementary: Core Knowledge, Reading Wonders, & Intense Science Curriculum**
4. **AP Programs for all in High School**
5. **Toulmin Writing Model**
6. **Shared Inquiry: Socratic Seminars**
7. **Data Driven Assessment & Instruction**
8. **More Time on Learning (and double the science instruction in K-5)**
9. **Pacing for Rigor**
10. **Integrated Co-Teaching Model – Apprentice Teachers & High Dosage Tutoring**
11. **Global Languages**
12. **MAADDness: Music, Art, Athletics, Drama, & Dance**

Pillar 1: GRACE: Grit, Resiliency, Agency, Character, and Excellence

What are the qualities that we want to develop in our children so that they will be successful in life? How do we develop these qualities in our students? Angela Duckworth, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania who was recently awarded a MacArthur Genius Grant, claims that grit outweighs talent and IQ in determining success in life. We start the discussion of this Pillar with questions and we are not going to stop asking them at College Achieve Central. We hope to imbue our students with a deeper moral understanding of themselves, to educate their character with the aim of making our students good and successful citizens. We want to empower our students to exhibit “grace under pressure” and for that they need to go beyond

reading, writing, and math skills, and develop and educate their moral strength, to enquire and learn what is grit, resiliency, agency, character, and excellence. We want them to embody all this and have a good sense of humor. We believe GRACE and laughter are two wonderful things to have in the hearts of College Achievers.

Grit: the tendency to sustain interest in and effort toward very long-term goals. Trying your hardest even when you know you are going to struggle and fail again and again. Never giving up.

Resiliency: the ability to overcome failure, disappointment, setbacks, and loss.

Agency: owning your life and the decisions you make that determine your path.

Character: doing the right thing even when no one else is watching. Doing the right thing even when you know you will suffer for it. Becoming a person of integrity, compassion, and purpose.

Excellence: the urge to find a way to do a thing perhaps better than it has ever been done before, or doing it the best way it can possibly be done.

Pillar 2: A rigorous, standards based instructional program that is backwards mapped from college standards

At CAC, we will implement a rigorous, standards based instructional program that is backwards mapped from college standards and the Common Core State Standards. Teachers and administrators will build a school curriculum that backwards maps from Advanced Placement (AP) Courses in the sciences, history and social sciences, English literature, mathematics, Spanish & other global languages and includes the Common Core State Standards. Studies show that an intense curriculum and instructional model is the single most reliable predictor of a student graduating from a 4-year college or university.¹² Additionally, teachers and administrators will deconstruct and prioritize content standards. We believe the Common Core State Standards align consistently with the expectations and standards of knowledge and skill required to pass Advanced Placement exams.

Pillar 3: Elementary: Phonics, Core Knowledge Sequence, and Intense Science Curriculum

Data indicates that the students we anticipate serving, low income and minority students in Plainfield and North Plainfield enter kindergarten nearly a year behind their white and middle class peers.¹³ This puts them at a distinct disadvantage for future success, as research demonstrates that students who have not learned to read by the end of third grade have high dropout rates from high school, low college matriculation rates, and low college graduation rates.¹⁴ Further, individuals who do not graduate from high school have lower lifetime incomes, higher unemployment rates, and dramatically higher rates of incarceration than their peers who graduate from high school.¹⁵

For over 30 years, the reading scores in Plainfield's traditional public schools have created a negative cycle of unacceptably high rates of high school dropouts and low college matriculation and graduation rates. Six of Plainfield's fifteen public schools are ranked in the bottom 5% of all schools in the state of New Jersey.

College Achieve Central will reverse this trend by ensuring that all students learn to read at grade level or above by the end of second grade. To do so, CAC will use a Direct Instruction program called Reading Wonders, a successor to Open Court that heavily emphasizes a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and reading comprehension. We will couple this program with two and a half hours of daily reading instruction, ensuring that our students have the greatest possible chance of reading on grade level by the time they leave third grade, and ultimately, the greatest chance of future academic success. We plan to augment the Reading Wonders curriculum with the Core Knowledge Program, which we will use for the study of history, science, and art in grades K-5.

For science in K-5, we must invent our own curriculum because elementary students will receive over 4 hours of science instruction a week. Can you imagine Kindergarteners doing 50-75 lab experiments a year? Hypothesizing, test their hypothesis?

¹⁰<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/cs/disting2011.asp>

¹¹ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/cs/yr14distschools.asp>

¹² Adelman, Clifford: Answers in a Toolbox: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment, US Department of Education 1999.

¹³ Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, 2011. <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/myeclsk2011/>

¹⁴ Hernandez, Donald J. (2011). Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED518818.pdf>

¹⁵ National Dropout Prevention Center. (2014). Economic impacts of dropouts. <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/statistics/quick-facts/economic-impacts-dropouts>

Pillar 4: Advanced Placement Program for High School Students

We believe (and a massive body of research supports this belief) that participation and success in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program leads to higher college matriculation rates, higher GPAs in college, and higher college graduation rates. For over half a century, the AP Program has exposed students to rigorous, college-level course material while in high school, offering the opportunity to gain both high school and college credit. To this end, CAC will require students to participate in Advanced Placement courses and will offer a wide range of AP courses.

Pillar 5: Data-driven assessment & instruction

CAC will administer a comprehensive assessment system in order to ensure that students are learning and achieving at high levels. We will be part of the Achievement Network's Assessment program, as well as use Fountas & Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment Series (BAS), our own teacher-created interim assessments, Advanced Placement exams (AP), the SAT, and other assessments, including state-mandated assessments to measure students' learning. We will also utilize online learning programs such as iStation,¹⁸ a program which offers students individualized reading instruction at their level, and DreamBox¹⁹ which personalizes math instruction for students. In grades 6-12, teachers will have the support of Read 180, ALEKS math, and Achieve 3000, as well as Khan Academy. These programs contain robust data reporting to ensure teachers understand student progress. In addition to formal assessments and programs, all teachers will regularly employ other informal assessments, such as daily exit tickets and ongoing student classwork, to inform instructional practices and student differentiation. Data gleaned from these various assessments will enable teachers to have frequent and regular checkpoints to determine how well their students are progressing. Data from these assessments will also be used to group students and to plan future lessons, including re-teaching and/or accelerating content as needed.

For data to be useful, it is critical that teachers understand how to use it to inform and improve their instruction. As a result, we will deliberately use our scheduled professional development days both to ensure that teachers understand how to use data and to support teachers in using that data to address the needs of their students.

¹⁸ www.istation.com

¹⁹ www.dreambox.com

Pillar 6: Shared Inquiry: Socratic Seminars

CAC will employ the Socratic method of teaching, a method that engages students in dialogue, encouraging them to think critically about content and ideas instead of simply looking for the “right” answer. Teachers respond to students’ comments and queries with a series of probing questions designed to facilitate broader and deeper understanding. The Great Books Foundation calls this “shared inquiry.”

In the classroom, students will be given opportunities to "examine" a common piece of text, whether it is in the form of a novel, poem, art print, piece of music, historical debate, mathematical problem, or scientific formula. After review of a common text or problem, the teacher will pose open-ended questions. Open-ended questions will allow students to think critically, analyze multiple meanings in text, and express ideas with clarity and confidence. The dialogue created through this process will encourage students to think deeply. This is in contrast to more traditional discussions or debates where information is transferred with the goal of “winning” the argument. Once teachers and students learn to dialogue, they find tremendous value in the ability to ask meaningful questions that stimulate thoughtful interchanges of ideas. It also encourages students to become deeper and more critical readers of text. The focus on drawing their insight or response from specific passages in the text and using the text as evidence to make their point dovetails perfectly with the Toulmin writing model (described below). All teachers will receive training in teaching the Socratic Method from programs offered by the National Paideia Center²⁰ and the Great Books Foundation²¹. Every teacher must be trained in this methodology for at least 16 hours before they start teaching at CAC.

²⁰<http://www.paideia.org/>

²¹ <http://www.greatbooks.org/programs-for-all-ages/junior/research-effectiveness/state-and-common-core-state-standards-for-english-language-arts/#>

Pillar 7: ICEF Toulmin College Writing Model (Grades 6-12)

Writing is a tool for thinking, and writing well is a skill that our students must master in order to be successful in high school, college, and the professional workplace. Unfortunately, too few educators focus on explicitly teaching students to write. At CAC, however, teaching students to write well will be an area of focus in all content areas. To do this, we will rely on the Toulmin writing model. The Toulmin writing model teaches students to make a claim, define the issue in the claim, support the claim with evidence, explain how the evidence supports that claim, and finally consider and engage with aNpossible counter-claims. This is a high level of thinking and writing that requires students to have read, understood, and engaged deeply with a text prior to making an argument and writing a persuasive essay. As a result, coupling this writing model with Socratic seminars (discussed above) is imperative.

The academic journal Educational Leadership highlighted the success of the ICEF’s Toulmin writing model at its first school, View Park Preparatory Charter School:

“Ninety-eight percent of View Park’s 375 students are black; half receive free or reduced-price lunch. View Park uses a curricular approach similar to Tempe Prep’s, with a focus on developing students’ analytical and argumentative skills. From 9th through 12th grade, English instruction focuses almost exclusively on reading, argument, and persuasive writing... View Park students not only outperformed their white peers in the district on the 2005 California English Language Arts Exam, but they also have the highest test scores among black high school students in California.”²²

We at CAC believe so strongly in the high caliber of learning that results from combining Socratic seminars and the Toulmin writing model that we will require teachers to use both methods in every class and in every discipline from grades 6-12. From experience, we have learned that if only the English department is responsible for teaching students to think and speak critically (the intended purpose of shared inquiry in the Socratic Seminars) and to think and write critically (the intended outcome of the Toulmin writing model) then only a third to half of the students will actually master the skills of thinking and writing critically and only in the discipline of English literature. However, by using these methods frequently in the instruction of not only

English, but also in science, history, and mathematics (and even to a degree in art, music, and physical education) all students acquire critical thinking and writing skills. Further, students are challenged in every discipline to define in their own words what they believe to be the answers to essential life questions about life, art, justice, freedom, and equality. The process of grappling with these essential questions both verbally (through Socratic seminars) and in written format (through Toulmin) helps students define what they believe to be true and question issues of which they are uncertain.

²² Educational Leadership, Hernandez, Kaplan, & Schwartz, 2006. Note: View Park Prep was the first K-12 charter school founded by CAC Lead Founder Mike Piscal.

Pillar 8: More Time for Learning & Science

Research shows the impact of more time to learn is tremendous.²³ CAC students will have a longer school day, the equivalent of more than 30 additional days of school. The longer school day means that teachers will have adequate time to plan high-quality lessons and collaborate with one another, which will in turn ensure students' academic and social needs are addressed. As a result, students will be afforded more rigorous learning experiences. The longer day will also allow time within the school day for teachers, apprentice teachers, and tutors to intervene with struggling students and tutor one-on-one or in small groups.

Additionally, CAC will double the average instructional minutes devoted to science instruction in grades K-5. According to the National Center on Education Statistics, students nationwide receive 2.3 hours of science instruction per week. At CAC, we will devote 4.3 hours per week to science instruction. This will amount to an additional 432 hours of instruction in science by the time a student reaches the 6th grade. Beginning in the 6th grade we plan to increase the amount of time spent on science to 5.25 hours per week. This will amount to 319 additional hours of science instruction over the three years grades 6-8. An additional 700 additional hours of science instruction will significantly contribute to our students' success on Advanced Placement exams in chemistry, biology, and physics in grades 10-12.

Pillar 9: Pacing for Rigorous Instruction

It is not enough for our students to compete effectively with other low-income students; they must be prepared to excel at top-tier colleges and ultimately, in the professional workplace. Because of this, we employ the approach of "Pacing for the top quartile." This practice was pioneered by Henry Levin at Stanford University and endorsed by the US Department of Education as the "Accelerated Schools" model of education. In this method, teachers tailor their instruction to meet the needs of the top quartile of students, at a pace of 1.25 grade levels per year. This means that teachers will cover one-and-a-quarter years' worth of material during the year.

This pace ensures that top quartile students will make outstanding gains, and all other students will be stretched to their full potential. The belief is that the default mindset of teachers ought to be accelerating the learning of their students, rather than remediating their students' deficits,²⁴ and that students achieve at higher levels when they are in an environment with high expectations.²⁵ In order to support students at all levels, we plan to employ interventions by employing apprentice teachers in nearly every classroom and aides in the others. Apprentice teachers and aides will be responsible for small group and individualized instruction to ensure that the lowest quartile maintains pace with the class.

²³ See Hansen (2008); Jacob and Lefgren (2004); Rivkin et al. (2005); and Krueger (1999). This research shows the estimated effect for third-grade students of adding 10 days of learning is nearly 0.16 standard deviations. This exceeds the estimated effects of grade retention for low-achieving students (approximately 0.13 standard deviations), of having a teacher who is one standard deviation above the mean for effectiveness (approximately 0.11 standard deviations), or of reducing class size by four students (approximately 0.10 standard deviations).³⁴

²⁴ <http://schoolimprovement.com/resources/video-summaries/Accelerated-Schools-Transform-Education-with-Henry-M-Levin/>

²⁵ <http://www.schoolthatcan.org/index.php.schools/ca/the-accelerated-school/>

Pillar 10: Integrated or Inclusive Co-Teaching (ICT) Model for K, 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9th grades & High Dosage Tutoring

The ICT Model will put two teacher in every core classroom in what CAC believes are the most critical years: learning how to read in K-3; and the transition years into middle school and high school. The ICT model will have several salutary effects: reduce the student teacher ratio from a high of 24:1 to 12:1; create an apprentice program where new teachers first shadow, observe, and teach (first lessons, then units) and nearly half of the apprentice teacher's time will be spent offering high dosages of tutoring to the students most in need of individualized attention: students with disabilities, ELL students, RTI students, and students at risk of academic failure (those in the bottom quartile of the classroom).

The Inclusive Co-Teaching (ICT) model provides for a master teacher and an apprentice teacher in every core classroom. One of the two teachers will be Highly Qualified Special Education. This will provide students with disabilities with 100% instruction from a qualified SPED provider in every core class for the entire class every day. It will be a massive commitment to our special needs students, and creates an apprentice path for new teachers into the classroom without ever having our most vulnerable students being taught by a rookie teacher straight out of college or another career – see Special education section for fuller discussion.

The benefits of high dosage tutoring are well documented. In 1997, the U.S. Department of Education published a research brief entitled “Evidence that Tutoring Works,” which surveyed dozens of studies and finds that “when tutors work closely with teachers and are provided with intensive, ongoing training, they can make a difference.” More recently, Harvard Economists Roland Fryer and Will Dobbie found tutoring to be a key characteristic of highly effective charter schools in New York.¹²⁶

Tutoring is one of the most effective methods of individualized instruction and will ensure that struggling students have the support they need to meet our high academic standards. Tutoring one-on-one will be targeted at the students in the lowest two quartiles – especially focused on the lowest performing students. Every student in the 4th quartile will receive at least two hours of individualized or small group tutoring every day delivered by our full time Apprentice Teachers – see staffing model – or by a City Year Corp (CYC) member or equally qualified and trained tutors. City Year Corp member will provide one-on-one or small group tutoring before, during, and after school to help students work through their academic challenges.

Embedded in the schedule is time for tutoring. From the 5th grade on, every student who has been identified by our diagnostic assessments or referred by their teacher will have Math Lab and/or English Lab four days per week (see schedule). During this time, they will receive small group and/or one-on-one tutoring. Tutoring will also take place during whole class instruction (during group work, Socratic Seminars, and Blended learning blocks) through in class pull outs. Every class 3-9 will have at minimum one experienced teacher and a tutor and in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9, there will be two teachers per classroom to provide this high level of support in our Integrated (or Inclusive) Co-Teaching Model.

²⁶In their research of the inner-workings of over 35 charter schools in New Jersey City, Dobbie and Fryer (2011) show that an index of five policies suggested by over forty years of qualitative research – frequent teacher feedback, the use of data to guide instruction, high-dosage tutoring, increased instructional time, and high expectations – explains approximately 50 percent of the variation in school effectiveness.

Pillar 11: Global Languages

A human being's capacity to learn languages is at its peak from somewhere in infancy to age 8. After age 8, the ability to learn languages plunges and becomes extraordinarily difficult. This is an established medical fact. However, if a child learns two languages before the age of 9, they will retain the ability to learn other languages with the enhanced ability of a young child. To take advantage of this innate human ability, College Achieve students will study Spanish intensively in grades K-5. After grade 5, students will be able to choose other languages to study including Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, French, and German.

Pillar 12: MAADNESS: Music, Art, Athletics, Drama & Dance

The founders of College Achieve Central are committed to MAADNESS! Students from previous schools we have founded have gone to graduate from the Berklee School of Music, have toured with Shakira, Jackson Browne, Robin Thicke, and Jamie Foxx, have travelled to perform in Barcelona, Havana, and Brazil. Our visual art students have toured DreamWorks Animation Studios, staged Gallery Openings, and self-published their own comic books. Our athletic teams have won state championships in football, basketball (boys and girls), and our international rugby teams (boys and girls) have played everywhere from China to South Africa. Two of our girls were named high school All Americans in rugby. We love to do at least one musical a year, and one traditional play (Shakespeare, Sophocles, Shaw, or August Wilson).

In a recent study published by the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Center for Education Statistics found that males who participated in high school sports had 58 percent higher odds of immediate enrollment in postsecondary education than those who did not participate.²⁷ Hispanic students who participated in high school sports had 73 percent higher odds of immediate enrollment in postsecondary education than those who did not participate in a sport. A 2007 study found that women who played a sport in high school were 73 percent more likely to earn a college degree within six years of graduating high school than those who did not play a sport. This held up even for students facing socioeconomic challenges to graduating from college.²⁸ Given the low rates of high school and college graduation for the students we anticipate serving, CAC intends to use sports as a key lever to increase the number of students prepared to attend and succeed in college and create a college going culture. At CAC we plan to have a traditional sports program offering team sports in high school football, basketball, soccer, track & field, and rugby.

II. ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE & SECURITY

A. Student Arrival: Students may be enter CACCS between 7:00 and 7:30am at the main door, and will proceed directly to the cafeteria for breakfast. Extended Day/AM Tutoring will begin at 7:30am. Staff members will be at assigned rooms to greet the students at the door. Students are to report to Homeroom at 7:45am. Period 1 will begin at 7:45am.

B. Late Arrivals: Please make every effort to arrive at school on time, in order to maximize learning time and minimize disruptions once the school day has started. Students arriving after 7:45am must enter buzzed in through the main door and receive a late pass from the Main Office before proceeding to their classrooms. Students must always attend PM detention when they are late for school.

C. Picking Up Your Child: Parents and guardians must provide the school with a list of all persons designated to pick their children up from school, Enrichment, or Extended Day. *Please note that College Achieve Central Charter School cannot release any child to the care of someone who is not on this designated persons list.* Please also inform *College Achieve Central Charter School* in writing or by e-mail of any special arrangements or restrictions pertaining to your child and his/her custody. Copies of any legal documents should be provided to the office.

D. Student Departure: dismissal must be orderly and quiet. No student should be left in the classroom unsupervised at any time.

E. Tutoring and Enrichment:

Once all students are assessed at the beginning of the school year, initial tutoring groups will be designated for Math and LAL for each class. Students who are having difficulty in each area will be recommended for tutoring, which will take place Monday thru Friday, 7:30-8:00am and 3:00-4:00pm; each day will be designated for a specific subject area, and targeted groups for each will rotate on a trimester basis, following the Enrichment calendar. Teachers must send home a tutoring permission slip for each student recommended for tutoring that indicates the dates and times of tutoring sessions. Teachers will also be responsible for submitting an action plan to the Principal, outlining how they will target the students' specific needs during the trimester.

If there are students who need a one-on-one session for a "quick" review, teacher may use either the AM or PM session. If a parent requests enrichment tutoring sessions outside of school hours, teachers must notify the Principal for appropriate accommodations. No teacher should tutor his/her own students outside of school.

F. Early Student Release: Parents wishing to sign a student out early must first visit the Main Office.

This should be kept at a minimum with prior written notification. The student is responsible for all work and deadlines related to missed classes. All non-emergency doctors, dentist and other appointments should be made after school hours.

G. Visitors: During the school day, parents and other visitors must be buzzed in to enter through the main door and proceed to the Main Office.

H. School Closing: *College Achieve Central Charter School* closes for severe inclement weather. A robo-call will be made to all families to announce closings, late openings, or early dismissals. You may also monitor www.collegeachieve.org While *College Achieve Central Charter School* will close on some days that the Jersey City Board of Education closes its schools, there may be circumstances when *College Achieve Central Charter School* closes even though the Jersey City Board of Education keeps its schools open. *All after-school and evening activities will be canceled when school is closed.*

I. Building Security: It is the policy of *College Achieve Central Charter School* that all entrances to the building are locked throughout the school day. A bell and intercom system is in place at the main entrance. All parents and visitors must sign in before heading to the main office.

J. Security at Times of Transition: It is the policy at *College Achieve Central Charter School* that no student in the building, on school grounds, or on a field trip be unattended at any time. Students are to move quickly and quietly between classrooms and to and from the cafeteria and at dismissal. There will be 2 minutes of transition time between classes.

K. Emergency Contact: *College Achieve Central Charter School* requires parents and guardians to provide the school with the name, address, and telephone number of a relative or neighbor whom your child knows and trusts and who can be contacted in an emergency.

III. Attendance

College Achieve Central Charter School requires that the pupils attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered by this school is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance and punctuality are considered important aspects of student growth and education at CACCS.

Absences: Parent-School Communication-Parents and caregivers should notify the school in advance, via e-mail or letter to the Principal or Designee, about necessary planned absences. In cases of unplanned absences, parents and caregivers should call the main officer at by 8:00 AM to report the absence. If no notification is received, parents will be contacted by the school.

A. Attendance:

- A doctor-verified illness,
- A death in family,
- Observance of the State-recognized holidays,
- Involvement in a comparable educational program outside of school,
- Any others identified in regulations.

B. All other absences are countable; unverified absences are countable and unexcused as defined by NJAC 6A:16-7.8.

C. Students absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence.

D. Prolonged or repeated absences (non-countable or countable—10 or more unexcused and countable), from school or from class, deprive the pupil of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in a letter of warning of:

- Referral to court; or
- Retention at grade level

E. Verified written is required for any absence from school to be made excused (non-countable).

F. Unverified absences from school or from classes within the school day constitute truancies and shall be subject to the disciplinary rules of the school.

G. The Principal shall calculate and monitor the average daily attendance rate for the school. Whenever the average daily attendance rate is below ninety percent, the Principal shall develop and implement an attendance improvement plan.

H. *College Achieve Central Charter School* considers repeated tardiness as an impediment to a child's education.

IV: Discipline Policy

The *College Achieve Central Charter School* discipline policy recognizes that there must be measures in place to ensure that the Code of Conduct is consistently and uniformly followed. The goals of *College Achieve Central Charter School*' discipline policies and procedures for students are to ensure that:

- *College Achieve Central Charter School* is a community that is safe and conducive to learning.
- *College Achieve Central* students learn personal responsibility and self-direction.

Minor Infractions of the Code of Conduct: When a student behaves in a way that violates the Code of Conduct, the student is asked to stop the behavior in question. A private discussion will ensue between the teacher and the student(s) involved. If appropriate, the class may join the discussion in order to learn from the experience. If the student persists in the offending behavior, he or she may be asked to

leave the class. The student may return to the class when he or she and the teacher agree that he or she is ready to participate in an appropriate way. Teachers will notify the parent of the child by phone or e-mail to advise of the situation and request that parents please reinforce the Code of Conduct at home.

The College Achieve Central Charter School has as its basis the mission to prepare students to lead, and to provide a foundation for post-secondary education. A part of this overall plan must include assisting students to develop elements of character that will help them to perform well in the educational and medical environments. Therefore appropriate behavior will be required at all times and consequences will follow infractions of discipline policies. Along with the demands of the discipline policies the College Achieve Central Charter School will take a prevention approach. All students will participate in character development activities.

The code of conduct will reflect standards for all in the school environment and will address:

1. An attitude of respect towards oneself and others, including respect for the diversity of others including people of differing backgrounds, races, culture, gender, religion, belief systems, and abilities including physical and intellectual.
2. A focus on responsibility for one's own actions and for contributing to problem solving in situations of conflict, with an attitude of dignity and fairness.
3. A position of engagement in the pursuit of academic excellence, that includes support of regular attendance, completion of homework, and striving for achievement in all areas of the curriculum.
4. Respect for property of oneself, others and school property.
5. A commitment to appropriateness of dress, grooming and social manners, including wearing the school uniform when required, and wearing the Jersey City Medical Center uniform clothing when required.
6. Standards for communication, especially in regard to potential cases of infractions of the code of conduct.
7. Students with special needs will be expected to conform to the code of conduct. In the case of student(s) with IEPs, any behavior management techniques and/or consequences for infractions that are included therein, will be honored and applied. It is anticipated that any IEPs developed through the College Achieve Central Charter School will include consideration of the code of conduct in formulating the goals, objectives, modifications and special services.

Serious Infractions of the Code of Conduct: Some infractions of the Code of Conduct are considered quite serious. These include:

- Continued and willful disobedience.
- Open defiance of any teacher or other person in authority.
- Endangering the physical well-being of other students.
- Bullying, harassing, or otherwise intimidating a fellow student.
- Taking, or attempting to take, personal property from another pupil by means of force or fear.

- Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property.
- Assault on a teacher, administrator, board member, or any employee of the school.

If a child commits a serious infraction of the Code of Conduct, there will be disciplinary consequences. The teacher will call in the Principal, who will take appropriate action after speaking to all concerned parties, including the student’s parents. Serious or repeated infractions of the Code of Conduct may constitute cause for an official letter of reprimand, and if deemed further necessary, in-school suspension, suspension from school, or expulsion.

In-School Suspension: Though students will continue to receive instruction, staff will place them in another classroom or location designated by the Principal. Students will be separated from the regular classroom, but will always have adult supervision.

Suspension: Where deemed necessary, students will be suspended from school for one to five days, depending on the severity of the infraction. School administrators will notify the parents in advance and they will be required to meet with the Principal before their child can return to school.

Expulsion: If the Principal determines that all other options have been exhausted without the desired effect, or that law mandates expulsion, a hearing will be arranged with the President of the Board of Trustees, the Director/Designee, the parents, and the student. The hearing could result in a recommendation to the Board for student expulsion. The Board has the final authority for expulsion decisions.

V. BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND INTIMIDATION

College Achieve Central Charter School is compliant with the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (P.L. 2010, Chapter 122).

Normal Conflict	Bullying
Equal power; friends	Imbalance of power; not friends
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative actions
Accidental	Purposeful
Not serious	Serious; threat of physical harm or emotional or psychological hurt
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction on part of the
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control
Not trying to get something	Trying to get material things or power
Remorse; takes responsibility	No remorse; blames victim
Effort to solve the problem	No effort to solve the problem

The teachers and staff at *College Achieve Central Charter School* strive to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, caring, and kindness among all members of the *College Achieve Central Charter School* community. These attitudes are embodied in the behavioral expectations to which all students are held, are modeled for students by teachers and staff at all times and in all settings, and are supported by the curriculum. These attitudes are also supported by a

discipline policy and a school-wide conflict resolution process.

We anticipate that this mutually respectful atmosphere will work to prevent incidents of mistreatment – including bullying, harassment, and intimidation – of a student by one or more students. Any such behavior, however, should it arise, will be considered a serious threat not only to the safety of the student in question but also to the integrity of the student community, and will not be tolerated. Teachers and staff are trained to be alert to signs of such student-to- student misbehavior and to respond to it swiftly. In addition, anyone in the *College Achieve Central Charter School* community who observes behavior that appears to constitute bullying, harassment, or intimidation is strongly encouraged to report this promptly to the *College Achieve Central Charter School* Principal -Designee.

Observations or reports of behaviors that appear to constitute bullying, harassment, or intimidation will be quickly and carefully investigated. If it is determined that such mistreatment is occurring or has occurred, corrective action will be taken immediately. The first step in this process is to safeguard the physical and emotional safety of the student in question. Next, there will be a corrective response to the student or students who have behaved inappropriately, consistent with the school's discipline policy. Finally, steps will be taken as needed to restore or increase harmony and security within the student body and to prevent a recurrence of the behavior in question on the part of any student. Parents of all affected children will be kept fully informed at each step of this process.

VI. UNIFORM POLICY

Research has shown that school uniforms help to facilitate and maintain an effective learning environment as well as to keep the focus of the classroom on learning. CACCS will require students to be in uniform. We need parents and students to embrace and support this initiative.

- Students must wear shoes black, brown or tan are acceptable. NO SNEAKERS or BOOTS.
Females: Flats
- All shirts must be tucked in. Belts must be worn. Ties are required with button-down shirts
- BOTTOMS: Males-Khaki Pants Females –Khaki Pants Khaki
- Uniform Shirt with school logo
- Outerwear must have school logo

Should your child fail to meet any of the uniform standards below, a phone call shall be made home to review the uniform policy and to make arrangements for the appropriate uniform item(s) to be delivered to school. Students who fail to meet the uniform policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

VII. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Because both schools and students benefit from parents participating in the education of their children, *Great Futures Charter High School* stresses the importance of taking the time to become involved.

To this end, College Achieve Central Charter School offers parents an opportunity to talk with its staff at Open House/Back-to-School Night, Report Card Distribution and parent-teacher conferences. Parents can also join the Parent Teacher Organization, which meets several times a year, and attend monthly College Achieve Central Charter School Board of Director meetings, as well as other meetings announced during the year. Parents are encouraged to help the school develop programs and offer ideas to make College Achieve Central Charter School a better learning environment.

Most important, parents should take an active interest in what their children are doing at school. They

should talk to them about what they did that day. They should make sure that they never miss school and always complete their homework. They should encourage a positive attitude and talk to their child's teacher if the student is having problems they can't solve or don't understand.

VIII. VOLUNTEERING

College Achieve Central Charter School welcomes parents to volunteer in a variety of capacities. Not only does the school benefit from their participation, enabling it to undertake more ambitious activities, the parents gain a better understanding of why *College Achieve Central Charter School* and share their expertise with the school.

Volunteer opportunities will be posted throughout the year on the webpage and in periodic newsletters. If you are interested in volunteering in your child's classroom, please contact your child's teacher or Class Parents. To get involved in a broader way, please contact the Principal or your PAGE (Parents, Advocates, Guardians, and Educators) representative. There are many ways parents can help; following are just a few examples:

- Field Trips
- Classroom Activities
- School Events
- Grant Writing
- Workshops/Enrichment
- Translation
- Community Outreach

IX. HOMEWORK

Meaningful homework assignments and special projects extend the learning that has been started in the classroom. Homework should be given on a daily basis and projects should be assigned during extended days off. This deepens understanding and builds independence and creative thinking. The following guidelines will make homework assignments more effective and impactful:

1. The assignment must serve a valid educational purpose.
2. The assignment must be reasonable and consistent with the students' abilities, needs and interests.
3. The assignment must extend the student's knowledge without fostering discouragement and resentment.
4. The instructions must be clear to the student.
5. The assignment must provide a challenging reinforcement for lessons that have been taught.
6. Assignments must be given daily.
7. All homework must be checked by the teacher upon return, and corrected accurately.
8. All homework must be graded and recorded.
9. All tests, quizzes or various forms of assessments must be sent home as a homework assignment to be signed by parent/guardian in a Monday folder.

The homework policy and expectations will be explained during Back-to-School Night.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements is currently being modified. Updated section will be posted shortly.

Student Progress Reports and Report Cards

Student performance will be reported to parents/guardians eight (8) times annually using “Progress Reports” and “Report Cards” as the official representation of student grades for each marking period, cumulative for the length of the school year.

Progress reports will be mailed directly to student/parent home address. Report cards will be disseminated at “Parent/Guardian Open House/ Report Card Distribution Nights” each marking period.

Every parent/guardian is expected to attend the Parent Open House/Report Card Distribution Night. Parents/Guardians will have the opportunity to meet with the child’s teacher(s) to conference on student academic progress, student needs and collaborate on successful solutions to improve student performance, if necessary.

Promotion and Retention

College Achieve Central Charter School will conform to any/all NJDOE requirements regarding promotion and retention. CACCS believes that each child is best educated with his/her peers, providing supports to each in that process; and desires to the extent possible, to promote each child with those peers. To this end, continuous assessment will be in place, testing students’ achievement of the core competencies for each subject/ grade. This will ensure the maximum achievement rate and therefore the maximum promotion rate.

If a student fails to earn sufficient credits in a given school year to move up to the next grade level status, the student will be retained (in the previous grade level) and will be scheduled as a Grade R (Retained) student until such time he/she accrues the correct amount of credits.

If necessary, students will participate in support and intervention activities as part of their instructional program, extended day/week support activities, and extended year/summer school.

Each student who falls below grade level will be given supports including tutoring, after school assistance, and summer school classes taught by certified teachers.

Ultimately, if a student is in danger of not being promoted based on academic performance, the Principal of CACCS will convene the appropriate parties, as early as possible, to discuss possible interventions and strategies for improvement. If acceptable improvement does not occur, the Principal will be responsible for making the final decision regarding a student’s promotion.

