



**2022-2023**

**STUDENT - FAMILY  
POLICIES**

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## NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Code § 2-1402.41, et sec. (Act), and other applicable local and federal law, Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School, in providing educational programs and services, does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, source of income, or other status protected by applicable law. Harassment is a form of discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act.

Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action. Anyone who experiences or observes discriminated or harassed should immediately report the matter to Leicester Johnson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), 2315 18th Place, NE, Washington, DC 20018, 202-269-6623.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Attendance is a critical component for academic success. Learners are expected to engage in school regularly.** It is important to attend and participate in all learning in order to obtain needed information to complete your program and/or graduate. Our most successful learners make educational gains after 100 hours of instructional engagement.

**Academy of Hope APCS staff will make every attempt to contact and reengage learners according to the contact schedule listed below. Learners who fail to respond to AoH's contact and reengage in learning for a period of 21 days are at risk of being unenrolled from the program.**

Missed Classes (Days)	Action Taken
<b>No Show Attendance (Admissions/Instructional Team/ and Student Support)</b>	
1 Week of Classes (4 days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner will receive a call from an individual teacher to inquire about missed class. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>Learner will be outreached by Student Support Specialist and logged into the SIS (Learners with 2 or more absences).</li> <li>A robocall and email from the admissions team will be sent each day to absent learners. <i>(We will make every effort to engage learners before unenrollment.)</i></li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Week of Classes (8 days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>The admissions team will attempt direct contact with learners who were not unenrolled during week one. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> </ul>
<b>Term Attendance</b>	
Weekly Absent Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly absent report will be sent to student support and principals/instructional managers each Thursday by 5pm.</li> </ul>
10 Classes (5 Days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>Student Support will contact learner via phone and/or email to inquire about missed days. Collect documentation to support missed days, if applicable. Log contact in SIS. Forward any documentation to admission team for filing.</li> </ul>
16 Classes (8 Days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>Student support, principals/instructional managers, and instructional team will meet weekly to discuss learners with 8+ days and develop a plan of action. If the decision is to unenroll a learner, this information will be forwarded to the admissions team for completion.</li> <li>Student Support will contact learner via phone and/or email to inquire about missed days. Collect documentation to support missed days if applicable. Log contact in SIS. Forward any documentation to admission team for filing.</li> </ul>
24 Classes (12 Days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>Student support, principals/instructional managers, and instructional team will meet weekly to discuss learners with 8+ days and develop a plan of action. If the decision is to unenroll a learner, this information will be forwarded to the admissions team for completion.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support will contact learner via phone and/or email to develop <b>attendance plan</b> for reengagement and offer necessary resources if needed. Collect documentation to support missed days, if applicable. Log contact in SIS. Forward any documentation to admission team for filing.</li> <li>• If a learner is not responding to outreach, a letter will be mailed to learner to advise no contact may lead to unenrollment.</li> </ul>
32 Classes (16 Days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>• Student support, principals/instructional managers, and instructional team will meet weekly to discuss learners with 8+ days and develop a plan of action. If the decision is to unenroll a learner, this information will be forwarded to the admissions team for completion.</li> <li>• Student Support will contact learner via phone and/or email to develop <b>attendance contract</b> for reengagement and offer necessary resources if needed. Collect documentation to support missed days if applicable. Log contact in SIS. Forward any documentation to admission team for filing.</li> <li>• If a learner is not responding to outreach, they may be unenrolled at this point. Decision will be made by student support/academic team to unenroll.</li> </ul>
42 Classes (21 Days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will continue to receive contact from individual teachers via direct call. This contact will be logged into the SIS.</li> <li>• Student support, principals/instructional managers, and instructional team will meet weekly to discuss decision to unenroll learners with 21+ days and forward a list of unenrollment's to admissions team.</li> </ul>

#### **Acceptable Documentation for Excused Absences**

If a learner is experience any of the following types of absences the admissions team will accept documentation (listed below) to excuse the absence and/or defer the learner. This documentation will serve as communication to Academy of Hope staff and should be forwarded to the admissions team for filing in the learner's permanent file. A learner may have the opportunity to defer until the next term if any of the following type of absences exist.

If you experience any of the following types of absences, it is your responsibility to forward acceptable documentation to the Enrollment & Registration team at [enrollment@aohdc.org](mailto:enrollment@aohdc.org). This documentation will serve as communication to Academy of Hope staff.

<b>Type of Absence</b>	<b>What documentation is acceptable?</b>
Illness	Doctor's note
Doctor's Appointment	Appointment card, Doctor's note, etc.
Moving residence	Proof of residency dated within one week of the move (ex. lease, letter, bill, etc.) ( <i>learner must complete new residency verification form</i> )
Social Service/Housing Appointments	Recertification Letter with Appointment Date or documentation showing appointment date ( <i>this is the only acceptable documentation</i> )
Emergencies (ex. accidents, death in the family)	Obituary, emergency room/discharge paperwork, etc.
Religious obligation	No documentation needed.
Jury Duty/Court Appearance	Jury summons letter/Court notice showing court date

## UNENROLLMENT/DEFERMENT

If a learner is unenrolled, they will have to re-register for classes. If a learner is unenrolled for health reasons, due to the death or care of an immediate family member, or for other reasonable issues determined by the attendance team the learner may have the option to defer for one term. Deferring for a term can only be done once in a 12-month period and is granted on a case-by-case basis. Please contact your campus registrar to discuss your deferment options.

<b>To be eligible for deferment, learners must complete the following steps:</b>	
» CASAS Test (if needed).	
» Complete employment form (if there has been a change in employment).	
» Have no outstanding discipline or attendance issues.	
» Residency verification form is completed and up-to-date.	
<b>Acceptable Reasons for Deferment</b>	<b>What documentation is acceptable?</b>
Health Related (ex. hospitalization, surgery, illness lasting longer than 8 days)	Doctor's note (ex. Surgery paperwork, doctor's paperwork showing extended hospitalization, etc.)
Health Related for an Immediate Family Member (ex. hospitalization, surgery, illness lasting longer than 8 days)	Doctor's note (ex. Surgery paperwork, doctor's paperwork showing extended hospitalization, etc.)
Mental Health Related	Doctor's note (ex. Surgery paperwork, doctor's paperwork showing extended hospitalization, etc.)
Homelessness	Letter from shelter, transitional housing, housing program, etc. <i>(documentation for homelessness is not required)</i>
<b><i>Remember that you have the option to switch to a "ONLINE ONLY" schedule. If you need assistance with this type of transfer, please contact your campus registrar.</i></b>	

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

AoH believes that every learner should have the opportunity to learn the skills and values necessary for personal development. Every learner also has the right to learn and be safe, and no one has the right to interrupt learning or make others feel unsafe. During the first week of class, learners receive their schedules, and all learners participate in a formal orientation. The orientation provides learners an opportunity to get to know other learners and the AoH faculty and staff. The orientation also provides an overview of AoH's programs, policies and procedures, including a thorough introduction to our disciplinary policy: the AoH Student Code of Conduct.

The Student Code of Conduct includes clear rules about the treatment of others (learners, staff and volunteers), attendance, late arrival, banned substances, and attire. The Student Code of Conduct clearly describes the potential consequences of violating these rules. There is also a process if they have complaints about peers, staff, school policies or disciplinary actions. In accordance with District of Columbia law (DCMR Title 25), serious violations of school policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct may lead to the suspension or expulsion of a learner. Every learner will be asked to sign a learner contract containing the Student Code of Conduct, indicating his or her willingness to abide by all school rules and policies.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- The Staff of Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School encourages learning and personal growth. We expect all learners, teachers, staff, and volunteers to respect one another at all times. We encourage and support one another as we learn and grow together in order to meet our goals.
- AoH does not allow alcohol or drug use on our grounds. Learners who come to school under the influence of substances will be asked to leave. AoH is a safe place for all learners and staff.
- AoH does not tolerate violence of any kind. Learners who become violent with other classmates or staff will be suspended for a period determined by the Associate Campus Principal. Violence includes physically striking someone or using strong abusive or threatening language toward someone.
- AoH forbids all of its learners from harassing any other learner, volunteer or staff member because of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income or any other reason prohibited by law.
- AoH prohibits harassment at AoH itself and in social or educational activities (for example, celebrations and field trips) conducted or sponsored by AoH. If you believe a classmate, volunteer or staff member has harassed you, please speak with an AoH staff member, Associate Campus Principal, Managing Director of Student Services, or the Chief Executive Officer.

### STUDENT RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO SUSPENSIONS

Students have the right to receive an appropriate education. Listed below are the student rights that are relevant to school discipline:

- Students have the right to enjoy peaceful and meaningful freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion on school property and at school-sponsored events.
- Students may not be excluded from their regular school program or denied instructional time in the absence of a documented, official, disciplinary intervention (i.e. suspension or expulsion).
- Students must be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story before a decision is made to place them on in-school, short-term, long-term, or extended suspension or expulsion.
- Students will be returned to their regular educational program once the conditions of a suspension or expulsion are met.
- Behaviors that should not result in suspension include, but are not limited to, cutting class, or unexcused absences.
- Students are entitled to receive written notification of why they are being removed from the classroom or school for disciplinary reasons.
- Students are entitled to a conference with the associate principal at the time when a decision is made to remove them from the classroom or school for disciplinary reasons.
- Students are entitled to make up classwork and assignments without penalty when they are excluded from school for any period of time. Teachers are required to provide students all daily classwork and assignments and will correct and return all completed work to students on a weekly basis. Students are responsible for completing classwork and assignments in a timely manner.
- Students cannot be suspended for more than three consecutive school days without the CAO's approval.

Academy of Hope recognizes the effectiveness of restorative practice methods and other progressive disciplinary measures that build positive relationships. These interventions are a shift away from overly harsh and punitive disciplinary responses. Instead, they educate students about the harm caused by their actions, while seeking to reunite them with the school community.

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### OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION GUIDELINES

Out-of-school suspensions of up to 5 days are used when learners severely violate the expectations of the community of Academy of Hope. This step is never taken lightly, and is a decision made based on input from the school administration staff, student support staff, and faculty.

The following categories are examples of behaviors that may result in a learner being suspended:

- Disruptive behavior that is on-going and uncontrollable, including harassment
  - Behavior that is a danger to the learner or to others, including the use of threatening language and the possession or use of drugs or alcohol while at school
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- Other extreme behaviors that may deserve suspension based on the frequency of the behavior, the riskiness of behavior, and the learner's openness to following instructions
- Theft

At least one day prior to returning to classes at Academy of Hope from an out-of-school suspension, the learner is required to have a meeting with school administration and student support staff. Prior to the meeting, the learner is expected to prepare a written statement to take responsibility for his/her actions that led to the suspension and propose a plan to avoid similar actions in the future. During the meeting, a behavior intervention plan is created and implemented in order to help the learner to avoid the problem behavior in the future.

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## EXPULSION GUIDELINES

In rare instances, learner behavior may be so severe that expulsion is appropriate. Expelling a learner is never considered lightly and requires the consensus of the Campus Principal and Dean of Student Academic Services. Typically, student support staff and faculty also participate in the decision process.

As a school, one of our most important responsibilities is to create an environment that is safe for everyone. We take that seriously and act accordingly. As a result, expulsion is considered when we believe that a learner may be a danger to self or others. Except in extreme instances when a learner's behavior might warrant immediate expulsion, we first try to create a plan that meets both the community's need for safety and the needs of the learner. If the plan fails, then we may move to expel the student.

Grounds for immediate expulsion may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical violence or assault
- Brandishing, use, or threat of a weapon
- The sale of drugs on campus
- Theft

Except in cases of extreme behavior, a learner is expelled only after the learner's team has worked closely with the learner to change the problem behaviors. After expulsion, learners are not permitted to attend classes for the current session or to be present on either campus for the duration of the expulsion. If the current session is near its end, the expulsion may carry over to the next session. At the end of the expulsion, a student may complete the application and registration process to return to Academy of Hope and must also complete a more extensive appeal to return that includes a restorative justice process.

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## DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION DECISIONS

In accordance with school policy, students have a right to appeal a suspension or expulsion within 10 days after receiving the final decision on the disciplinary action. The student also has a right to a hearing that can be requested in a written appeal. The **Campus Principals** will schedule the hearing (if requested) or render a written decision within 10 days from receiving the appeal. If this decision is not made within 10 days, the student will be allowed to return to school unless there is a finding that the student's return would pose an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff.

In the event a student disagrees with the outcome of a disciplinary decision, they may appeal the determination to the **Chief Academic Officer**. This appeal should be submitted no later than 5 days after the decision to uphold the suspension or expulsion. The Chief Academic Officer and or Chief Executive Officer will render a final decision no later than 5 days from receipt of the appeal.

In the event a student disagrees with the outcome of a disciplinary decision made by the Chief Academic Officer, they may appeal the determination to the **Chief Executive Officer and/or AoH Board Chair**.

## GRIEVANCE OR COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A learner who has a complaint or grievance against another learner in a class should first discuss the issue or concern with the class teacher. If the learner is not satisfied, the learner should discuss the situation with their **Student Support Specialist**.

Name	Email	Phone Number
<b>Shatyra Henry</b> – Ward 5 Daytime	<a href="mailto:shatyra@aohdc.org">shatyra@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 103
<b>Coretta Edwards</b> – Ward 5 Evening	<a href="mailto:coretta@aohdc.org">coretta@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 142
<b>Porsha James</b> – Ward 8 Daytime	<a href="mailto:porsha@aohdc.org">porsha@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 231
<b>Nathaniel Swinson</b> – Ward 8 Daytime	<a href="mailto:nathaniel@aohdc.org">nathaniel@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 234
<b>Ayaba Sedjro</b> – Assistant Director	<a href="mailto:ayaba@aohdc.org">ayaba@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 209

A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a teacher should discuss the problem with the teacher. If the learner does not feel comfortable approaching the teacher or the learner is not satisfied with the solution after approaching the teacher, the learner should present the problem to the **Campus Principal**.

Name	Email	Phone Number
<b>Richmond Onokpite</b> – Ward 5 Campus	<a href="mailto:richmond@aohdc.org">richmond@aohdc.org</a>	202-269-6623 ext. 149
<b>Alicia Waldon</b> – Ward 8 Campus	<a href="mailto:alicia@aohdc.org">alicia@aohdc.org</a>	202-373-0246 ext. 215

A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a staff member should discuss the issue with the staff member. If the learner does not feel comfortable approaching the staff member or, if after discussing the problem with the staff member is still not feeling satisfied, the learner should take the grievance to the **Chief Operations Officer, Tiffany Godbout** at 202-269-6623 ext. 132 or by email: [Tiffany@aohdc.org](mailto:Tiffany@aohdc.org)

A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a decision made during the implementation of a policy may appeal the decision by contacting the **Chief Academic Officer, Michael Durant** at 202-269-6623 or by email: [mdurant@aohdc.org](mailto:mdurant@aohdc.org)

A learner who cannot resolve a complaint or grievance through school leadership may contact the **Academy of Hope Board Chair, Barbara Jumper** at [boardchair@aohdc.org](mailto:boardchair@aohdc.org)

Learners will be notified of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when signing their enrollment documents. A copy of the learners “Notification of Rights under FERPA” is provided to them during registration and in this manual and is reviewed during orientation. Learners with further questions regarding their rights under FERPA should contact their site principal or registrar or contact school officials as identified in the Notification of Rights under FERPA.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students age 18 or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

- (1) **The right to inspect and review** the student's education records within 45 days of the day Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School (AoH) receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Campus Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Campus Principal or other appropriate school official will make arrangements for access and notify the Parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) **The right to request amendment** of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students may write the Campus Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If AoH decides not to amend the record as requested by the Parent or eligible student, the school will notify the Parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the Parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) **The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information** contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. For example, FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent to school officials whom AoH has determined to have legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by AoH as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom AoH has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- (4) **The right to withhold disclosure of directory information.** At its discretion, AoH may disclose basic “directory information” that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy without the consent of parents or eligible students in accordance with the provisions of District law and FERPA. Directory information includes:
  - A. Student Name
  - B. Student Address
  - C. Student Telephone Listing
  - D. Name of School Attending
  - E. Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
  - F. Weight and Height of Members of Athletic Teams
  - G. Diplomas and Awards Received
  - H. Student’s Date and Place of Birth
  - I. Names of Schools Previously Attended
  - J. Dates of Attendance

Parents or eligible students may instruct AoH to withhold any or all of the information identified above (i) by completing the “Release of Student Directory Information” Form available at the school, or (ii) by notifying in writing to

the **Director of Enrollment Management**, at Academy of Hope – Adult Public Charter School, 2315 18<sup>th</sup> Place, NE, Washington, DC 20018. The release or notification must be provided within 30 days of the issuance of this notice.

(5) **The right to file a complaint** with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by AoH to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202.

## OPEN MEETINGS POLICY

**Section 2.07. Regular Meetings.** The Board shall hold at least five (5) board meetings per fiscal year; four regular meeting and one annual meeting. Between regular meetings, board members will receive monthly board updates via written report or conference call. The Chair and/or Executive Committee may call additional meetings as necessary. At least one of each of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board shall be open to the public and shall be advertised by the Board within the community, in such manner as the Board shall determine, to promote attendance of the community.

**Section 2.08. Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting shall occur at such date, time, and location, as the Board shall determine. The annual meeting may be held with or in lieu of a regularly scheduled meeting.

### 2022-23 Board of Directors' Meeting Schedule

Board meetings are conducted at the Ward 5 Campus located at 2315 18<sup>th</sup> Place NE, Washington, DC 20018 unless otherwise noted.