

Letter to ACPS Families

We are excited to welcome our students back to school! The 2023-24 school year holds the promise for all students to become better prepared to serve as change agents in their classrooms, schools, community and our ever-evolving world. As we focus on building strong school cultures that promote student engagement, a sense of belonging and connectedness, we provide opportunities for our students to share their personal stories and we are ready to hear their collective voices. We seek to cultivate all aspects of each individual student and we acknowledge the importance of developing positive behaviors in each student. We continue to focus as a school division on the implementation of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) each day. SEL is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions and acquire positive relationship and decision-making skills (CASEL, 2017). In ACPS, we work with our students to seamlessly integrate academic learning into our SEL program. Our work is also known as SEAL. The SEAL program is designed to assist each student to develop positive behaviors that promote learning, support mental health with trauma informed practices, build strong school communities that are restorative, and deliver fair and equitable treatment across all student populations.

As we focus on equity for all in our classrooms and school buildings, we work with each individual student to build strong relationships that fosters individuality and inclusion that celebrates the rich culture and diverse experiences each student brings to the classroom. In this Student Code of Conduct handbook there is information that focuses on how we use a tiered system of support to teach and reteach positive behaviors. We use prevention strategies to build our tiered system of support that is developmentally and culturally responsive. In support of our students who demonstrate they need additional support with learning positive behaviors, we are committed to restorative practices in our school communities and we look for alternatives to suspension while also keeping student and staff safety in their classrooms and the school a top priority.

Student behavior is one way that our students communicate their needs to us. Meeting the needs of our students with the right intervention and with understanding will keep them in school and assist them with thriving academically and behaviorally. This Student Code of Conduct handbook outlines the most common tiered interventions that assist students with acquiring social skills and provide support to students who need additional time to demonstrate the behavioral expectations. We have also shared the procedures for reporting bullying behaviors and unwanted conduct that could result in specific disciplinary actions along with interventions that are provided to encourage positive behavior change.

We ask that families partner with us to sit with their student(s) to read through this Student Code of Conduct carefully. It is helpful for families to share behavioral expectations with students to set consistent expectations for positive behavior that includes school attendance that can lead to positive academic outcomes. After reading and discussing this information, please make sure you and your child sign the ACPS Signature Form, provided in the Back to School Forms at the start of the school year.

We are partners with you on this journey to support our students to become the very best version of themselves and we look forward to working collaboratively with you to ensure safe and orderly learning environments for everyone. Let's all enjoy a safe and successful school year!

Profile of a Virginia Graduate



