



**** I acknowledge that I have read and understand the content of the 2023-2024 Lead Academy Student | Parent | Guardian Handbook.****

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please sign this page and return with beginning of year paperwork. Complete a separate form for each enrolled student.

****Handbook is published on www.myleadacademy.com and paper copies are**

available by request in the front office**



2023-2024 Student | Parent | Guardian Handbook

Dear Lead Academy Families and Community,

As Lead Academy Public Charter School principal, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone back to the 2023-2024 school year. We are all excited to have students back in our classrooms and hallways, filling them with energy and enthusiasm for learning. At Lead, our mission is that every child can achieve at an exceptionally high level, regardless of background or circumstance. We strive to challenge each student to reach their highest potential. We have great teachers who spend hours planning high-quality instruction and engaging lessons. Our staff utilizes EL Education curriculum to create classrooms that foster the three dimensions of high achievement which are mastery of knowledge and skills, character, and high-quality student work. When students and teachers are engaged in challenging, adventurous, and meaningful work, learning and achievement flourish. I am excited about the upcoming school year and can't wait to begin a new year of learning and growing. Remember, we are crew, not passengers. Doing exceptional work requires all of us to be on the same page and operating as a crew.

Lead Academy Vision

At LEAD Academy,

- A) A diverse community of students, teachers, and families will be cultivated into leaders.
- B) All students will demonstrate craftsmanship, achieve mastery of knowledge and skills, and model the character of a leader in all contexts.
- C) All stakeholders feel included, supported, and responsible in the leadership growth of others.
- D) Our leaders will be prepared to identify their passion, create opportunities in their lives, and make a difference in their community.



Lead Academy Board Members

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Be Nice.
Work Hard.
Serve Well.
Have Fun.





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ABOUT LEAD

Our Purpose

Lead Academy is a free, public charter school founded on the belief that every student can achieve at an exceptionally high level, regardless of background or circumstance.

Our Methods

High Expectations

Lead Academy holds to the belief that ALL students can learn, regardless of circumstance or background.

More Time

Our school day begins at 7:45 and ends at 3:10. Allowing for more time in the classroom has proven to translate into higher pupil achievement. This extended time allows for structures like Crew, and more elective time for our elementary students.

Commitment to Motivate

Lead Academy faculty and staff have the mandate to make school meaningful, relevant and fun for our students. Every instructor must produce lessons that activate students' intrinsic motivations as well as create classroom environments that facilitate this outcome. To this end, every student is expected to embrace hard work as a part of the educational experience. Our partnership with EL Education provides the tools and training to implement this method.

Mission Driven

It is the duty of every member of the Lead Academy community to move all students to demonstrate craftsmanship, achieve mastery of knowledge and skills, and model the character of a leader in all contexts.

Empowering

Administrators, teachers, parents/guardians and students are all given academic and cultural tools to shape the educational experience as it pertains to them.



Our Culture

Culture • 'kəl-chər • n. the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization



We believe the level of student achievement is directly related to the culture of the school. At Lead Academy, teachers, students and parents/guardians have the responsibility of setting and maintaining high expectations for each student throughout the school year. Parents/guardians, students and teachers agree to hold each other accountable to these standards.

The "Small Stuff" Matters

Our smaller size gives us more opportunities to supervise student investment into our core values: Be nice. Work hard. Serve well. Have fun. We constantly monitor student ownership and work to promote the values of kindness, perseverance, stewardship, and teamwork.

Attendance Matters

We believe every minute of instruction counts. We continuously review our school schedule to ensure we are making the most efficient use of our time.

Uniforms Matter

We want all energy focused on student achievement and performance.

Attitude Matters

We value teamwork and the positive climate created as a result.



Education

EL Education

EL Education is an educational reform model that grew out of Outward Bound, a provider of experiential and outdoor educational programs. These 10 principles, which seek to describe a caring, adventurous school culture and approach to learning, were drawn from the ideas of Kurt Hahn and other education leaders for use in Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) schools.

1. **The primacy of self-discovery:** Learning happens best with emotion, challenge and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. Students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.
2. **The having of wonderful ideas:** Teaching in Expeditionary Learning schools fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.
3. **The responsibility for learning:** Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of an Expeditionary Learning school encourages both students and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.
4. **Empathy and caring:** Learning is fostered best in communities where students' and teachers' ideas are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small in Expeditionary Learning schools, with a caring adult looking after the progress and acting as an advocate for each student. Older students mentor younger ones, and students feel physically and emotionally safe.
5. **Success and failure:** All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.
6. **Collaboration and competition:** Individual development and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Students are encouraged to compete not against each other but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.
7. **Diversity and inclusion:** Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, respect for others.
8. **The natural world:** Direct respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the earth and of future generations.
9. **Solitude and reflection:** Students and teachers need time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections, and create their own ideas. They also need time to exchange their reflections with others.
10. **Service and compassion:** We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and one of an Expeditionary Learning school's primary functions is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service to others.



GENERAL PROCEDURES

General Information

****ALL CHANGES TO POLICY ARE WRITTEN IN RED****

****See Addendum for additional Covid-19 Changes****

The School Day

- The school day at Lead Academy is from 7:45 am to 3:10 pm, Monday – Friday. Students may arrive as early as 7:15 am. Special cases for early drop-off may be considered but must be communicated to administration.
- Cafeteria breakfast is served from 7:15 am – 7:40 am. Late students will receive an alternate meal until 8:00am.
- Students arriving prior to 7:45 will be admitted to holding classrooms.
- Students are expected to be in Crew at 7:45 am. If you arrive in the morning after the 7:45 AM bell, you must sign-in your student in the office and will be marked tardy. For safety reasons, a student cannot enter the building alone after 7:45. Students may not come in by themselves when tardy.

Office Hours

The school office will be open from 7:30 am until 4:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The office will *close* each Wednesday at 3:45 pm for professional development. Exceptions are noted on the school calendar.

Visitors

All visitors must sign-in at the front office and display a visitor's badge while on campus.

Visitors must secure administrative approval before being allowed in any part of the building. All visitors, including parents, must report to the office, obtain permission, sign-in, and receive a name tag before reporting to any other area in the school. If you wish to visit a classroom, you must make arrangements, in writing, to the teacher, office clerk and grade level administrator at least 24 hours in advance.

If visiting without making prior arrangements, the office staff will be more than happy to give the staff member a message so that arrangements can be made. If there is an issue that needs immediate attention, please contact a member of our school administration.

Conferences

Appointments, conferences, classroom visits, etc. should be scheduled with the teachers, principal, or other administrative staff by email, note, or phone. This ensures that we make your time with us as productive as possible, which enables us to better serve you. Teacher and staff contact information can be found on the Lead Academy website.

In addition to requested conferences, Lead Academy hosts a Student-Led Conference Day (SLC Day) each school year. It is very important that all families make a concerted effort to attend SLC day.



Change of Address or Personal Information

If a student moves during the school year or during the summer, they should report changes of address and phone numbers to the front office and the school nurse. Accurate addresses and phone numbers are needed in case of emergencies. The school should have an up-to-date address and phone number for each student's parents/guardians at all times.

Cell Phone Usage

Students are expected to make all daily school and after school arrangements prior to arriving at school each day. Students will only be allowed to call home using the office phone with approval of a teacher. They must have a pass to use the phone in the office. Students **MAY NOT USE** cell phones during the school day or while attending school-sponsored and school-related activities. They must be turned off and stored away. If used, the cell phone will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian in the front office according to school guidelines. If a parent/guardian reports that their student called them from a cell phone to come pick them up, the phone will be confiscated. Students may not contact parents regarding illness using personal cell phones or a classroom phone. Anytime a phone is taken, the staff member who confiscated the item will communicate the circumstances involved. Students using the electronic devices to video other students/faculty or post photographs of students/faculty without permission may lead to suspension and/or expulsion. Additionally, staff members will not post photos or videos of students on their personal social media pages or other outside media outlets.

Smart Watches & Wearable Technology

As technology advances, more devices enter the classroom. As with our cell phone usage policy, communication devices, such as smart watches, and wireless communication or listening technology, such as earbuds/airpods, are not to be used during the school day or while attending school-sponsored and school-related activities. If students are found to be using those devices, the device will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian in the front office.

Consequences for Improper Use of Technology

If an electronic device* is visible or heard then they will receive the following consequences:

1st Offense : Returned at the end of the school day to a parent/guardian in the front office.

2nd Offense: Technology Referral and Conference

3rd Offense : Technology Referral and ISS

4th Offense: Technology Referral and OSS

*Electronic devices include, but are not limited to: recording devices, radios, CD players, DVD players, TV's, laser pointers, earbuds, smartwatches, Chromebooks, tablets etc.

Lost and Found

Any article found on school grounds should be turned in to the front office. Students who wish to claim a lost item that has been found must go to the front office and make proper identification of the item. Lost and found items will be held in the office, and items not claimed will be discarded or donated to a charitable organization.



School Records

The Lead Academy administrative staff maintains school records and sends them to other schools when students transfer or are promoted to high school.

Student Health & Medications

Health Room

The health room is an emergency station and is not equipped to take care of any serious illness. Students will only be dismissed from school in case of illness from the Health Room. A parent or doctor's note is required upon the return of the child who was dismissed from the Health Room. Students may not contact parents regarding illness using personal cell phones or a classroom phone. If a student becomes ill at school, they must go to the Health Room where the nurse will evaluate whether or not that student needs to go home. Parents are to notify the school nurse, in writing, of any health conditions pertinent to the child's wellbeing such as asthma, epilepsy, toxic reactions to bee stings, diabetes, bone and joint problems, etc..

A student is not permitted to enter the health room without a pass from a teacher or administrator.

Immunizations

The state requires that each student present the school with a valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization or Certification of Exemption. Students who do not have immunization records on file with the school will not be provided a schedule. Please provide the above information to the front office.

SC law requires that students entering 7th grade receive a dose of Tdap vaccine. Students entering the 7th grade who have NOT received the Tdap vaccine by the first day of school on August 15, 2022, will not be allowed to attend school until they have received the vaccine and provided proof to the school nurse.

Medications

STUDENTS MAY NOT BRING MEDICATION OF ANY KIND TO SCHOOL AT ANY TIME. All medications, prescriptions or over-the-counter, must be brought to school by the parent/guardian or guardian. This includes Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Aspirin, and Inhalers. All medications must be checked in through the school nurse by a parent/guardian or guardian. Medication of any kind, prescription or over-the-counter, must be in its original container. Pharmacies will help you by providing an additional labeled bottle for prescription medications, but you must ask for it. NO MEDICATION, even those sold over the counter, will be given without proper documentation from the parent/guardian/guardian of the student.

1. parent/guardians are required to bring prescription medication to school and must complete the [Authorization for Prescription Medication form](#) before any prescription medication may be left at the school.
2. If your student must self-administer medication at school, the [Self Medication Form](#) is required before medication is brought to school.



3. A parent/guardian may provide written authorization for over-the-counter medication to be kept and administered in the health room, using the [Authorization for Non-Prescription Medication Form](#).

Food and Nutrition Services

Meals

Lead Academy is a nut free school. Please see our [nut free policy](#).

Lead Academy contracts with a food service provider to provide meals to our students. Breakfast and lunch are served following the guidelines of the National School Lunch and the National School Breakfast Programs.

Cafeteria Procedures

Breakfast Procedures:

- Students may enter the cafeteria for breakfast at 7:15 a.m.
- Students eating breakfast should report directly to the cafeteria. Once students enter their classrooms or holding spaces, they will not be allowed to return to the cafeteria for meals.
- Each grade level sits at a designated table.
- Once students are finished with their food, they need to pick up all trash and put it in the trash can and leave the cafeteria to report to their designated holding space.
- All food is to be eaten in the cafeteria. No food or drinks can be taken out of the cafeteria.

Lunch Procedures:

- Students will remain in a line walking to lunch and while waiting for lunch.
- All students should enter the cafeteria on a "0" volume level unless interacting with cafeteria staff.
- Students will be required to sit silently for a minimum of five minutes at the beginning of each lunch period.
- Once students are seated, they may not get up unless given permission by a teacher or administrator.
- All food is to be eaten in the cafeteria. No food or drink is to be taken out of the cafeteria. Water is the only drink permitted outside of the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to remove food, napkins, or other items from the tables and the floor around them.
- All litter is to be deposited in the designated trash cans.
- Students shall not leave the cafeteria until dismissed by a teacher.
- Students are not allowed to use a microwave to heat lunches.

Food Delivery

Outside food may not be delivered by a delivery service to students. Students may not bring in food for their peers to share. There should be no scheduled food delivery for students during any time at Lead Academy. This distracts our office staff and does not support our educational or cultural goals at Lead Academy. Any student that has food sent to the office will be provided a school lunch in its place and will be subjected to regular meal pricing based on free or reduced lunch status.



Meal Pricing

****Breakfast and lunch will be free for all students for the 2023-2024 school year through USDA grant funding.**

Any family who needs assistance to pay for meals and who qualifies for supplementary funding must complete the necessary forms to receive the funding prior to receiving any free or reduced priced meals. The Operations Coordinator is permitted to use their judgment in isolated situations; e.g. a student forgot meal money one day. Meal prices and procedures are subject to change.

Applications for the Free and Reduced Price Meal program are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year. Application may be made at any time during the school year. Individual Free and Reduced Price Meal application information remains confidential. All families are encouraged to make an application. The statistical information pertaining to the number of students qualifying for benefits is a determining factor in the federal and state funding allocated to the school for educational programs.

Unpaid Balances

Any money sent in for a student who has an unpaid balance due (lunch fees, uniforms, chromebook fee, etc) will first be applied to outstanding debt before being applied to any extracurricular activities (field trip fees, yearbooks, etc).



Attendance and Truancy Policy

School doors will be opened at 7:15 each morning. School personnel are on duty to supervise students beginning at 7:15 AM. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED OFF BEFORE 7:15 AM.** The school day will begin at 7:45 AM and dismissal time is at 3:10 PM. **If you arrive after 7:45 AM, you must sign-in your student. For safety reasons, students cannot be dropped off without an adult after 7:45 AM. You must accompany your student into the building.**

Unexcused Absences

A student will not be excused for the following reasons:

- The student does not attend school without a good reason and without the parent/guardian/guardian's knowledge.
- The student does not attend school without a good reason and with the parent/guardian/guardian's knowledge.
- Any reason not listed under "Excused (Lawful) Absences."

Excused Absences

A student who is absent from school must present a note to the front office within 48 hours of their return to school. No more than 10 days of excused absences, with a note written by a parent/guardian/legal guardian, can be accepted for lawful absences during any school year. Absences will be excused if they fall in the following categories:

- Cases of extended or chronic illness with a doctor's note
- Doctor or dental appointments
- Contagious illness that could spread to students and staff
- Serious illness or death in the student's family (limited to three days, unless approved by the principal)
- Recognized religious holidays
- School-related activities
- Short-term suspensions from school

Written Excuses

In order for an absence to be considered excused, a written statement from the parent/guardian, guardian, or doctor must be submitted to the front office. A written excuse for the absence should be brought to the school or submitted through the school app the day the student returns from being absent. If the excuse is not sent within two (2) days, the absence will be considered unexcused and recorded accordingly. If the absence is excused, the student will be allowed to make up any missed work. All makeup work must be completed according to the makeup work policy. Excuses for these absences should:

1. be dated and give date or dates of absences,
2. state reason for absence unless it was prearranged,
3. be given to attendance office the day student returns,
4. be written and signed by the parent/guardian, and
5. must have a phone number where parent/guardian can be reached for verification.



Tardies and Early Dismissals

When a student has over 10 unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals during the school year, parent/guardians/guardians of elementary or middle school students may be required to complete an Attendance Intervention Plan.

Late Arrivals

Late arrival for any reason is disruptive to the learning environment and to the learning process. The late arrival policy is as follows:

1. A student arriving at school after 7:45 am must report to the front office
2. Only tardies certified by a doctor or other professional will be considered excused
3. Persistent "EXCUSED" tardiness will be carefully examined by administration to attempt to reduce it.

Early Dismissals

On the day a student needs to leave early, they must bring a note signed by a parent/guardian stating the reason for their dismissal and a phone number where parent/guardians can be reached. This note must be received in the office or submitted through the school app no later than 9:00 am. The note must include the following: student's name, specific reason for early dismissal, specific time for dismissal, name of person transporting the student, and a telephone number where a parent can be reached or for verification. If the early dismissal is for medical purposes, the request should include the doctor's name and telephone number. The parent/guardian or legal guardian with whom the student lives must meet the student in the office be authorized to pick the child up from school (photo ID will be required). If anyone other than the parent or guardian picks up the student, identification may be necessary before the student is permitted to leave. Early dismissals are excused for the same reasons as excused absences. Early dismissals count as an absence in all classes missed. **NO STUDENTS WILL BE DISMISSED AFTER 2:45 PM UNLESS ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE BEFORE 9:00 AM THAT DAY. This guideline helps reduce the number of interruptions in the later portion of the school day. Any parent wishing to retrieve their students after 2:45 must participate in our carline dismissal. Once dismissal begins, students will not be called to the office. All students will be dismissed via the carline system or parents can wait in the front office until the carline dismissal has concluded.**

Truancy Law

As a parent/guardian, you are responsible for ensuring that your student attends school every day. Therefore, it is important that you know the law and district policy regarding school attendance. In South Carolina, the Compulsory School Attendance Law [Section 59-65-10](#) requires students to attend school daily for the entire school day. The law applies to students who reach their 5th birthday before September 1st, until they reach their 17th birthday.

At Lead Academy, when a student accumulates absences **three** days in a row or a total of **five** unexcused days or 10 excused days at any time during the school year, parent/guardians/guardians may be contacted by the school to schedule a meeting. At the meeting, the parent/guardian and school staff will discuss the reasons for the absences and develop an Attendance Intervention Plan.



If the student continues to have unexcused absences after an Attendance Intervention Plan is developed, the school administration may complete a truancy petition and the parent/guardian/guardian and student will be required to appear before a Judge in Family Court. If the student is placed under a court order, the student and parent/guardian/guardian must follow all requirements of the court order. The school is required to file a contempt of court complaint if the court order is not followed. *Lead Academy has an extensive wait list of students wishing to attend our school. If an enrolled student is not consistently attending school, parent/guardians may be asked to enroll the student in their zoned school instead of continuing to attend Lead Academy, to give other interested students an opportunity to take that spot at Lead Academy.*

Withdrawals from Lead Academy

In the event a student must withdraw from school, the following steps are to be followed:

1. Call or send a note to the front office from the parent/guardian/guardian/guardian.
2. Request a withdrawal form from the front office. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian/guardian/guardian and all of the student's teachers.
3. Return all books and equipment, including textbooks, to the appropriate teachers. Chromebooks, chargers, and cases must be returned to the front office.
4. Clear lunch balances with the front office.
5. Pay all outstanding fees and fines.
6. Return the signed withdrawal form to the front office.



Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Cars

Car riders should load and unload in the designated car loop area only. Students arriving at school before 7:40 am must report to the designated area. For afternoon pick up, all cars must display a dismissal placard supplied by the school, with the student's dismissal number on the card. Any car arriving without a placard will be required to report to the front office with a valid ID for student pick up.

Dismissal will begin at 3:10. Any car riders remaining after 3:40 will be transferred to the late stay holding room and remain there until a parent checks the student out of the building through the front office. Students may not leave with walkers and enter a vehicle in the school car line. Car riders should remain in the pick-up area safety zone.

Students not involved in extracurricular activities, sponsored by Lead Academy should be picked up by 3:40 p.m. There is no supervision provided after 3:40 p.m. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from being here by 3:40 p.m. to pick up your child, then you will need to make arrangements with the main office.

If a student is consistently picked-up after 3:40, then the parent will be notified and provided information for the school's extended day program. Please see the link below and on our website to access more information regarding other Extended Day Programs.

Messages will not be delivered to students regarding changes in transportation unless it is an emergency. Parents should remind their child of any change in transportation for that day before arriving at school. Delivering messages to students causes interruptions during instructional time.

Bus Transportation

Limited bus transportation is available for the 2022-23 school year. Buses will only pick up students at the designated pick-up points, not at students' homes.

- For the safety and security for all students, parents/guardians are not permitted to enter the bus at any time.
- Students are not permitted to video/record other students. All cell phone and technology expectations apply while being transported on the bus.
- Drivers are not permitted to change routes or stops.
- Please do not make requests of the bus drivers or ask too many questions while at the bus stop. Please be courteous to the other families along the bus route waiting for the bus to arrive on time for their children. If you have a question or concern, please contact the school.
- Bus routes typically run late on the afternoon runs during the first couple weeks, until schools and students become familiar with the procedures for the new school year.
- Recording cameras for video and audio are in use on each bus to aid behavior management.



Code of Conduct on School Buses

In order to ensure the safety of all students riding Lead Academy buses, appropriate behavior is required for all students. Transportation to and from school is an extension of the classroom and should be considered part of the school day. Students are required to uphold all Lead Academy expectations while on school buses or vehicles. Violations of school bus rules will be addressed in the manner listed below. The Lead Academy discipline handbook and all of its contents are in effect for all students at all times when being transported on school bus to and from school or school activities. Thus, while students may lose the privilege to ride the bus due to misconduct, the student may also be disciplined according to the school's behavior code. Students must remain in their assigned seat on the school bus at all times unless instructed to move by the school bus operator or other staff member.

Below are the expectations for all students who ride a bus at Lead Academy:

- Remain seated at all times. (No standing, no switching seats, no crawling on the floor etc.)
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Interact with staff and students in a respectful and kind manner
- No cellphones, tablets, or other electronic devices may be used.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum.

Level I Offenses- Disorderly Conduct

- Not sitting or remaining in assigned seat
- Getting on or off the bus at an unauthorized stop without permission
- Standing or sitting improperly while the bus is moving
- Jumping or moving between seats
- General minor horseplay
- Making loud noises
- Littering or making a mess on the bus and not cleaning it up
- Not following staff directions

*** School administration may classify a Level I offense as a Level II offense if the infraction seriously jeopardizes the health and/or safety of others. ***

Level I Consequences

1st Referral- Warning

2nd Referral- In school punishment and/or one (1) day bus suspension

3rd Referral- Suspended from bus for three (3) days and parent/guardian/guardian conference

4th Referral- Suspended from bus five (5) or more days and parent/guardian/guardian conference

Any further incidents may result in permanent revocation of bus riding privileges

Level II Offenses

- Throwing objects out of bus
- Profanity or obscene gestures



- Rude, disrespectful behavior directed at staff
- Vandalism
- Harassing, threatening, or intimidating another student
- Fighting
- Physical contact with another student (hitting, kicking, pinching, slapping, pushing, etc.)
- Stealing
- Other safety violations that may interfere with the safe operation of the school bus

Level II Consequences

1st Referral- Suspension from bus up to ten (10) days and parent/guardian/guardian conference

2nd Referral- Suspension from bus ten (10) or more days and parent/guardian/guardian conference

3rd Referral- Suspension from bus thirty (30) or more days up to permanent revocation of bus riding privileges.

Students going home with friends

If a student is going home with another student, both sets of parent/guardian/guardians are required to send a signed permission note to the office by 9:00 am on the day of the change. Students may not travel with friends on the bus unless all paperwork has been completed for bus transportation.

Late Pick-Ups

There are times when an emergency may prevent families from picking up their student from school. Please inform us as soon as possible of late pick-ups. Students who are not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal must be signed out by a parent/guardian/guardian in the front office. Persistent late pick up will result in a required attendance meeting with an administrator to create a plan for improvement and resolve the issue. If a parent/guardian does not pick up their student within one hour of dismissal, the school will contact the Greenville County Sheriff's Office.

This policy also pertains to school-sponsored events that occur outside of regular school hours, such as athletic events, school dances, etc.

Extended Day/After School

Lead Academy does not currently operate an afterschool program. There are several options for afterschool care programs that currently pick up at Lead during dismissal. These programs are listed below:

Inclement Weather

Should inclement weather affect the normal school schedule, students and parents should tune in to their local television or radio station for announcements about school openings and closings. Lead Academy staff and students come from all across the Upstate. In order to ensure the safety of all stakeholders, Lead Academy follows the Greenville County School System for delays and closures.



If schools are closed due to inclement weather, the school day will not be made up. Instead, Kindergarten through Second grade students will have assignments communicated through Dojo and Google Classroom from their teacher. Third through Eighth grade students should log onto Google Classroom to access their assignments. Assignments are expected to be turned in within five school days to be counted present for that day.

Student Expectations and Conduct

School Culture

Crew

Crew is a daily structure at Lead Academy Monday through Friday, which provides 25-30 minutes of structured academic and social development for students. Lead conducts Crew time because we believe the structure and process allow us to support the healthy development of relationships, provide ongoing and effective academic and social oversight, and create a more effective transition into elementary school, from elementary to middle school, and from middle to high school. In 5th-8th grade, Crew Leaders remain with the same students for each year when possible. Students are known well and supported by their Crew Leader as a point of contact for the students throughout the day.

Crew emphasizes working together to accomplish collaborative success. A crew sails a ship, not a single passenger. The Crew Leader is challenged to balance supporting individuals in their own development, while intentionally working to support the healthy evolution of the entire Crew.

Each day, Crew Leaders plan a purposeful meeting that includes the Elements of Crew support materials, and their own professional creativity. Crew Leaders engage students in enjoyable and meaningful experiences.

Restorative Practices

Lead Academy strives to build the problem solving skills of students by using restorative practice techniques. When an incident takes place that damages the culture of the school or relationships within the school, restorative practices are used to teach the importance of making amends and repairing damage done due to poor choices. At Lead Academy, we will implement many elements of restorative practices that may include:

- Crew - Issues, both positive and negative, will be worked through during crew time.
- Peer Mediation - allowing students to work out conflict with a panel of peers serving as mediators.
- Restorative Circle - panel of the student's support network will gather to help students repair damage done to school culture through restorative conferences. This may include parent/guardian/guardians, teachers, and other students.



Lead Academy utilizes a positive behavior system to ensure that all students are encouraged and rewarded for upholding the principles of: Be Nice. Work Hard. Serve Well. Have Fun. Students are expected to always strive to do the right thing and behave in a respectful manner that enhances Lead Academy's culture. When students uphold the expectations outlined in the Lead Academy Habits of Leadership, the following systems are in place to reward those students:

- Reward Trips and Parties- Students will become eligible for reward trips and parties based on their Habits of Leadership scores.
- EPIC Leader Award - The highest award given to students of Lead. Students are selected by peers, evaluated by all teachers, and must embody the Habits of Leadership in all contexts.
- Other rewards and prizes may be given at any time that is deemed appropriate by Lead Academy staff members.

When students choose not to do the right thing and fail to uphold Lead Academy principles, the following scenarios may occur:

- Classroom interventions - For minor classroom disruptions or failure to follow directions, teachers may use classroom interventions to reduce the problems. These interventions include, but are not limited to: change seat in room, in-class isolation, silent lunch, speak with student outside of class, verbal warning, parent/guardian/guardianal contact, etc.
- Behavior Intervention Request (BIR) - When a teacher has attempted to reduce minor student behaviors but the student continues to not follow the rules, the teacher may request Administrative Intervention. The teacher will fill out a BIR indicating what they have done to try to remedy the situation, and administrators will speak with the student and teacher to problem solve and brainstorm solutions to the problem. parent/guardian/guardians will be contacted and informed of the problem and the plan for reducing future incidents. The plan will be put into place, and if unsuccessful, a new plan will be created or more severe consequences will be assigned.
- Major behavior issues - Referrals will be given for major behavior issues such as: fighting, bullying, profanity, lying, cheating, stealing, harassment, gross disrespect, etc. Consequences may accompany referrals to include, but not limited to: In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), detention, reflective writing, etc.

Actions that result in immediate Office Referrals:

- In off-limits area
- Profanity/obscene gesture
- Destroying property
- Fighting
- Theft or possession of stolen item
- Verbal/physical assault
- Inciting a fight
- Harassment/bullying
- Possession of a controlled substance/weapon
- Vandalism
- Excessive disruptive behavior in class
- Lying



- Forgery
- Cheating

In-School Suspension (ISS)

ISS is used by the administration to remove a student from the classroom, while allowing them to report to school. Parent/guardian/guardians will be contacted if their student receives ISS. Work will be provided by the teachers, and will be completed in ISS for the student to return to class. Students will complete the same assignments that their classmates are completing in the regular classroom. Students will also receive additional work focused on reflecting on their behavior and setting goals for themselves to avoid ISS in the future. Good behavior in ISS is required. Failure to follow the expectations of ISS will result in additional days of ISS.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

OSS is used by the administration to remove a student from the school. parent/guardian conferences are required in order for a student to return to school after OSS. Students who are suspended must make up work missed within one (1) school day.

Zero Tolerance for Weapons Violations

Any Lead Academy student possessing a weapon on campus, on a school-sponsored field trip, or at a school event held off campus, will be automatically referred to the Board of Directors for an expulsion hearing. A weapon is defined as a firearm, knife, sword, razor blade, or any other pre-made or homemade object that could inflict harm on others. Bringing a weapon to school does not guarantee expulsion but it does guarantee a hearing to consider it. A student in possession of a weapon will be suspended from school indefinitely while awaiting a hearing. A hearing will be provided within 15 school days from the time of the incident. Students may not attend any school events or have contact with any Lead Academy faculty or staff during the suspension.

Expulsion

Students may be recommended to the Lead Academy Board of Directors for major disciplinary infractions that place other students or staff in danger such as:

- Weapons on campus
- Drugs or other illegal paraphernalia on campus
- Possession or use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes or vaping devices
- Explicit or implicit threats of violence or harm
- Sexual or non-sexual harassment or bullying
- Assault to staff members or students
- Continuous major behavioral infractions that are not successfully remedied through other interventions or consequences
- Any other violations that need to be considered by the Board of Directors as recommended by school administration.



A student may be expelled for any reason listed in the student code of conduct; for the commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior or the violation of any other written policies, rules or regulations established by the board or the state board of education; or when the presence of the student is deemed to be detrimental to the best interest of the district. Expulsion means the student cannot attend school or be on district or school property, cannot attend any school-related events or activities on or off campus and cannot ride a school bus.

If procedures for expulsion are initiated, the parent/guardian/legal guardian of the student will be notified in writing of the time and the place of a hearing before the board of directors. The hearing will take place within 10 school days of the written notification of expulsion at a time and place designated by the district hearing officer and a decision will be rendered within seven school days of the hearing. The student may be suspended from school and all activities during the time of the expulsion procedures.

At the hearing, the parent/guardian/legal guardian has the right to legal counsel and to all other regular legal rights, including the right to question witnesses in a manner determined by the board of directors. parent/guardians will be notified of the decision of the board within 10 school days.

If a parent/guardian wishes to appeal the decision of the board, a letter should be mailed to the school with attention to the chairman of the board. The letter should detail any new information or considerations they would like the chairman to consider. From there, the chairman will decide within 5 school days whether to uphold the decision of the board or request a new hearing. If a new hearing is required, it will be scheduled within 10 school days.



Bullying/Harassment

Lead Academy is committed to a safe learning environment where everyone is treated with respect and no one is physically or emotionally harmed. Bullying is a serious offense and will not be tolerated in any form at school or school-related events or outside of school hours with the intention to be carried out during school or school-related events.

Bullying is intentional harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student for reasons including actual or perceived race, color, national origin, or disability (including the disability of being infected with COVID-19 or perception of being infected), and involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying means engaging in written, verbal, or electronic expression or physical conduct that results in bodily harm to a student, damages a student's property, places a student in fear of harm, or upsets, excludes, or embarrasses a student. Bullying is a form of persistent aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort.

It is the responsibility of each member of the school community: pupils, staff and parent/guardians to report instances of bullying or suspicious of bullying to school administration. If a student feels he/she is a victim of bullying, the student should fill out a bullying report. A Safety Issue Reporting Form is available in the Lead Academy App and on the Lead Academy website under Student/parent/guardian Links. A paper copy can be obtained from the front office and returned to the front office to be given to the Principal. Consequences and corrective action will be assigned based on the nature of the incident(s).

Student Dress Code Policy

Students at Lead Academy are expected to wear the required uniform every day they attend in person instruction, unless otherwise indicated. In the event that students engage in virtual lessons where a student will be seen on video, students are expected to dress appropriately for a school environment. Inappropriate attire includes but is not limited to clothing with offensive language or symbols and clothing that is overly revealing. There should be no visible underclothing. The dress code policy is subject to change at any time.

The uniform will consist of the following:

- A Lead Academy uniform T-shirt or polo shirt.
- Khaki, navy blue or black pants, shorts, skirt/skort, or jumper. NOTE: Khaki, navy blue or black pants should be tailored material, not jean material. Neat blue/black jeans may be worn on Fridays.
- Students and parents/guardians should make every effort to ensure that uniform shirts and pants are cleaned regularly. Torn or worn clothing should be replaced.

Shirt

- Uniform T-shirts must be worn Monday - Thursday red T-shirt for K-4th grade, dark gray T-shirt for 5th-8th grade.
- On Fridays, students may wear any Lead Academy T-shirt or Lead Academy jacket, including apparel from prior years. These may include field trip shirts, athletics shirts, etc.



- Shirts do not have to be tucked in except as directed by staff for events, field trips or special visitors.
- Shirts should fit appropriately and be neat in appearance.
- Students may only wear **black, white, gray, or red solid-color** undershirts underneath their uniform (short-sleeve or long-sleeve undershirt). Undershirts should fit properly. Hoodies and jackets may not be worn underneath t-shirts.
- Black polo shirts will be worn on field trips and special events when requested by staff. All students are required to purchase the black Lead Academy polo.

Pants/Bottoms

- Khaki (beige/tan), navy blue, or black pants, shorts, skirt/skort, or jumper must be worn Monday-Thursday and on field trips when specified.
- **Tights and leggings cannot be worn alone. They must be covered by the acceptable articles of clothing mentioned above.**
- All bottoms must be tailored style. **No athletic-type pull on shorts or pants.**
- Neat blue/black jeans may be worn on Fridays OR on field trips as directed by staff members..
- Other stipulations for pants include:
 - Purchased by the parent/guardian at a store of your choice
 - Should be free of any designs, embellishments, or contrasting accent colors
 - **Pants and jeans may not contain holes or rips of any kind** (even if material is present underneath).
 - No baggy pants. Pants may not sag and must be worn at the waist. Underwear or undergarments should not be seen.
 - Shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be fingertip length.
 - Clothing should not be tight

Jackets

- **Only** Lead Academy jackets may be worn inside the school building. During colder weather, heavier jackets may be worn **outdoors only**.
- **Lead Academy uniform jackets/hoodies (dark gray design with logo) and may be worn Monday-Thursday.**
- **Falcons athletic jackets/hoodies may ONLY be worn on Fridays**
- Any Lead Academy jacket may be worn on Fridays, including apparel from prior years.
- Exceptions to the jacket policy may be made on very cold days as deemed appropriate by the administration.

Belts

- Belts should be black or brown, solid color with no embellishments, grommets or other items on the belt strap. Chains, pocket watches, or any other accessory should not be attached to the belt.
- Scarves, fabric, and other non-belt material may not be substituted for a belt.



Shoes and Accessories

- No “flip-flops”, sandals, **crocks, or slides**.
- Shoes should not impair the regular form or function of a student’s day at school.
- All shoes, sneakers, or boots should be **enclosed (closed toe)**.
- Socks, tights, or pantyhose must be worn with shoes.
- Any shoes with a heel taller than one inch are not allowed.

Students are not allowed to change attire in order to engage in recess or other activities. This includes shirts, pants, and shoes.

We reserve the right to add to this list or modify the dress code policy as concerns or issues arise.

Uniform Violation Consequences:

- Blatant uniform violations (no uniform shirt or inappropriate bottoms) or consistent violations (e.g., sagging pants for several days) will result in the parent/guardian being contacted immediately to bring the appropriate uniform item to school. The student may be required to remain in isolation until the correct uniform is retrieved from home.
- If a student comes to school without a uniform item and a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to purchase a uniform item to wear, to ensure dress code compliance.
- Repeated uniform violations are seen as noncompliance with Lead Academy’s mission statement and core values and will result in further disciplinary action.

The rationale behind the Lead Academy uniform policy is as follows:

One observable aspect of being a part of our “Crew” is our uniform. We value “teamwork.” Just as members on a sports team are required to wear a uniform to promote unity, so too are scholars of the Lead Academy team. Students often spend too much time and energy concerned with which students are wearing the most popular name brand clothing. If our focus is on developing Leaders, the students at Lead Academy will need to spend their time and energy focusing on their education, not on comparing clothing.

Safety Procedures

Safety Drills

Safety drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Practicing these drills in an orderly fashion promotes safety in case of a real emergency. To ensure safety, remember these basic rules:

Check instructions in each classroom for emergency procedures (posted near the door).

Move quickly and quietly to designated areas.

Listen for teacher instruction.

Misbehavior during a safety drill will result in a disciplinary infraction.



Personal Belongings

Bookbags

Bookbags are allowed for carrying books and materials to and from school, and serve as students' primary means of storage while at school. Bookbags will be subject to search if there is ever a question of safety, weapons or drugs. "Bookbags" are defined as any bag in which materials for school are carried – the regular ones, the smaller "gym bag" type, etc.

Students are not allowed to have the following items on school property:

- Coffee drinks, sodas or strong "energy/power" drinks
- Any illegal substance
- Possession or use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes or vaping devices
- Weapons and toy weapons
- Matches or lighters
- Fireworks
- Stuffed animals or dolls unless designated by teachers specific days
- Blankets
- Nintendo DS, PSPs or any other portable electronic game system, MP3 players, headphones, headsets, or speakers (Bluetooth, etc.), portable radios or televisions, Discman, iPod, no electronic item that accesses the internet, etc.
- Sunflower seeds/snacks/candy
- Cards/Card games
- Toys
- Gum (is not allowed to be chewed at Lead Academy)
- Any other additions made to this list by administration.

Lead Academy prohibits at all times the use of any tobacco product or alternative nicotine product by any person in school buildings, school facilities, on school campus, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by Lead Academy. This policy also prohibits the use of any tobacco product or alternative nicotine product by persons attending a school-sponsored event at any location.



School Issued Materials

Textbooks and Curriculum Aligned Materials

Textbooks, anchor texts, library books and other curriculum aligned materials are issued to students for use during the school year. Scanners/barcodes are used to ensure that books are checked out and turned in by the student. These materials are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Students will be required to pay replacement costs for lost books and damaged materials.

Chromebooks

All students in Grades 3-8 have the option to receive a school issued Chromebook as part of our 1:1 technology initiative. Students and parents/guardians are required to sign the Student/Parent/Guardian Chromebook Responsible Use Agreement included in the beginning of year paperwork before a student will be issued a school Chromebook.

Computer Usage Guidelines

Student Email Guidelines

Upon acceptance of your Lead Academy email account, you agree to the following terms and conditions:

- I will not use email to bully, harass, or threaten other students or individuals.
- I will not use email to send chain letters, viruses, or hoaxes to other students or faculty.
- I understand that email is provided to me by the Lead Academy and is school property. The district reserves the right to access a student's email account at any time if misuse is suspected.
- I understand that my email account is filtered and that any message written that contains inappropriate language or content may not be delivered.

Students may not use any internet platform other than email to communicate. This includes, but is not limited to, creating Google docs as chat rooms, using Google chat, etc.

Violation of this agreement may result in the immediate termination of your student email account and loss of computer privileges at Lead Academy.



Internet Use Policy

Lead Academy uses a network that connects all computers at the school. "Acceptable use" of this network is use that is consistent with the instructional goals of the school.

Lead Academy takes precautions by using filtering software to keep inappropriate Internet sites out of the classroom. Electronic teaching and learning tools and online access are designed to support education. If a student breaks "acceptable use" rules, they may lose the privilege to use both the student Chromebook and/or the Internet. Further disciplinary and/or legal action may be taken at the discretion of school administration.

Treat computer equipment with care and respect. Willful destruction of any computer equipment or software will be considered vandalism, and may warrant the involvement of local law officials. Any written text, graphics or executable files created, downloaded, displayed, or exchanged with another student or teacher must be education-related and not offensive in any way.

Do not use school computers for illegal activities such as planting viruses or hacking. Do not use school computers for commercial purposes. Follow copyright laws at all times. If you have questions about the legality of using software, text, graphics, or music you find online, ask a teacher or media specialist for guidance. Keep your password secret – you will be held responsible for all computer activities associated with your password. For example, if you share your password with a friend and he/she signs on as you and breaks one of the rules outlined above, you may be held responsible.

All online communication must be polite and not threatening or offensive in any way. Lead Academy has the right to review any email sent or received using Lead Academy equipment and email accounts. Email accounts should be used for educational and school purposes only. Do not give out personal information on the Internet. Never give out your phone number, social security number, full name, age, home address, or any other personal information. Students should not store personal or non-school related work.

Please note that parent/guardians may choose for their student not to have access to the internet at school; however, students who do not have access to the internet will not be able to access email or web based programs that teachers may be using in class. Your student has agreed to the terms and conditions of this document upon acceptance of the Lead Academy handbook. Violation of any of the terms or conditions will result in disciplinary action. Please contact the school if you do not want your student to have access to the Internet and email.

Failure to comply with Lead Academy computer usage guidelines will result in computer privileges being taken from student and/or damages paid by student.



ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Homework Assignments

Purpose of homework at Lead Academy:

- At the primary level (K-2nd) the purpose of homework is to begin to develop responsibility as well as to inform parents/guardians about the learning in school.
- At the elementary level (3rd-5th) the purpose of homework is to continue to develop responsibility and time management, to begin to teach study skills and to inform parents/guardians about the learning in school.
- At the middle school level (6th-8th) the purpose of homework is to foster individual responsibility, develop independence in assignment and time management with high school in mind, and to inform parents/guardians about the learning in school.. Middle schoolers are expected to study as well as complete more independent reading, writing, and research.

Homework assignments at Lead Academy will be created with these purposes in mind.

Makeup Work

When a student is absent, all missed work must be completed. It is the responsibility of the student, not the teacher, to arrange for makeup work. The time generally allowed to complete this work without a penalty will be the number of days the student was absent. Upon returning to school, it is the student's responsibility to find out what assignments they missed.

Field Work

Field work is an essential part of the learning process. Students on approved school field trips and approved school activities will not be considered absent from school and must make up any work missed. Students participating in field trips or any other school activities are expected to abide by the same policies as during a regular school day and will be expected to follow uniform dress code procedures determined by the teachers in charge of the field trip. Students must have a signed field trip permission form prior to going on a field trip.

Access to Field Lessons

1. Inappropriate behavior on a school field trip is grounds for not being allowed to attend other trips.
2. Students are expected to be in full uniform in order to attend a field trip.
3. Students who are excluded from a field trip will be given assignments to complete at school.
4. Students will not be penalized academically for not being allowed to participate in a field trip.

Access to Library Resources

In accordance with the guidance of the American Library Association, our library is operated on the belief that we have a role in providing resources that meet the needs and interests of our diverse kindergarten through eighth grade student body. It is not the role of the library to assume the role of parent. Parents have the right and responsibility to determine their child's access to library resources.



For more information on the Lead Academy Library Mission and Criteria, please contact the Director of Academics.

Habits of Leadership

Lead Academy was founded with four basic principles: Be nice. Work hard. Serve well. Have fun. These are our non-negotiables and the “Just Do It” components of our culture. These principles guide everything we do.

We strive to incorporate our four principles into our students’ everyday lives from kindergarten to eighth grade. In order to do this, we established our Habits of Leadership. Empathy, Perseverance, Integrity, and Curiosity, more commonly known as EPIC, are the Habits of Leadership that all community members try to improve upon each day. We believe that these four habits can work both in developing character and improving academics. We hope that after spending time at Lead Academy, all of our students become EPIC Leaders.

Habits of Leadership aim to communicate growth in the character component of our learning to parents/guardians and students. Along with each report card, families will receive a Habits of Leadership report detailing the strengths and weaknesses of each student, highlighting behaviors and choices that do not show up on a traditional report card. In Crew, students will analyze their data, set goals for improvement in their weak areas, and plan to maintain their strong areas. Habits of Leadership will also be used for various awards and acknowledgments around the school.

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, Lead Academy would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student’s teacher—
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your student’s teacher and/or paraprofessional’s qualifications, please contact Principal Curtis Baker, at 864-613-7535.

We welcome and need any and all suggestions and feedback from parent/guardians. To provide suggestions or feedback, a few different methods can be used:

1. Email Principal Mr. Curtis Baker (cubaker@myleadacademy.com)



2. Call Mr. Baker directly at 864-613-7535

All suggestions or feedback will be responded to within 48 hours of receipt.

2021-2022 Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Lead Academy Vision

At LEAD Academy,

- A) A diverse community of students, teachers, and families will be cultivated into leaders.
- B) All students will demonstrate craftsmanship, achieve mastery of knowledge and skills, and model the character of a leader in all contexts.
- C) All stakeholders feel included, supported, and responsible in the leadership growth of others.
- D) Our leaders will be prepared to identify their passion, create opportunities in their lives, and make a difference in their community.

Any scenario in which many people gather together poses a potential risk for COVID-19 transmission. No policy or procedure created can provide a 100% guarantee that the virus will not be transmitted in our schools. Lead Academy's goal will be to limit disease transmission as much as possible.

Our priorities for opening schools are as follows:

- Maintaining the health and safety of our students, employees, and Lead families.
- Maintaining face-to-face instruction as safely as possible.
- Remaining flexible and altering procedures if health issues dictate.



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Introduction

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plans (ARP) Act was signed into law. In it, the U.S. Department of Education is providing an additional \$121.9 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund). This legislation will award grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) for providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the nation.

South Carolina will receive \$2,112,051,487 in ESSER III funds from the Act, with 90 percent being awarded to school districts with amounts determined in proportion to the amount of Title I, Part A funds they received in summer 2020 from funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The remaining funds will be used for state-level activities to address issues caused by COVID-19.

This plan describes how the LEA or district will provide the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction. This report template complies with all reporting requirements of the ARP Act (Public Law 117-2), the [ESSER III](#) grant terms, conditions, and assurances (CFDA Number 84.425U), and the interim final rule established by the United States Department of Education, 86 FR [21195](#).



Overview

This document is the Lead Academy Public Charter School Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. The goal of Lead Academy is to return to normal school operations. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) provided a template with the following thirteen required topics that must be included in the plan in order to meet the federal requirements of the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Rescue Plan (ESSER III).

I. Description of Maintaining Health and Safety.

This document was created with guidance by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), SC State Department of Education (SDE), Governor's Office, and the South Carolina Public Charter School District. Clear and consistent communication with all stakeholders has been and will continue to be a vital component of maintaining health and safety.

II. Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

Students will be allowed to opt-out of wearing masks per South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster's Executive Order No. 2021-34. The staff and student opt-out forms are available on the [DHEC website](#). When the CDC and SCDHEC guidelines change regarding the recommendations for masks in schools, the opt-out form will no longer be necessary.

Face coverings will no longer be required for any student or staff member through the opt-out form, however, masks may be worn by those who feel more comfortable doing so. Face coverings will not be required through the opt out form in any educational space, activity, function, athletic practice/event, etc.

Regardless of the mask opt out form, students should wear masks when in the health room due to COVID symptoms.

Masks are supported if individuals choose or need to wear them and we will support this choice and work through each situation.



III. Modifying Facilities to Allow for Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be implemented where possible and where reasonable.

Parents/guardians and other visitors are allowed to enter the building. Virtual options may also be provided for parent meetings/programs or events when feasible. Lead Academy may limit the number of guests permitted for meetings, programs, or events based on evolving conditions in our community.

IV. Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Lead Academy will continue to encourage good hand hygiene, such as reminding students to wash hands after using the restroom, before meals, etc., and provide access to hand sanitizer in every classroom and around the school.

V. Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation

Touchpoints (i.e. doorknobs, light switches, etc.) will continue to be disinfected on a regular basis. School buses will continue to be disinfected on a regular basis. Teachers and staff will continue to have access to disinfectant supplies, including disinfecting wipes, to clean high-touch areas regularly.

Water fountains will continue to only be used as bottle fill stations. Students are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles or disposable cups will be provided.

VI. Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine

DHEC recommendations will be followed for contact tracing to determine isolation and quarantine criteria for students and staff. Contact tracing will be done by those individuals (nurses and school administrators) who have completed training to perform this duty. For



additional information, please visit the following Website: [Schools & Childcare Centers \(COVID-19\)](#)

VII. Diagnostic and Screening Testing

Students and staff may utilize community testing sites to obtain diagnostic testing and/or screening testing. These diagnostic tests can also be utilized to shorten quarantine as described in the links above. Those who develop symptoms should be tested as soon as possible and must follow the guidance provided in Section VI to return to school.

VIII. Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, Other Staff, and Students if Eligible

Vaccine opportunities were provided through Prisma Health for staff beginning in March 2021 and students in June 2021.

IX. Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect To Health and Safety Policies and Practices

All IEP's will be followed and may be updated to reflect the needs of the students in regard to COVID-19 and special precautions needed.

X. Coordination with State and Local Health Officials

Lead Academy works closely with the SC Department of Environmental Control (DHEC) and the South Carolina Public Charter District to ensure current and effective mitigation and prevention practices are utilized. We also are kept abreast of current infection rates and changes in policies, practices, or executive orders by the Governor's office and the SC Department of Education.



XI. Continuity of Services

As we move toward the start of the school 2021-22, Lead Academy is committed to the belief that every child can achieve at an exceptionally high level, regardless of background or circumstance.

Lead Academy understands that COVID-19 closures and changes have had a significant impact on students' learning, social emotional health, and mental health. Therefore, positions, services, curriculum, and programming will be put into place to provide tiers of interventions towards improving academic and social emotional learning, and to help cultivate emotional resilience with the addition of extra staff.

In addition to the social/emotional health of our students, Lead Academy believes the health and well-being of all our employees is of critical importance. In recognition of this, we have implemented a comprehensive employee assistance program (EAP) for our employees and their families.

Field trips will be reinstated for the 2021-2022 school year. Students, staff, chaperones, parents, and others participating will have to adhere to the guidelines for each location.

XII. Periodic Review

Schools and districts are required to review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023, including seeking public input and taking such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan.

XIII. Public Input

The ARP Act requires that schools and districts make their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan available to the public online and that the plans be in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, are written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that



parent. Before making its plan publicly available, school districts must seek public comment on the plan and develop the plan after taking into account public comment.



The Board of Directors for Lead Academy Public Charter School reviewed and approved the Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan on **July 22, 2021**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

Yes **8**

No **0**

Two absent

Affirmed on: July 22, 2021

By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thomas A. Austin", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

(Signature of Board President)

(Signature of Principal)