

Charleston School District

# First Step

*... high quality early childhood programming...  
PRE-K Ages 3 thru 5*

## Policy and Procedures Handbook



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First Step Pre-K Building

Charleston School District  
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updated July 25, 2022

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## **Philosophy**

Caregivers and parents work together to promote health, safety, well-being and the total development of the child in an atmosphere that promotes creativity and self-esteem.

## **Purpose of the Early Childhood Program**

1. To provide practical training for students enrolled in Child Development Classes, Family Living Classes and Parenting Classes.
2. To provide a site for other classes to perform service-learning activities.
3. To provide a service for teen parent(s) that will enable them to complete successfully the high school experience.
4. To provide a service for patrons within the Charleston School District and/or surrounding areas.

## **Goals as a Child Care Center**

1. To serve the needs of children by providing a safe, healthy environment for pre-school age children.
2. To serve the needs of children by providing a developmentally appropriate/age appropriate program for pre-school children.
3. To serve the needs of parents for childcare and parent education.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

### **Criteria for Enrollment**

#### **A. General Enrollment Requirements**

1. Documentation of Program Eligibility
2. Completed ABC & DHS Applications
3. Copy of Birth Certificate
4. Copy of Social Security Card
5. Copy of Immunization Record
6. Completed Health Assessment
7. Signed Photo Release Permission Form
8. Signed Field Trip Permission Form
9. Signed Parental Consent Form
10. Signed Discipline Agreement Form
11. Secured Method of Payment (if non-ABC)
12. Free/Reduced Lunch Income Eligibility Application Form

**B. Arkansas Better Chance For School Success Qualification Requirements**

Parent/Guardian shall present the following documentation showing:

- Child shall be three or four-years old by August 1, 2022.
- Family earned income does not exceed 200% of Federal Poverty guidelines.
- Child is current or on acceptable catch-up schedule for all required immunizations.

Acceptable documentation for age shall be an official copy of a birth certificate or other record of age. Acceptable documentation of immunizations shall include record from pediatrician or Division of Health. Acceptable documentation of income shall include of one the following:

- Paystubs dated within the past 30 days
- Copy of 2021 W-2 forms
- Copy of 2021 Federal Tax Forms
- Copy of 2021 Schedule C or Schedule F (for self-employed only)

Parents or guardians claiming zero income must produce a copy of current school schedule documenting enrollment in an educational program OR a notarized statement signed by the parent attesting to the fact that there is no earned income.

**C. Priority for Enrollment**

The Director(s) shall determine the priority of applicants based on the following guidelines:

Charleston's **First Step** program serves the following populations in this order of priority.

- Children who are currently enrolled in **First Step**
- Children of community parents

As vacancies occur within the program, they will be filled in accordance with the establishment priorities.

**D. Application & Termination Policies**

Registration begins in April of the previous school year, but applications for the waiting list may be taken at any time. Applications are placed in order based on guidelines above and on the date of application.

The enrollment of a child will be automatically terminated when:

1. Parent gives false or incomplete information about enrollment requirements or fails to notify the Site-Supervisor of changes in student or employment status.
2. Continued enrollment of the child becomes hazardous to the health or safety of the other children only with the approval from ABC.

Should a parent decide to voluntarily withdraw his/her child, a two weeks' notice is required. Notification must be written, dated, and signed by the Director when received. A child who is voluntarily withdrawn before the end of a semester will not be included in the next semester's enrollment. The parent may reapply for the next semester and the child will be placed on the appropriate waiting list.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The center serves families who live in the Charleston School District and/or surrounding area. The Early Childhood Program is open from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, when Charleston School District's classes and semester finals are in session. **No drop-off before 7:45 a.m. Child must be picked up by 3:15.** Children are cared for and given developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn on an individual basis. Creative activities are available on a daily basis. The ECP staff strives to maintain a safe, healthy, and interesting environment. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided for the children. **A child needs to be at the daycare by 8:00 a.m. to eat breakfast. Please notify daycare at (479)965-3100 by 8:00 a.m. so we won't order your child's breakfast if child will be absent or late.**

### **ABSENCES AND WITHDRAWAL**

Attendance is very important. It is also important for the parent to bring the child to school on time, as well as picking the child up on time.

Absences- Any time a child will be absent; parents are asked to *please notify* the center at **(479) 965-3100** by 8:00 a.m. Notification should be given to the Site-Supervisor when the child has an illness so that other parents can be notified if necessary. **The full amount of weekly fees will be charged regardless of absence.** When the center is closed during the week, fees are figured on the basis of the daily rate that each child normally pays.

### **CENTER CLOSING FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

The Center will be closed as appropriate identified by administration personnel to allow caregivers to participate in professional development activities. Parents/guardians will be given adequate notice to secure temporary services.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

The ECP will be open Monday through Friday for every day of classes and semester finals if at all possible. In order to operate, the ECP must maintain a minimum staff ration required by the

Department of Human Services (1 caregiver for every 10 children). In the event that the center must be closed, an announcement will be made as early as possible on the following television station KFSM Channel 5 (Fort Smith). Parents are urged to listen to cancellations before bringing children to the center. Parents can also call the school. If driving conditions should become hazardous during center hours, parents are urged to pick up children as soon as possible. Parents will not be charged for any day the center is closed. If payment has been made, the parent will be reimbursed or given credit for the daily rate.

**Religious Instruction**

23.04.5 Each ABC provider must maintain documentation that it has provided parents and guardians with the following written notice: “To assure that no religious activity is paid or subsidized by public funds or occurs in any manner suggesting governmental endorsement of any religion or message: (a) ABC funds must be used exclusively to support allowable ABC program costs incurred to provide non-religious instruction and activities during the ABC day; and (b) No religious activity may occur during any ABC day regardless of the source of funds used to support the activity.”

**HEALTH POLICIES**

**Immunization Policies**

Arkansas Law and the Arkansas Department of Health require up-to-date immunizations for all children who attend a child care facility. Immunizations not only protect your child, but also protect younger children in the center (who are not old enough for certain immunizations) from being exposed to a disease that your child could carry. For further information, see the chart below. A child will not be allowed to enter ECP without an immunization record that shows the child to be up-to-date or to be currently in the process of receiving immunizations due. After enrollment, when a child receives an immunization, the parent must bring immunization record to the Site-Supervisor so that a copy can be made.

**Recommended Immunization Schedule**

<b>AGE</b>	<b>POLIO</b>	<b>DIPHtheria TETANUS PERTUSSIS</b>	<b>MEASLES MUMPS RUBELLA</b>	<b>HEMOPHILUS INFLUENZA B</b>
2 months	XXXXX	XXXXX		XXXXX

4 months	XXXXX	XXXXX		XXXXX
6 months		XXXXX		XXXXX
15 months	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX
4-6 years	XXXXX	XXXXX		

Daily Health Check- A health check will be made daily by the Site-Supervisor or caregiver in charge upon the child’s arrival. Questions may be asked of the parent concerning any unusual observations of the child in general. If bruises or injuries are present, the parent must sign a statement to that effect. **The child will not be allowed to stay if fever or a possible contagious rash or diarrhea is present. The child will not be allowed back to the classroom until he/she has been fever-free or diarrhea-free for 48 hours. When an antibiotic is prescribed for infection, doctors recommend that the child take the antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to the center.** ECP will follow that guideline unless the parent brings a statement from the physician stating that the child can return sooner. Such a statement will be accepted only when no signs of excludable illness exist. A child who is taking a fever reducing medication will not be allowed to stay without a physician’s consent. The physician should note allergies on the medical form. Advance arrangements should be made for the care of a child when he/she is sick if the parent will be unable to stay home with the child. Parents should call the Site-Supervisor early in the day to report an absence or to ask about symptoms of illness if uncertain about bringing the child. A call may prevent an unnecessary trip to the ECP, because sick children will not be allowed to stay. If contacted to pick up an ill child, promptness is expected. The staff must always have up-to-date information so that the staff will be able to find the parent in the event that the child becomes ill.

**EXCLUDABLE SYMPTOMS**

Parents should keep a child home if any of the following conditions exist:

- **Fever** (at present or within the last 48 hours)  
A child cannot be at ECP while taking Tylenol or another fever reducing medication in order to maintain a normal temperature. **Children with a temperature of 100.4 or more will not be allowed to stay. A child must be fever free for 48 hours in order to return to the classroom.**
- **Diarrhea** (at present or within the last 24 hours) loose stool that cannot be contained within the diaper.
- **Vomiting**
- **Difficult or rapid breathing**
- **Severe coughing**
- **Skin conditions** which have not been diagnosed as non-contagious by a physician; including but not limited to:
  - a. Yellow (jaundiced) eyes or skin

- b. Contagious stages of chicken pox, measles, mumps, or rubella
- c. Head lice (NO NITS), live bugs, or scabies
- d. Untreated impetigo
- e. Ringworm (can return after 24 hours' w/medication or physician release)
- **Red swollen eye(s) and/or eyes with white or yellow discharge, pink eye (until on antibiotics for at least 24 hours or until a physician releases)**

A child should also be kept home if he/she is ill enough for any reason to demand one-on-one care or if he/she is too ill to go outside. (See outdoor policy)

**Covid-19 guidelines per DHS- If your child meets any of the following criteria they will not be allowed to enter the facility, a temperature of 100.4 or above, have had a temp of 100.4 or above in the last 48 hours, have signs or symptoms of Covid -19 which include, fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. If in previous 14 days they have had contact with someone that has had a confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19. We are asking all parents to help us in this process and help us to keep all children and staff safe and healthy. If your child has any of these symptoms, please keep the child home and contact the facility and let us know.**

**Safety measures regarding exposure to Covid-19- We will have to contact the ADH and follow the guidelines given. If we are told to quarantine or close we will then contact parents and start virtual learning until the center is safe to reopen. Our safety measures in place are the guidelines required by the CDC and the ADH, these include daily screenings and use of PPE equipment by staff. If a child starts displaying symptoms of Covid-19 the child will be removed from the other children and the parents will be contacted for immediate pickup.**

Taking Temperatures – At **First Step** Pre-K temperatures are taken using a non-touch forehead thermometer. A child will be sent home if temperature is on or above 100.4 degrees. If other symptoms exist, a child may be sent home with a lower temperature than those stated above. If fever is suspected at the time of arrival, the parent will be asked to wait for a thermometer reading before leaving the child. Again, if a child has been sent home from the classroom with fever they cannot return the next morning (48-hour fever-free condition.)

Toileting Policy- All children should be potty-trained upon enrollment of the program. Pull-ups will not be allowed in the Pre-K, unless a Doctor's note is provided with a medical reason. If a child continually has accidents, we may need to discuss further options. Positive attention will be given to all children during the routine and patience, encouragement, and support will be offered while teaching self-help skills.



## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA affords parent/guardian certain rights with respect to a student's education/medical records. These include certain rights of inspection, review, amendment, and disclosure of the individual student's records under a variety of conditions and regulations. Copies of this act are available for review in each school office. Certain directory information may be released without parental consent such as lists or new releases of honor roll students, rosters of clubs or teams, award-winners, etc. If a parent/guardian does not wish to allow their child's name in any such directory information to be released, they must notify the school in writing.

## **COMPLIANCE FORMS**

Charleston First Step compliance forms are available for review upon parent's request.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

On-going assessments will be recorded for each child. These assessments will include:

- Health Assessments-A physical will be completed by the child's physician before the school year and will include a vision and hearing test, usually done by our public school nurse.
- Developmental Assessment Testing- The Dial-3 Assessment will be conducted each year of preschool. This assessment measures a child's developmental level before beginning school.
- Work Sampling System- The WSS by Pearson Early Learning was adopted as the ABC statewide assessment for children. The purpose of WSS is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments across a wide a variety of effective assessment for early childhood programs.
- Virtual Learning- If we are required to change to virtual learning we will continue to assess your child through this process and will be communicating with parents to help with this process.

## **INFORMATION CHARTS**

Several types of charts are necessary at the center to provide both parents and staff with information that is vital in providing continuity and quality care.

Classroom Information Chart-This chart is filled out by the parent(s) at enrollment and updated as needed by the parent or as requested by the staff. It will be kept in the child's file.

Attendance Chart- Attendance charts for each day are located in a notebook at the ECP site. The parent (or any other person who brings or picks up a child) is required to check the child in and out of the center. Time of arrival and departure, the name of anyone other than a parent who will pick up the child, presence of injury, and signatures must be recorded on the attendance chart. The parent must tell the caregiver or Site-Supervisor if someone who has never been to ECP before will be picking up the child. No one other than a parent will be allowed to pick up a child unless that person's name is included on the Parent Permission Form in the back of the sign-in book. Persons who are not known by the staff will be asked for identification. The attendance chart is a record that must be accurate and complete at all times. Inform these persons of the responsibilities involved, such as checking the child in and out, checking supplies, etc. If another

person frequently has this responsibility, he/she should read this booklet, so he/she understands all aspects of the center. He/she may also attend parent orientation.

Medication Chart- Parents are required to supply the requested information each day that the child is to receive any medication while at the center. Medicine will be given only with written permission of the parent on the medication chart. All information must be written each day that medication is to be administered. If someone other than the parent brings medicine for a child, that person's name must be included on the Parents Permission Form in the child's file or that person must bring a signed statement from the parent that states all information required on the medication chart. Also, the parent should tell the teacher in charge about the child's medication and note on the child's daily chart that the child is taking medication. No medication will be administered without written authorization. Dosages higher than that specified on the bottle or dosages not specified will not be administered without a written statement from a physician. Medication that is not in the original container and/or is not recently dated will not be given. Medication that is brought to the center mixed with food or milk cannot be given. If a parent needs us to give Tylenol, there must be a reason written down. Parents are responsible for making sure that medications go home after school. Any questions should be discussed with the Director.

### **IN CASE OF INJURY**

The staff will care for simple injuries. The parent will be notified at the regular time when the child leaves the center. A written accident report will be given to the parent explaining what happened. In the event that a serious injury is involved, parents will be notified at once, and if necessary, the physician they have designated will be called or emergency services will be called. We must have other persons listed on file to contact in case the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a child comes to the center with a new injury received elsewhere, the parent points out the injury to the caregiver and notes that presence of the injury on a Daily Injury Report Form. An unreported injury found by a teacher after the parent leaves will be recorded on an incident report form. The parent will be asked to sign the report at the end of the day and it will be kept in the child's file; a copy is given to the parent.

### **CHILD'S PERSONAL SUPPLIES**

The parent for each child should supply the following items:

- One or more complete changes of clothing including socks and underwear (replaced as needed and seasonally)
- Outer garments suitable for outdoor play (seasonal)
- A water bottle labeled with the Child's name.

These supplies should be labeled with the child's name and placed in the child's cubby. Parents should check the child's cubby each day to see that supplies are adequate for the following day.

**PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING!** This is a must! Notify the center immediately of any lost items. Found items will be placed in a basket in the reception area.

A basket with each child's personal supplies will be provided at each child's locker for use throughout the day.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY**

The children will go outside everyday unless rain or extreme cold prevents doing so. In cold weather, the time spent outside is adjusted to the temperature, but the children will be taken out if at all possible. Please do not request that your child stay inside. ECP does not have extra staff available to stay in with one child. Cold weather does not cause disease and outdoor play is an important aspect of the ECP program. Please think of the child's comfort and possible daily weather changes when you dress him/her and in planning outer garments to wear or bring to the center daily.

### **ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME**

Parents of older children are asked not to allow a child to bring toys or other items from home, as this causes confusion for the other children, and also because they become mixed up with center toys and may be damaged. Do not send your child eating leftovers from breakfast, as other children invariably want some, too. Also, do not allow your child to bring coins or other small items to the center, as they are easily swallowed by young children and can cause serious medical problems. If your child has a security item, please do allow him/her to bring it to ECP. Balloons are never allowed in the center.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Children enter the transition class the year before they will enter kindergarten. The daily schedule of activities will be posted in the classroom. Slight variations may be made due to weather, special activities (such as parties, special visitors, etc.) and the mood of the children. The transition curriculum also includes everything that happens each day.

### **FOOD SERVICE POLICIES- PRE-SCHOOL**

A caregiver sits at each table for meals and snacks and eats lunch with the Children. Children are never forced to eat or drink. They are required to keep food at the table. Every child who can drink whole milk and eat solid foods will be offered all foods on our menu. Menus are posted on a monthly calendar in the reception area. If a child has a food or milk allergy, or there is another reason that he/she cannot have milk or a food, it must be noted on the medical report that is signed by a physician. If a problem arises during the semester, we must have a signed statement from the physician. The physician must also designate a suitable substitute (especially for milk). If there is a religious reason that a child cannot have a food, the matter should be discussed with the Site-Supervisor. Children will be receiving lunch meals served by the Charleston School District Food Service Program. Reimbursement is received for children unless we have such a statement from a physician in our files. We do participate in this program, which helps us keep

fees at reasonable rate, we have to have each parent fill out an Income Eligibility Application. These are kept in ECP files. They do not affect the weekly fee for the child. The number of children qualifying for free, reduced, or paid meals determines the amount ECP is reimbursed.

Due to Covid-19 each child will be provided individual packaged breakfast and snack. They will be given an individual tray lunch that will be served in the classroom. No guest will be allowed to eat with their children this year. They will eat in smaller groups to help reduce the risk of exposure.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline at the ECP is appropriate to the development level of the children consists of the following statements of intent and action:

1. Children are never punished. Discipline is viewed by all as being directed toward teaching children acceptable behavior and self-control, and helping the children play together safely.
2. Discipline is never associated with food or toileting.
3. Children are never isolated as a disciplinary action
4. Children are never labeled as “bad” or “naughty”.
5. Redirection is the primary disciplinary technique used with children. A child is guided into an acceptable activity and offered appropriate choices.
6. Prevention is the most important technique used at ECP. Teachers are alert to situations that could precipitate a child’s frustration or a dispute between two or more children. When a potential problem becomes evident, children are redirected through a transition activity, through offering children an appropriate substitute activity.
7. An adequate number of materials, equipment, and activities are used as a preventative measure. Duplicate materials are used whenever possible.
8. See Biting Policy

Positive guidance is the rule at ECP. The teaching staff uses verbal direction and guidance that is in positive terms. Guidance is positive yet firm. Children are encouraged to make choices that are positive when offered a choice between two acceptable behaviors, activities, materials, etc.

## **BITING POLICY**

Accident reports are filled out on all bites that leave a mark. If the bite should break the skin, the parent will be notified. Some doctors prescribe a small dosage of an oral antibiotic if the bite breaks the skin and is located on the hand, foot, or head. (Very few bites break the skin.) After a child has bitten 3 times in a day, the parents are called and asked to participate in a conference.

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND THE CENTER**

Communication between parents and the center is carried out in a several ways. Please check the bulletin boards, and signs near the entrance door for general information, which might be posted. Newsletters are printed periodically and should be read by all parents. At least one parent is expected to attend each parent meeting if at all possible. Feel free to let the Site-Supervisor know if you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your relationship with ECP, or if you have suggestions for improvement. At the end of each semester, parent-teacher conferences are offered to discuss your child's progress. Parents will be asked to fill out a written evaluation of ECP at the end of each semester.

Due to Covid-19, parent and teacher communication will take place via classroom phone, private facebook pages, and through seesaw. Important information will also be posted at the doors to be seen during drop off and pick up. We can also communicate with you during drop off and pick up each day. Please check your Childs folder daily for other classroom information.

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

At the time of enrollment, the parent is asked to sign a media release form. This will allow the teachers and/or director to photograph, video-tape, or audio-tape children who attend. This will also permit newspaper releases to be submitted for publication.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are welcome to work with teachers at the ECP site. Anyone wishing to do so should contact the Supervisor. All volunteers must meet licensing requirements.

Due to Covid-19 we are not allowed to have visitors in the building until further notice.

## **Charleston Elementary School Handbook**

### **CES Mission Statement**

We will foster a learning environment with love, encouragement and inspiration.

### **Charleston Elementary Believes:**

1. Every child can learn and wants to learn and deserves to learn.
2. Teacher knowledge and skills are the foundation of progress in the classroom.
3. Self-respect is basic to learning.
4. Teacher attitude and behavior define the classroom.
5. Mutual respect is essential for growth.
6. Participation is necessary for appreciation and recognition.
7. High achievement is expected of teachers and students.
8. Positive discipline brings recognized achievement.

### **Student Creed**

I am a responsible Charleston Elementary student with high expectations. I accept the challenge to do my best today and every day. I know that if my dreams are to be, it's up to me.

### **Teacher Creed**

I am a teacher. I accept the challenge to teach each of you. I believe you can learn. I pursue excellence for myself and for you. I expect great things from myself and you. I cherish and love each of you. I am a teacher. I change the world, one child at a time.

### **BULLYING POLICY**

In compliance with Act 681 of 2003, no CES student will be allowed to bully other students while on school property, on a school bus, at a school bus stop or at any school event. Bullying is defined as any act of one student or group of students who verbally, physically, or in any form or fashion pressure a student or a group of students to the point that they feel threatened or must change their routine to satisfy the student(s) applying the pressure. Students who are in violation of this policy will face disciplinary action as outlined in the discipline policy.

In compliance with Act 115 of 2007, cyber bullying, or the use of computers, websites, the Internet, cell phones, text messaging, chat rooms, and instant messaging to ridicule, harass, intimidate, humiliate, or otherwise bully another student is prohibited.

Person/persons who file a complaint will be not be subject to retaliation or reprisal of any form.

### **ASSAULT**

Assault or threatened assault or abuse of students or teachers will result in suspension or other disciplinary action.

### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS VIOLATING SCHOOL RULES**

Violation of school rules and policies will result in disciplinary action. When this action is not specifically stated for the offense, the disciplinary action may result in:

1. Conference with teacher and principal
2. In-School Suspension (ISS)
3. Suspension
4. Corporal punishment
5. Expulsion

Disciplinary severity will be determined by the teacher or principal based on severity and frequency of the offense. In accordance with Act 472, a student cannot enroll in another school until a suspension or expulsion has expired.

### **RECORDED DISCIPLINE ACTION**

In addition to legally prohibited behavior, students will be disciplined for the following misconduct. Male and female students will be treated equally in discipline matters. (This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list.)

- ❖ Excessive tardiness (defined as more than two (2) unexcused tardies).
- ❖ Unauthorized presence in unassigned areas on the school grounds.
- ❖ Insubordination – refusal to comply with the request of school personnel or gross disrespect to school personnel.
- ❖ Profanity or vulgarity.

- ❖ Disruption of educational process – behavior, action or mode of dress or expression that causes any interruption of teaching and learning.
- ❖ Gambling of any type.
- ❖ Unauthorized entering into another person’s locker, property or school building.
- ❖ Throwing objects on campus, in classrooms, or at school sponsored events, except as authorized.
- ❖ Bringing unauthorized visitors onto the campus.
- ❖ Failure to complete assignments, detention, or other punitive assignments.
- ❖ Any other action or expression detrimental to Charleston Public Schools that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of students and school personnel.
- ❖ Leaving campus without checking out through the office.
- ❖ Using or having possession of tobacco products.
- ❖ Any student involvement in an immoral or illicit act.
- ❖ Behavioral problems are not necessarily limited to the above listed items. A behavior that results in the disruption of school will be dealt with accordingly.

Students should be aware that discipline records are accumulated over the period of time a student attends Charleston Public Schools. Penalties are progressive and become more severe as violations are documented. All students are encouraged to conduct themselves to the best of their ability. In the event of misbehavior or failure to follow the guidelines of the Student Handbook and Discipline Policy, a student may expect one of the following forms of discipline as decided by the Principal:

- (a) Talk with the Principal
- (b) Time Out
- (c) Conference with parents
- (d) Corporal punishment
- (e) Suspension from school
- (f) Expulsion from school

All of the above forms of discipline will become a written record. This is for those students who will have discipline action because of their conduct.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Charleston School District does not discriminate against pupils on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap in its education programs or activities. Federal law prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap.

### **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The use, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal controlled substances (including alcohol) while at school, during any school activity, on school-sponsored trips, or at any school function is strictly prohibited. Not only is this an illegal act but is conduct that reflects badly on the school. The punishment for violation of this policy will be:

First Violation:

1. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.
2. Appropriate law enforcement will be notified.
3. Students will be suspended from school for a minimum of 5 days.
4. Required parental documentation of Drug/Alcohol counseling for not less than 60 days.

Second Violation:

1. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.
2. Appropriate law enforcement will be notified.
3. Students will be suspended from school for 10 days with a recommendation for expulsion for the remainder of the school year.

Students accused under this policy are required to submit to a drug or alcohol evaluation by law enforcement officials to determine influence. Students refusing to submit to this evaluation will receive the drug or alcohol penalty under which they are accused.

Selling and/or distributing of illegal controlled substances will result in a minimum of ten (10) days suspension and possible expulsion.

**TOBACCO POLICY**

Since it is generally understood that tobacco use can be harmful to one's health, it shall be the policy of the Charleston Board of Education that all students shall be aware of the physical/mental effects of the use of tobacco and tobacco products.

Students shall be informed of state laws and regulations regarding the use and purchase of such substances as well as the harmful aspects of the use of such substances. Teachers shall be well informed of their subject matter and use the best instructional material available when teaching about tobacco prevention.

ACT 1555 of 1999 states: Smoking or use of tobacco products in any form on any property owned or leased by a public school district is prohibited. Upon conviction, a violator shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and be subject if a fine of not less than \$10.00 or more than \$100.00.

No student shall possess or use tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia on school property or at school-sponsored events. Also, see dress code policy.

Students are encouraged to seek treatment and or counseling for tobacco and drug/alcohol problems.

Discipline action for violation of the tobacco policy will be at the discretion of the administration.

**DRUG FREE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

The following statement and procedure complies with section 5145 of the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act.



Charleston Public Schools is dedicated to providing a drug-free school for all students. Charleston Public School students are advised that the following activities are prohibited on Charleston Public Schools property or at any Charleston Public Schools function:

1. Use of a controlled substance which includes being under the influence of a controlled substance.
2. Possession of a controlled substance.
3. Distribution (in any manner) of a controlled substance to any person.
4. Manufacture of a controlled substance.

A student of Charleston Public School engaging in any of the above prohibited activities is subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

Agencies in the Charleston Public School area available for drug counseling or drug rehabilitation programs include:

Alcoholics Anonymous Intergroup (central office)	783-0123
Vista Health	866-813-HOPE
Western Ark. Counseling & Guidance Center	963-2140 (Paris), 452-6650 (Fort Smith)

### **FIREARMS POLICY**

According to Act 567, any student bringing a firearm or other type of weapon to school or school event will be expelled for not less than one (1) year.

### **VIOLENT ACTS**

Arkansas law Act 888 requires school administration to report any student who commits an act of violence against any school employee, school supervisor, or another student to be reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation and prosecution. Violence is defined as intense physical force that causes or is intended to cause injury or destruction.

### **CELL PHONES**

Students may carry cell phones and other electronic communication devices, but use of such devices will be limited to before and after school hours. The use of such devices during extra-curricular activities or on school trips will be permitted but shall be limited to necessary communication (travel plans, parental contact, emergencies, etc.) All use of such devices will be controlled by school personnel. Violations of this policy will result in: 1<sup>st</sup> offense: confiscation of the electronic device for 24 school business hours; 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: confiscation of the electronic device for 48 school business hours. The parent will be required to pick up the electronic device; 3<sup>rd</sup> offense; Insubordination-administrator discretion.

## **HEADLICE**

Charleston Schools have a “No Nit” policy. A student found to have the actual head louse or any viable nits will be sent home from school for further treatment. The student may return to school with proof of treatment (empty treatment carton) and a recheck from any school personnel.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

If students or the parents of a student involved in a disciplinary ruling in which they wish to contest the ruling, they must state their complaint in writing to the principal asking that the ruling be changed. If that fails, the appeal must then go to the superintendent, then the Board of Education.

The principal is authorized to suspend students from school for a period of ten (10) days for disciplinary reasons. The student shall be given orally or in writing the nature of his/her misconduct and the reason for and length of the suspension. The parent or guardian will be notified as to the reason for the suspension, its duration, and the manner in which the student may be re-admitted to school.

Students violating federal, state, or local civil codes on school property or during a school activity, may be subject to disciplinary action by the school and by the offended civil agency.

## **PERSONAL SEARCHES**

### **Charleston School District Search, Seizure, and Interrogations**

The district respects the rights of its students against arbitrary intrusion of their person and property. At the same time, it is the responsibility of school officials to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students enrolled in the district in order to promote an environment conducive to student learning, the superintendent, principals, and their designees have the right to inspect and search school property and equipment. They may also search students and their personal property in which the student has a reasonable expectation of privacy, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe such student or property contains illegal items or other items in violation of board policy or dangerous to the school community. School authorities may seize evidence found in the search and disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence found which appears to be in violation of the law shall be reported to the appropriate authority.

School property shall include, but not limited to, lockers, desks, and parking lots, as well as personal effects left there by the students. When possible, prior notice will be given and the student will be allowed to be present along with an adult witness, however, searches may be

done at any time with or without notice or the student's consent. A personal search must not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

The superintendent, principals, and their designees may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to help conduct the searches. Such searches may include the use of specially trained dogs.

A school official of the same sex shall conduct personal searches with an adult witness of the same sex present.

Questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant. If the district makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency due to a court order, the principal or the principal's designee shall make a reasonable good faith effort to notify the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control of the student by court order, or person acting in loco parent's listed on student enrollment forms.

State Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. In instances where the interviewers deem it necessary, they may exercise a "72-hour hold" without first obtaining a court order. Other questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant. Students may be subject to interviews by licensing staff as well.

Board Approved: June 23, 2004

Legal Reference: A.C.A. §6-18-513