

# Scholars' Academy

268 Capuchin Way  
Orange, New Jersey 07050  
Phone (973) 677-4000 Ext. 1801  
[www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us)



Student/Parent  
Handbook

Mrs. Karen Machuca  
Principal

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## **Vision**

“The Orange Public School District commits to provide a safe and caring environment where each student is expected to grow and succeed. We pledge to prepare all students with equitable opportunities for college and career readiness, leading to lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in a competitive global community.”

### ***Orange Public Schools Mission Statement***

- The Orange Public School District in collaboration with all stakeholders is responsible for promoting the academic, social, emotional and personal success of all students.
- With a commitment to academic excellence, the District provides teachers, families, and administrators the tools needed for all students to reach their full potential.
- The District serves all students in our school, acknowledging their unique backgrounds, cultural perspectives and learning styles.
- The District recognizes that curiosity, discipline, integrity, responsibility and respect are necessary for success.
- The Orange School District cultivates a community of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners where students take ownership of the learning process, achieve high standards of excellence, and focus on academics.

## **From Good to Great!**



Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Scholars' Academy family! The Scholars' Academy staff is committed to providing children with a safe and stimulating learning environment that will enable them to excel academically and socially.

This handbook contains basic policies and procedures necessary to maintain a school climate conducive to teaching and learning. It has been updated to address the current adjustments for Covid-19.

It is the responsibility of all students and parents to read this handbook, follow the guidelines, and keep it available for future reference. Our policies and procedures are designed to ensure that children have a positive educational experience at Scholars' Academy.

You will also see that we use the **lighthouse** as a symbol for Scholars' Academy as we believe that all students shine brightly as we all work together to navigate the seas of education! Please follow us on Social Media:

Facebook--Orange Public Schools

Twitter--SAcademy268 #GoodtoGreat #GoScholarsNJ

Wanting the Best for Your Child,

Mrs. Machuca  
Principal

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **“Home Page” and Updated Contact Communication:**

Consistent communication enables all members of the school community to stay updated with the educational journey of students. All staff members have a website for communication and updates about their classroom. Please visit <http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/1625> for the announcements, calendar updates, and a wealth of information to assist with your child(ren)’s education. Please ensure that your email and phone numbers are up-to-date! It is extremely important that phone numbers are updated, and are valid numbers. Phone blasts and emails are used to provide information to parents.

**Should a phone number change, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the new numbers to the office and to the Homeroom teacher as well. Emergency phone numbers must be provided for all students. Parents are required to sign up for ClassDojo as well for school communication!**

### **School Information:**

**Address:** 268 Capuchin Way Orange, NJ 07050

**Phone number:** 973-677-4000 Ext. 1801 Main Office

**Fax:** 973-678-6956

**HOURS OF OPERATION and SCHEDULING:** Due to Covid-19, our standard hours of operation have been modified.

## **RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN**

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
9/8/2020 to 10/2/2020 All Virtual	10/5/2020 to 11/25/2020 Remote synchronous (live) learning Staff will report to school and will teach from their classrooms	11/30/2020 to 12/23/2020 Soft opening for identified students only	1/4/2021 to 6/2021 Full entry on site learning (staggered schedule) Children will be in Cohorts as indicated below.

Monday and Tuesday (Classrooms/Cohorts Room 104, 105, and 108) no more than 8 children in each cohort)

- Cohort 1 will be in school from **8:45 am to 11:15 am** (1/2 of the children in classrooms 104, 105, and 108)
- Cohort 2 will be in school from **12:30 pm to 3:00 pm** (other ½ of the children in classes 104, 105, and 108)

**Wednesday – is a cleaning day, staff professional development, planning, office hours – students will be learning remotely**

Thursday and Friday (Classrooms/Cohorts 103 and 107) no more than 8 children in each cohort)

- Cohort 3 will be in school from **8:45 am to 11:15 am** (1/2 of the children in classrooms 103 and 107)
- Cohort 4 will be in school from **12:30 pm to 3:00 pm** (other ½ of children in classes 103 and 107)

\*Note: Siblings will be placed in classrooms/cohorts on the same day.

### **District and School Calendars**

The district calendar is available on the district website at [www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us). Our school calendars will be published monthly and provided to all students as well as available on our school website. It is important that our parents and students keep both posted in a safe area and reference them on a regular basis to ensure you are aware of school events and closings. **Parents are expected to sign up for ClassDojo as this is another daily communication we use to keep parents informed. Specific information about how to join Scholars' Academy will be distributed from the classroom teachers.**

## **PROGRAM DESIGN: PRESCHOOL**

**PROGRAM DESIGN:** The State of New Jersey supports full day/full year education for all three and four year old children in specific school districts. The Orange Township Public Schools offers a FREE six hour educational program in our district's public schools as well as the neighborhood childcare facilities. Before and aftercare services are available as well, however, there are associated costs, please see page 11 (Before & Aftercare) for additional information. This mixed delivery system allows families greater flexibility in choosing the school/center that works best for the family. However, placement at the schools/centers is on a first come first basis. Every effort is made to place your child at your school of choice. If there is no space at the school of your choice at the time of registration, we will work diligently to place your child at a school/center of your second choice. Your child will then be placed on a transfer waiting list for the first choice school and you will be notified as to when space becomes available.

- Transportation – There is no transportation provided; however, preschoolers identified as preschool disabled are eligible for transportation services provided by the district's Department of Special Services.
- Potty Training – Your child does not need to be potty trained to begin school. Teachers will work with families to assist with this process. If your child is not yet potty trained, you must

provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing at all times. You must also provide the diapers and wipes needed.

- Uniforms – They are optional in district preschool classrooms. Some of our private providers do require uniforms. If your child attends a site that requires uniforms, you will receive information about what your child should wear to school from the Director. Refer to additional information regarding clothing in this handbook.

**SUPPORT STAFF:** Besides the instructional staff, the preschool department has support staff to assist with the implementation of the program. The support staff includes:

Fiscal Specialist – is responsible for monitoring each contracting private provider and/or Head Start agency for compliance with the preschool program contract; track and report teacher certification information; 8 monitor expenses and review quarterly expenditure reports and provide financial management assistance to contracting private providers and Head Start in developing and monitoring their annual budgets.

Teacher Coaches – they work directly with the instructional staff and they model, coach, informally observe using structured observation instruments and provide feedback to teachers to assist with the implementation of the comprehensive curriculum and the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists (PIRS) – they work directly with the instructional staff to deliver preschool age-appropriate services designed to decrease referrals to special education and to maximize general education classroom teachers' ability to support all students. They visit classrooms to observe, model, provide feedback and make recommendations about appropriate strategies, classroom modifications and the selection of adaptive materials to address the needs of children with challenging behaviors or potential learning difficulties.

Social Workers and School Counselors– they collaborate with all relevant preschool instructional staff, administrators and support personnel to support the school district family services program. They also coordinate resources for families, review child needs, and provide parent involvement programs to help parents learn how to support their child's learning.

Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) – this person is responsible for coordinating the Preschool through Grade 3 Early Childhood Advisory Council which reviews the implementation of the preschool program and supports transition as children move from preschool through grade three.

Nurse – are responsible for the basic health services for all enrolled preschool children. These services include but are not limited to: vision, hearing, dental, height and weight screenings, maintenance of records pertaining to immunizations, physical examinations and other records. They also provide family education and communication that are designed to meet the health and social service needs of the children.

**ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES:** children must be 3 years old or 4 years old by October 1st of the current school year and all families must reside in the city of Orange. Preschool registration is held throughout the school year. Please call the Orange Early Childhood Center for dates and times: 973-677-4000 ext. 1904, 1918 or 1903. The following is required at the time of registration:

- A current lease, mortgage statement, deed, water bill, tax bill.

- Two additional proof of residency: i.e. utility bill, bank statement, cable bill, current driver's license, or current car insurance card, or current car registration, current pay stub, medical insurance bill, and state benefit statement or public assistance document.
- Birth certificate (original)
- Child's immunization record

**ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE:** Arrival and departure are busy times during a school day; therefore, parents are asked to walk their children to their classroom and sign them in each day.

Upon arrival it is very important to follow the morning classroom routine every day. This provides your child with a sense of security. The school must be able to contact you at all times. At the time you sign in, please provide a working phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. If there are any changes to your address and phone numbers please notify the school social worker or counselor immediately. Also please keep teachers informed about your child's health, mood, eating habits, family situation, or anything you think might affect your child's behavior at school. When it is time for the person dropping the child off to go, tell the child you are leaving, and say, "Good-bye". If your child is having difficulty separating, signal a teacher for assistance. Feel free to call us later if your child is upset when you leave, and we will let you know how he or she is doing.

Departing the school is very important. Children will only be released to parents and authorized individuals whom the parents have included on their emergency pick up cards. Parents are encouraged to include on their emergency cards the full names of all individuals that will be allowed to pick up their child. No phone calls will be accepted from parents informing us that someone that is not on the emergency card will be picking up the child. All individuals picking up children must have a picture ID available to show the teacher if it's their first time picking up the child (the name on the emergency card must match the name of the ID). Please note that we are not allowed to release the children to anyone who is not on the authorized pick up list or anyone under 12 years of age.

Arrival and departure procedures are designed to allow for safe social distancing. Families will be asked that the designated drop-off and/or pick up person not be a "vulnerable" person (older person such as grandparent or person with a serious underlying medical condition). We are also asking that only one family member drop off/pick up children to reduce the number of people in the building and reduce the risk of exposure. Families should try as much as possible to have the same adult drop off and pick up students. We will have designated check-in staff (support staff) at each entrance wearing proper PPE in the morning and afternoon to expedite signing in and out. All family members dropping off or picking up must wear a face covering. We would like family members to have their own pens to sign in and out. If we supply a pen, it must be cleaned by the designated check-in staff member before another person can use it. Each classroom will have a designated entrance for drop off and pick up.

Arrival and departure within the virtual classroom is equally important. Students should log in on time, keep their microphones muted until instructed by the teacher, ensure they are dressed appropriately for online instruction, and have their school materials ready. They should be in a learning space to focus on instruction from the teacher.

## **Drop-Off Procedures**

Check-in staff members (support staff) will be required to stand at their assigned post for arrivals to conduct visual assessments such as cough or shortness of breath and to take the children's temperature before they go to class. If the temperature is below 100F, the staff member will take the student to his/her classroom. Staff, family members, and children must wear face coverings while in the building. The school will supply disposal masks in the event that staff members or children forget to bring one from home. Family members must sign children in printing their full name, working phone number, and time signed in.

## **Pick-Up Procedures**

Check-in staff members (support staff) will be required to stand at their assigned post for dismissal. Teachers will bring the children to the designated pickup and staff member designated for that area to sign children out and everyone must wear a face covering/mask. Family members must sign children out using their full name and time signed out.

## **Designated Arrival and Departure Areas**

Entrance Area 1 which is the main door will be designated for classrooms 103 and 108 (these classrooms will be in session on different days)

Entrance Area 2 which is the back door entrance will be designated for classrooms 104, 105, and 107 (these classrooms will be in session on different days)

**ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS:** In order for children to obtain the full benefits of the program and reach their greatest potential, it is important for them to engage in the learning process whether virtual or face to face. If our child is absent, please call the school. If your child is absent more than three consecutive days due to illness, you must provide the school with a note from the doctor. Attendance is equally important during virtual learning. Please be sure that you and your child engage in all activities during the virtual learning schedule. If your child cannot participate on a given day, please inform your child's teacher right away. If we do not hear from you or if you do not engage in the learning process during virtual learning for three consecutive days, our social workers will reach out to you to ensure the health and safety of your family. We will work with you to help you find resources needed for better engagement with virtual learning.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school on time each day and that they are picked up on time each day. Your child is late 15 minutes after the start of the school day. If your child is excessively absent or late, a meeting will be required with the school social worker and principal.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS:** Announcements of school closings or delayed openings will be broadcast through the district's automated phone system, as well as your local TV stations and on the district's website: [www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us). It is important that your phone number remains current and that you answer the call whenever it is made. **Again, updated contact phone numbers are**

**essential.** A message will be posted via ClassDojo and other social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information gathered about a child is kept confidential. Records are kept in a secure area with limited access except by authorized personnel.

- Information obtained and collected by the program will be shared with other staff only on a “need to know” basis.
- Practicum students are not included in discussions of children and assessment/screening results unless the information is relevant to the practicum experience.
- Parents and guardians may ask to view screening and assessment results through asking the classroom teacher.
- All information compiled during screenings and assessments will be used to promote the healthy developmental growth of the child.
- No information shall be shared with an outside agency without the written consent from the parent or legal guardian.

**BEFORE AND AFTERCARE:** Norjenes Day Care Center offers before and aftercare services for in district preschoolers only. Childcare vouchers are accepted. Please contact the Executive Director for more details regarding hours and availability.

Contact Information:

Norma Adams, Executive Director  
95 South Essex Avenue  
Orange, NJ 07050  
973-677-4299

In addition, the district is working with the YMCA to assist with providing childcare as well. The YMCA will provide families with payment information.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY NURSES:** The Orange Board of Education employs a full time nurse to care for the needs of the students’ immediate health concerns. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date health records including immunizations, physicals and emergency information on every student. In addition, the nurse is responsible for taking the height and weight of the students as well as the following screenings: hearing, vision, blood pressure and dental. The nurse is also responsible for demonstrating proper hand-washing and tooth brushing techniques as well. In addition, the nurse will monitor students with any Covid-19 symptoms and ensure that proper PPE is administered to staff and students. The nurse information:

Linda Vicci, RN, BSN  
973-677-4000 Ext. 1806

**IMMUNIZATIONS & ANNUAL PHYSICALS:** It is mandated by the State of New Jersey that the school have complete immunizations on record for every student in preschool. The nurse will do an immunization review upon registration and early in the school year to ensure our records are up-to-date. If your child requires further immunizations, the nurse will send a letter home with the specific vaccines needed. If your child is not current with his/her immunizations, the school may be

forced to exclude your child from school until he/she is current. Students must also have a Universal Child Health Record filled out by a pediatrician which is based on their annual physical examination.

As of September 2008 the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services has mandated additional vaccines for children in preschool:

- Influenza Vaccine: This is for children 6-59 months attending any child-care center or preschool facility on or after September 1, 2008. They must receive at least one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.
- Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV): Every child 12-59 months of age attending a child care center on or after September 1, 2008 must receive at least one dose of PCV on or after their first birthday.

**MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION:** if your child is sick and needs to take medications, we hope that the medications can be given at home, either before or after school. However, in the event that your child needs medication during the school day, our policy is that you must have your doctor fill out a "Permission to Give Medication in Childcare" form before our nurses can administer the medication. We ask that you give at least one dose to your child at home to ensure that there are no allergic reactions or side effects. Please note that even if the medication is over the counter medication, we will need a form filled out by the doctor. These forms are located in your child's school/center. In order for medication to be administered in school, it must be in the original prescription bottle and clearly labeled with the following: child's name, name of medication, dosage, the date it was prescribed, times to be given, the child's name and doctor's name. We can only give medication to the specific child the prescription was intended for. If your child has asthma, they may be in school as long as we have the proper Asthma Action Plan filled out by the doctor and have the proper medication to administer if needed. Every school/center has a nebulizer if needed. You would need to provide a mask, tubing and medication in a clearly labeled prescription box.

**INCIDENTS & ACCIDENTS:** If the child is injured during the day, the preschool nurse will be called to examine the child. The nurse will care for the child and contact the parent as needed. If we cannot contact a parent, we will call the emergency contact. The emergency contact must be someone who will be available in case of mild illness, to provide temporary care for a sick child, and has transportation to the school/enter. A report will be completed and given to the parent or person picking up the child. In case of a medical emergency beyond that of the preschool nurse, 9-1-1 will be called immediately and an ambulance will take your child to the nearest hospital if necessary. The school will need a signed permission form for staff to act in your absence in case of an emergency. You will be contacted immediately and will meet your child at the school or the hospital. A preschool nurse or staff member will accompany your child to hospital. A report will be completed and given to the parent in this case as well.

**ILLNESS & EXCLUSION:** Should your child become ill, please take precautions to ensure that we do not spread the illness to others in the school/center. Once your child is symptom-free, or has a doctor's note stating the diagnosis, length of recovery time and the date, the child may return to school. Children who have been diagnosed with the following or have related symptoms prior to a diagnosis may not come to school:

- A runny nose with a discharge that is green, the child should be taken to the doctor to rule out infection
- Ringworm which is a fungus causing a small, round, itchy, red, flaky patch that is highly contagious. If the doctor diagnoses your child with ringworm, he/she may return to school with the appropriate doctor's note 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Lice which are also very contagious, they are small insects that attach eggs called nits to the hair shaft. Students will be excluded until they have treatment, examined before returning to class and parents should bring in the empty box of medicated shampoo used for lice treatment to show school nurse/teacher.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): If a child is diagnosed by the doctor with pink eye, they must remain home for 24 hrs after the first treatment of antibiotic eye drops so they are no longer contagious.
- Bed Bugs: If your child has many bedbug bites on their arms and legs, the school nurse will call to see if there is a known problem at home and will help by calling our district exterminator to test the classroom as well as the home. The exterminator along with the Department of Health can then help notify the landlord of necessary treatments.
- Chicken Pox
- Whooping Cough
- Measles
- Scabies
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Scarlet Fever
- Diarrhea: more than 2 loose stools, child will be sent home and cannot return for 24 hrs.
- Vomiting: Child will be sent home and must remain home for 24 hours after vomiting stops.
- Fever over 100 degrees: child will be sent home and must remain home until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours.

#### **ADMISSION/EXCLUSION DUE TO SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS (COVID-19)**

- Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our school. If families have any doubts about their child's health, they must call 973-677-4000 ext. 1906 to speak with the school nurse. If children appear to be sick or have any of the above symptoms while at school, the school nurse will notify the family immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification.
- The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication. Children must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning. In the event that a child is sent home with one of the above health concerns, he/she will not be permitted back to school without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.
- Permission for a child to be administered medicine in the school must be approved by the physician and completing a medication form. Medications for maintenance will be

administered throughout the day as required. The medication must be given to the school nurse in its original bottle, which contains the pharmacist's directions. The medication log must be signed by the parent at this time and will be kept on file. Children will be given their medication according to the prescription specifications only.

- If a child is showing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) OR if a family member was in close contact with someone testing positive for COVID- 19, we will ask the family to keep the child home for a minimum of 14 days.
- We ask that all family members and staff inform us of any potential exposure immediately. A potential exposure means being in close contact (within 6 feet) of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID- 19 for at least 10 minutes. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Superintendent and follow district process and procedures while informing our parents.
- We will safely and respectfully isolate children who show symptoms related to COVID-19 in our established isolated space (near the nurse's office). Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Students and employees may be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, based on CDC guidance, that is not otherwise explained:
  - A fever of 100° F or greater
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

### **HYGIENE MEASURES AND PROCEDURES (COVID-19)**

There will be signs for social distancing and proper handwashing throughout the building.

Scholars Academy staff will routinely clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, tables, etc.) before/after use (in the classrooms and offices). Cleaning procedures include two stages: cleaning, which removes dirt and germs from surfaces, and disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning.

Scholars Academy staff will ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection supplies, including storing products securely away from children, and ensuring appropriate ventilation so students and staff are not exposed to toxins or fumes.

1. Handwashing: As soon as students arrive to the classroom, they will wash their hands properly. Hands will also be washed throughout the day and more frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be used when soap and water is not available. Sanitizing stations are located throughout our school.
2. Sanitizing/Disinfecting: All hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day, before and after use as well as at the end of each day. Any toys that go into a child's mouth will be put into the disinfecting process as usual. All surfaces and toys will be sprayed at the end of the day. All sensory bins, soft toys, pillows, dress-up clothes will be put away during this phase of opening.
3. Mask wearing: children will be expected to wear a mask when they enter/exit the building, when using the bathroom (only classrooms that do not have a bathroom), while walking in the hallways, on the playground and when they cannot practice social distancing. While in their own classroom – they may remove the mask and place it in their personal book bag. Staff are expected to wear a face covering throughout the day (with breaks) unless health reasons prohibit the wearing of a face covering. The district will purchase a face shield for all staff.
4. Plexiglas shields: shields will be provided for secretaries and security guards. Each student in the district will have a trifold type desk shield.
5. Social distancing: Each class is considered a “family.” Each “family” will socially distance from other “families” to assure safety. Children will not need to wear a mask when they are in their “home” (classroom). Classes will not intermix and will be with the same teachers as much as possible. Also, children are prohibited from wearing a mask during naptime.
6. Potty Training: A school district with a state funded preschool program cannot mandate that preschool students be potty trained prior to program enrollment (this includes preschool contracted providers and Head Start). The only requirements for enrollment in a state funded preschool program are age and residency within the school district. Eligible children cannot be denied enrollment into the preschool program, nor can they be removed from the program due to the lack of potty-training skills. Teachers and support staff will utilize all safety precautions when changing children. Due to the pandemic, extra precaution will be taken as teachers will be provided with a face shield, disposal gloves, and disposal gowns to protect their clothing. Children must wear a mask while being changed (see page 21). Teachers will dispose of the gloves and gowns after changing each child and will wash their hands properly and thoroughly.

### **SCHOOL CLEANING PRACTICES (COVID-19)**

Our school will adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. Scholars Academy has a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects.

- Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:

- o Classroom desks and chairs
- o Classroom sink handles
- o Countertops
- o Lunchroom tables and chairs
- o Door handles and push plates
- o Handrails
- o Kitchens and bathrooms
- o Light switches
- o Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment)
- o Buttons on vending machines and elevators
- o Shared telephones
- o Shared desktops
- o Shared computer keyboards and mice
- o Drinking fountains
- o School bus seats and windows
- o Sign in/out materials (e.g. pens, paper)

Bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily and between use as much as possible.

- Regarding bathrooms:
  - o Scholars Academy will avoid crowds in the bathrooms by limiting the number of students who can enter at a time.
  - o Scholars Academy has open trash cans to avoid children touching the lids
  - o Doors are open to avoid touching handles

Scholars Academy has a process and schedule for the routine cleaning and disinfecting of furniture.

- Classrooms have EPA-registered disposable wipes for teachers and staff to wipe down commonly used surfaces before use (e.g., keyboards, tables, etc.)

The Scholars Academy building will be cleaned and disinfected after a person has been identified as COVID-19 positive.

**ALLERGY PROCEDURES:** When children are diagnosed with an allergy or there is a known allergy at the time of enrollment the parent must notify the school with a written doctor's statement. This would include food or other allergies (such as bee stings). If there is a doctor's plan for the care of the child due to the allergy, this must be given to the school and must have the doctor's signature. A Food Allergy Action Plan should be completed by the doctor. If, for any reason, your child cannot eat a certain food, please provide a written notice from your physician and discuss this issue with your child's teacher and school nurse. If your child is prescribed an Epi-Pen for the specific allergy, you must provide the school nurse with one to keep in the classroom with the proper prescription label and proper documentation filled out.

**NUTRITION & WELLNESS:** The preschool centers/schools provide breakfast, lunch and a snack each day. The State of New Jersey requires each family to complete the lunch form which will be

given out the first day of school. Please make sure that you inform the teacher and nurse of any allergies specific to food. In keeping with the Orange Board of Education District Wellness Policy, we encourage healthy foods and we want the children to make healthy food choices. Therefore, please do not send your child to school with candy, soda, sugar drinks, gum, etc. Instead opt for fresh fruit or vegetables, 100% fruit juice, water, low fat 13 cheese, rice cakes, yogurt, etc. **Due to many children with food allergies, especially peanuts, we ask that you also avoid sending in anything with nuts.**

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS:** While in this phase of operation, children may not bring in any personal belongings aside from what is approved. No toys or personal items from home will be permitted at this time. Bedding will be sent home on the last day of each week, and it is **mandatory** that bedding be laundered before returning the next week. Bedding will be stored in large plastic bags for health and safety reasons. At this time, bedding will not be needed at school since nap time will occur at home.

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:**

- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted by all phones.
- The parent/guardian provides, in writing, the names and phone numbers of persons to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.
- In case of an emergency, a faculty/staff member may go with the child to the emergency room and remain until a parent/guardian arrives.
- Nurse/Staff will report in writing any injuries that may occur while the child is in school.
- Nurse/Staff will notify the parent/guardian of any injury requiring first aid treatment.
- Fire drills and safety drills are practiced once each month.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room.
- The school nurse is CPR and First Aid trained. Each year, training in CPR and first aid are made available to staff at no cost to the individual. Classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are required to have the training.
- Each classroom will have a first aid kit and a fanny pack (portable first aid kit). The fanny pack is to be taken with the class whenever leaving the room for outdoor play or taking a “field trip”. It will contain the following items: CPR Mask, gloves, antiseptic wipes, and alcohol wipes, antibiotic ointment, band aids, gauze pads, Kleenex, paper towels, germ-x, a class roster with emergency information as well as any specific medications the student may require (i.e. asthma inhalers, epipens, etc.).
- Children are supervised at all times and appropriate child: staff ratios are maintained.
- Teachers move throughout the play yard to ensure adequate and appropriate supervision.
- The playground is monitored closely for safety and improvements.
- Medicines are stored out of children’s reach and administered only with written permission of parent/guardian.
- Individuals who serve food wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Cleaning supplies are stored out of children’s reach.
- Teachers/Nurses complete documentation for accidents, incidents, and health-related situations. Parents receive copies of accident/incident forms.
- Universal precautions for blood-related accidents and incidents are followed.

- Latex “free” gloves are available in each room for emergencies.
- Toys are checked frequently and broken toys are discarded.
- Teacher-child ratio is adjusted for field trips to ensure that there is a higher ratio of adults to children. • On field trips children must stay where teachers can see them at all times and vice versa. \*For safety reasons, no field trips will occur for the 2020-2021 school year\*
- Health and safety information is incorporated into the curriculum and taught to the children on a regular basis.
- Anti-bullying and character education are built into the preschool curriculum.

**GRAB AND GO MEALS:** The District continues to provide packaged ‘Grab-and-Go’ breakfast and lunch, during all virtual/remote phases at no cost to families, at multiple locations for pick up. The selected locations are

- OECC (includes students from Cleveland Street School), located 397 Park Avenue
- Scholars Academy, located at 268 Capuchin Way
- Forest Street School, located 651 Forest Street
- Heywood Avenue School, located at 421 Heywood Avenue
- Lincoln Avenue School, 216 Lincoln Avenue
- Oakwood Avenue School, located at 135 Oakwood Avenue
- Park Avenue School, located at 231 Park Avenue
- Rosa Parks Community School, located at 369 Main Street

Please be advised that all locations will host the breakfast/lunch grab and go program from 7:30 AM until 1:30 PM; Monday through Friday. Students may pick up their meal from any of the locations listed above.

**Social distancing as well as the wearing of a mask is required when reporting to all locations. It is important to note, once students receive their breakfast/lunch grab and go bags it is the expectation to return to their respective homes.**

**CHILD ABUSE:** Mandated Reporting – As professionals in contact with young children and their families, we are required by law to report children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors; as well as day care/child 14 care workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is our policy to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone.

**GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE:** One of our goals is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behavior guides the staff in their interactions with children. The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in our schools/centers.

**SMOKING & CELL PHONES:** Smoking is not permitted on or near school grounds and cell phones cannot be used while in the schools and classrooms.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF:**

- ★ All preschool teachers are NJ Licensed Teachers holding a Bachelor's Degree and a NJ Preschool Grade 3 Teacher's Certificate. Relief Teachers hold the same credentials as the teachers. They travel from classroom to classroom throughout the school day and cover the classrooms when the teachers are on their planning time which occurs each day for 45 minutes. Relief teachers assume all responsibilities as a teacher when she/he is in the classroom.
- ★ All preschool paraprofessionals must have at least 48 college credits or have passed the NJ Paraprofessional Exam.

**THE CLASSROOM:** Class size is limited to 15 children with a certified classroom teacher and paraprofessional. The district uses a mixed age delivery and inclusive approach. Preschoolers have a 6 ½ hour day from 8:30 am - 3:20 pm, breakfast, lunch, snack and a rest period of an hour included, however, our schedules have been modified to accommodate the safety procedures regarding Covid-19.

**INCLUSION:** Inclusive education teaches all children teamwork and how to relate and function together with others with different abilities. Students learn to value diversity, see the ability of others to contribute, and inclusion also gives children a sense of unity. Preschool Inclusion teachers work in the classroom to provide special education services to children with disabilities. They collaborate with and provide strategies to the regular education teachers to ensure the children's individual goals are being met. They provide extra support and change the curriculum in order for children with disabilities to function in a general education setting. The Inclusive Teaching Model is where the Early Childhood teacher implements classroom activities and lesson plans from the district curriculum and plans with the inclusion teacher for adaptations and modifications for children with special needs. All related services such as Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy or Physical Therapy are strongly encouraged to occur in the child's classroom.

## **THE CURRICULUM: PRESCHOOL**

**THE CURRICULUM:** The Orange Early Childhood department which includes Scholars Academy uses one of the approved curriculums from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). High Scope is a research based curriculum that began in Michigan over 40 years ago. It is a curriculum focused on Key Developmental Indicators, which are fundamental developmental capabilities. The indicators focus on all areas of child development. Teachers utilize both the KDI's which are aligned with the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning State Standards and the Common Core to develop lesson plans. Every lesson is structured around Math, Science and Reading. This curriculum also provides a daily routine schedule which enables the child in that he/she can visually see and follow each step throughout the day. Children "learn by doing," often working with hands on materials and carrying out projects of their choice. The adults working with the children see themselves more as facilitators or partners rather than managers or supervisors. They help the child to learn at the level he/she is most

comfortable and always looking for opportunities to challenge the child. In a High/Scope classroom the five ingredients of active learning are present: materials, manipulation, choice, child language, and adult scaffolding which are instrumental for teachers in meeting the needs of all children. The Early Childhood Program uses the High/Scope Growing Readers Early Literacy Curriculum for its focused approach to literacy instruction and the High/Scope Numbers Plus Curriculum for mathematics.

**VIRTUAL LEARNING:** Scholars Academy will use google classroom to provide instructions for lessons/activities, to model lessons/activities, to conduct assessments, and to answer questions. Classdojo will be used to share information, lessons, resources, and for one-on-one communication between families and the school. The portfolio feature of the classdojo will be used for communication and assessment documentation.

Online learning experiences occur in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere during the learning process and interact with teachers and other students.

One of the keys to ensure effective online education is active learning. To provide online active learning, the following two learning modes can be applied.

1. Synchronous online learning is a more structured learning strategy, where the activities/lessons are scheduled at specific times and in live virtual classroom settings. In this way, students benefit from real time interactions
2. Asynchronous online learning does not provide live classes, students are working on activities and lessons independently and at their own pace.

Time	Activity	Type of Learning
8:30 am to 9:00 am	Breakfast time preparation/set up for the start of the school day (be sure that all technology is charged up and that materials and supplies for the day are ready in advance)	
9:00 am to 10:00 am	Greeting Time and Message Time – live instruction for children who are at home Read Aloud (story, discussion, questions)	Synchronous--Live with teacher video
10:00 am to 11:00 am	Work time children must be given activities to do on their own	Asynchronous--Independently
11:00 am to 12:00 pm	Large Group Time: music and movement, songs, nursery rhymes, dance, etc.  Small Group Time (teacher and para will break up into two small groups): Monday – ELA Tuesday – Math Thursday – Science Friday – SEL (Social and Emotional Learning)	Synchronous--Live with teacher video

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm	Lunch/Nap Time for Children	
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm	<p>Outside Time/Work Time (flexibility):</p> <p>Children can work independently on assigned tasks</p> <p>Children can engage in hands on activities and creative arts (i.e. painting, finger painting, drawing, playdough, collaging)</p> <p>Children can develop their large muscles by going outside or to the park to run, jump, play ball, ride a tricycle, etc.</p> <p>Children can engage in mindfulness strategies, yoga, and stress release activities</p> <p>Teachers are available to meet and to provide extra support to children as necessary</p>	Asynchronous--Independently

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING:** Social-emotional skills help children to persist on challenging tasks, to effectively seek help when they need it and to be thoughtful in their actions. Additionally, a developmentally appropriate preschool with a focus on social and emotional learning will assist children with developing a positive attitude toward school, positive social behavior, higher academic performance, decrease in emotional issues, and challenging behaviors. Children need to be taught social and emotional skills and to have opportunities to practice these skills in much the same way that they learn how to read and solve math problems. These efforts come with a big payoff, as strong social emotional skills can help children in a wide variety of social and academic settings for years to come.

There are five core skills that are widely recognized as critical social-emotional skills:

- Self-awareness – the ability to recognize your emotions and understand the links between emotions, thoughts and behaviors.
- Self-management – the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviors.
- Social awareness – the ability to take other’s perspectives and demonstrate empathy.
- Relationship – the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships.
- Responsible decision making – the ability to make good choices about your behavior and interactions with others.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT (PBS):** PBS provides a process to understand and resolve the problem behavior of individuals or children that is based on values and empirical research. It offers an approach to develop an understanding of why the child engages in problem behavior and strategies to prevent the occurrence of problem behavior while teaching the child new skills. Positive behavior support offers a holistic approach that considers all factors that have an impact on a child and the

child's behavior. It can be used to address problem behaviors that range from aggression, tantrums, and property destruction to social withdrawal.

The Pyramid Model - The Pyramid Model builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them.

- Tiers of the Pyramid Model

Tier 1: Universal Promotion – strategies are used for all children

Tier 2: Secondary Prevention practices that are targeted social and emotional strategy to prevent problems

Tier 3: Tertiary intervention comprised of practices related to individualized intensive interventions

SEL will be integrated into our delivery of instruction daily and throughout the school year. To help children problem solve, teachers will use solution cards, social stories, books, the High Scope conflict resolution steps, and Tucker Turtle.

**ASSESSMENT**: The Child Observation Record (COR) is the performance-based assessment model for all district and community preschool classrooms. The Preschool COR assessment is based on six child development categories that represent broad domains of child development: I. Initiative II. Social Relations III. Creative Representation IV. Movement and Music V. Language and Literacy VI. Mathematics and Science. The teaching staff spend a few minutes each day writing brief notes that describe what children say & do and how they behave in various situations. The COR is completed in the course of everyday activities, and is a true reflection on what the children can do. Therefore, the assessment is seamlessly integrated with teaching and planning. Teachers compile and analyze the notes to provide a comprehensive portrait of each child's developmental gains as well as the progress of the group as a whole. The information gained will assist teachers with planning appropriate activities/lessons for the children. Child progress is shared with parents twice per year.

In Class Assessment – teachers will observe and collect anecdotal notes as much as possible when children are in school.

Virtual Assessment – where applicable, teachers will use google classroom to observe children and take anecdotal notes while children perform learning tasks in front of the teacher in each of the identified COR indicators.

**THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**: According to the High/Scope Curriculum, “young children need space to use materials, explore, create, and solve problems; space to spread out, move around, talk freely about what they are doing; space to work alone and with others; space to store their belongings and display their inventions; and space for adults to join them in support of their intentions

and interests.” Therefore, the classrooms are divided into well-defined and labeled interest areas with simple names: sand & water area, block area, house area, toy area, art area, book and writing area, music & movement area, computer area, etc.

**THE DAILY ROUTINE:** Establishing a routine helps provide children with a consistent schedule of events for the day. It also helps adults organize their time to ensure challenging learning experiences.

Elements of the High/Scope daily routine include:

- Greeting Time (children are greeted and welcomed)
- Morning Message (message are written on the board using a combination of pictures and words)
- Small Group Time (the class breaks up into two small groups)
- Large Group Time (the children are all together)
- Planning Time (children be given the opportunity to plan what they will do for work time)
- Work Time (children will work on their plans in the different interest areas and teachers will observe, support and assist the children as they work, explore, inquire, create, etc.)
- Recall Time (children share their work time experiences)
- Meal Time(s) (children and teachers eat all meals and snack family style in the classrooms at the tables)
- Outside Time (children will go outside everyday weather permitting)
- The daily routine used in our preschool programs allows for one hour of rest time per day. Due to the modified schedule, naps will occur at home instead of school.

### Sample Schedule for 2.5 Hours of Instruction

Activity	8:45-11:15 AM Cohort 1 & 3	12:30-3:00 PM Cohort 2 & 4	Minutes
Greeting Time	8:45-9:00	12:30-12:45	15
Small Group	9:00-9:20	12:45-1:05	20
Planning Time	9:20-9:25	1:05-1:10	5
Work Time	9:25-10:10	1:10-1:50	45
Clean Up	10:10-10:15	1:50-1:55	5
Recall	10:15-10:20	1:55-2:00	5
Outside	10:20-10:40	2:00-2:20	20
Handwashing	10:40-10:50	2:20-2:30	10

Large Group	10:50-11:10	2:30-2:55	20
Dismissal	11:15	3:00	

**FIELD TRIPS:** Preschool programs can be enriched through the inclusion of carefully planned field trips. Field trips provide children with a level of understanding that adds to the realism of their play and enriches their overall learning. Field Trips are:

- Educational
- Appropriate for all ages
- Supports the goals of the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards and the High Scope Curriculum’s Key Developmental Indicators
- Teachers plan pre and post activities to support children’s learning

**Due to the current pandemic – field trips will be prohibited, but children will take at least two virtual field trips.**

**CLOTHING:** Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing, and other vigorous activity, and that is appropriate for the weather. Because the children work with paint, clay and other fun materials, they should wear clothes that can be laundered easily.

- For the safety of all of our students, we ask that children wear sneakers or other rubber soled shoes. Flip-flops, sandals and dress shoes are dangerous for running, jumping and climbing.
- A complete change of clothes is essential. Please label all clothing with your child’s name. The extra set of clothing will be stored at school. We ask that each student have a small container (i.e. shoe box) filled with a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants/skirt, T-shirt, underwear, socks). It is not unusual for preschoolers to occasionally soil their clothing due to illness or accident. Please check your child’s extra clothing box periodically to be sure that the content still fits and are season appropriate. All clothing must be labeled. If your child is not yet toilet trained, you must provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing at all times. You must also provide the diapers and wipes needed.
- One of the most important skills Preschoolers learn is to manage their own clothing. Please try to dress your child in clothing he can manage on his own. Please label your child’s jackets and coats with his or her first and last name. Sometimes items look very similar and it is difficult for a child to distinguish his or her coat from that of a classmate.

**TOYS FROM HOME:** We ask that our Preschoolers please do not bring toys from home into the classroom. While we understand that young children often are excited to bring in special toys from home, we do not want their precious treasures to be misplaced or accidentally broken. Each classroom is full of toys and materials for our children to use on a daily basis. If, by chance, a child does bring a home toy to school, she/he will be asked to keep it safely in her cubby until the end of the day. In the event that your child borrows a toy from school, please have them return it the next day.

**CELEBRATIONS:** The celebration of birthdays and other special events will be celebrated in developmentally appropriate ways for preschoolers. It is important to take into account the many different perspectives on holidays and what they mean to the communities, families and children that we serve in our schools. Guided by the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, celebrations are educational as well as fun.

- Birthdays - School birthday celebrations can be fun, academic, and still leave children beaming with birthday delight! Parents should check with the teacher to create a celebration that fits in with the school day while making your child feel special. The school and the teachers will make each child feel valued and special on his/her birthday, but keep to everyone safe, outside food, party favors, and visitors will be prohibited.
- End Of Year - Our end of the year celebrations are meaningful times for our children and families. It is important to celebrate children's accomplishments. This time also brings closure to our children's time together as many move to kindergarten.
- Please check with your child's teachers for other types of celebrations that may occur in your child's classroom throughout the school year.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:** Statistics show that the earlier family members get involved in a young child's educational experience, the greater the educational success of the child. Families and culture are celebrated in our school. Family involvement and connectedness is an integral piece of what makes our program strong. All parent meetings will be held virtually.

**FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES:** The district holds at least two family/teacher conferences per year. The purposes of such conferences are to involve the family in the progress of their child as well as discuss any concerns the family or teacher may have. The conferences are scheduled during convenient times for families to attend. If you have difficulty scheduling a time conference time, please speak with your child's teacher and make alternative plans to meet. Do not pass up the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher. **Due to the current pandemic, all family/teacher conferences and other parent meetings will be conducted virtually.**

**MONTHLY FAMILY EVENTS:** Family events are held at the school approximately each month to give families an opportunity to come together to learn and share information with one another. These events are usually related to the curriculum, financial information, health, community resources, etc.

**FAMILY VOLUNTEERS:** Because of the health and safety concerns posed by the current pandemic, volunteering in the school or classroom is prohibited. However, there are other ways to volunteer. Volunteering is a great way to model positive social interactions and to demonstrate a genuine interest in your child's education. Possible volunteering opportunities include but are not limited to:

- assisting with activities/lessons at home
- reading stories virtually to class
- sharing your favorite family snacks virtually
- collecting materials and supplies for your child to use at home such as, acorns, tops, leaves, dress-up clothes, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
- Attending or planning parent workshops (virtually)

- Participating in various school committees (virtually)

Please check with your child's teacher and sign up to become a volunteer.

**COMPLETING AND RETURNING FORMS:** Throughout the school year there will be forms sent home for you to complete and return to the school. It is important for you to complete the forms and send them back. Some of the forms that you will complete are as follows: Family update (this is sent home twice per year), Community Needs Assessment, Mid Year and End of the Year Parent Surveys, Kindergarten Transition Survey, health screening follow up forms, etc. Completing and returning forms is a form of volunteering; however, the information on the forms allows us to assess the delivery of services that we provide as well as maintaining a quality preschool program.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL:** The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) was established to give all those who are interested in the educational success of the children in the Orange Township Public Schools an avenue to learn and share information and experiences that are beneficial to the children. The council is comprised of school personnel, families, and community stakeholders. The council meets to discuss the needs of the program, challenges and successes of our preschool children. We encourage our families who want to have their voices heard to inform your child's teacher or social worker that you are interested in participating in the council. We will conduct our meetings virtually for the 2020-2021 school year.

**PREK-3 TRANSITION COMMITTEE:** The formation of the preschool-kindergarten transition committee came as a result of the Early Childhood Program and the district's elementary schools recognizing the importance of providing our preschoolers entering kindergarten with a seamless transition. This committee is composed of representatives of all the elementary schools, staff from the Early Childhood department, community stakeholders and parents. The events that will be planned will enhance the communication among all grade levels. The goal will be to strengthen the connection between home, school, and the community. If you are interested in participating in this committee, please speak with your child's teacher or the school's counselor. We will conduct our meetings virtually for the 2020-2021 school year.

**SELF CARE FOR ADULTS:** Self-care habits help us stay healthy and at the top of our game. Because self-care and mental health are connected, neglecting one can have a negative impact on the other. Sometimes, stress or burnout may become severe enough that you cannot overcome it on your own. In this case, one of the best self-care steps you can take is seek counseling or another form of professional help. A professional can help you figure out how to practice self-care in manageable ways.

The following are resources for self-care strategies.

Teach from Home:	<a href="https://hereforhealthyschools.lysol.com/teach-from-home.html?utm_source=&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=&amp;ref=006304569">https://hereforhealthyschools.lysol.com/teach-from-home.html?utm_source=&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=&amp;ref=006304569</a>
Special Education Resources- Learning at Home:	<a href="https://www.simplyspecialed.com/5-resources-for-at-homelearning/?fbclid=IwAR3PEv045bm10pBajUF_Xo4VFqASIRuDkEGIPxFY8cLav6VPJgjp3STU8eY">https://www.simplyspecialed.com/5-resources-for-at-homelearning/?fbclid=IwAR3PEv045bm10pBajUF_Xo4VFqASIRuDkEGIPxFY8cLav6VPJgjp3STU8eY</a>
Support Grieving Students (for staff):	<a href="https://grievingstudents.org/">https://grievingstudents.org/</a>
Supporting Kids from a Distance (for staff):	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD_k7O1i8-U&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD_k7O1i8-U&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Summer Guide to Staying Mentally Fit:	<a href="https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/giving/on-our-sleeves/get-involved/advocate/summer-mental-fitness">https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/giving/on-our-sleeves/get-involved/advocate/summer-mental-fitness</a>
10 Ways to Show Yourself Love:	<a href="https://youtu.be/8io1elnqZs">https://youtu.be/8io1elnqZs</a>
Virtual Field Trips - Bringing SEL to Life:	<a href="https://www.soarwithwings.com/videos/virtual-field-trip">https://www.soarwithwings.com/videos/virtual-field-trip</a>
Teacher Self-Care Seminar:	<a href="https://mhffcnetwork.org/centers/great-lakes-mhffc/event/happy-teachers-practice-self-care">https://mhffcnetwork.org/centers/great-lakes-mhffc/event/happy-teachers-practice-self-care</a>
Why Teacher Self-Care Matters and How to Practice Self-Care in Your School:	<a href="https://www.waterford.org/education/teacher-self-care-activities/">https://www.waterford.org/education/teacher-self-care-activities/</a>

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM--Gifted and Talented

**New Jersey Code for Gifted and Talented Services** *New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:8-3.1* defines students who are gifted and talented as those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

The *N.J.A.C.* requires that students be compared to their chronological peers in the local school district. The New Jersey Department of Education has not established state-level criteria for identifying students who are gifted, such as mandated tests or assessments, grade point averages, or IQ scores. Local school districts must use **multiple measures** to identify students.

According to the **Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act** that was signed by Gov. Phil Murphy on Jan. 17, 2020, the law effective July 1, 2020 requires

- that each school district report the number of students identified as gifted by grade level and the number of teachers/administrators whose job includes identification of and services to gifted students.
- multiple services should be provided and the identification of gifted students should match the services provided
- a report by each district of policies, procedures, timelines for identification and instructional adaptations made for gifted students in a continuum of services for all levels K-12, including professional development for staff.
- modifies the goal of meeting the NJSLS to match the student's instructional level.
- provide equity for all students for the application process to include English language learners, students with 504s and students with IEPs.

Students who are identified as "twice-exceptional" may have learning disabilities that mask their giftedness. These students may require different identification methods and program modifications to reach their full potential. It should not be assumed that students with disabilities cannot participate in gifted and talented programs.

*N.J.A.C.* requires that district boards of education provide appropriate K-12 services for students identified as gifted and talented. This includes appropriate curricular and instructional modifications indicating content, process, products, and/or learning environments. District boards of education must also consider the [PreK-Grade 12 National Gifted Program Standards](#) of the National Association for Gifted Children in developing programs for gifted and talented students. The standards are available at [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org).

*Out of state....*

N.J.A.C. does not set requirements regarding the identification of gifted and talented students. The measures that are used for the identification process are determined by the local school district. Therefore, a school district is not obligated to accept the evaluation from another state, school district, or independent service.

## **OVERVIEW**

Although there is no universal definition for the gifted and talented and/or talented child the Orange Public Schools has adopted the Federal definition:

*“Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high academic achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.”*

The following are the steps required for the selection of students to attend the Scholars Academy Gifted and Talented program. The program is designed to address the intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership needs of the student that requires specialized instruction based on higher order thinking skills to allow for him/her to meet their academic potential. The program is open to all children regardless of their academic placement. This includes students with IEPs and in the Bilingual/ESL program. Please note that behavior is not a criterion for selection.

### **The Scholars Academy GT Program:**

Once a week students in grades 1-5 who meet the criteria for the program will be bussed to Scholars Academy for a full day of instruction as indicated below:

<b>Day of the Week</b>	<b>Grades</b>
Monday	5th
Tuesday	4th
Wednesday	3rd
Thursday	1st-2nd

## **COVID-19 SCHEDULE FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>Day of the Week</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Time for Synchronous Instruction via Google Classroom or Google Meet</b>	<b>Asynchronous Instruction (Working Independently) will occur on the other days of the week. This will provide the adequate time for students to get their GT projects and assignments completed over a</b>
Monday	1st	1:15-2:45 pm	
Tuesday	2nd	1:15-2:45 pm	
Wednesday	3rd	1:15-2:45 pm	

Thursday	4th	1:15-2:45 pm	<b>week's span similar to the previous routine.</b>
Friday	5th	1:15-2:45 pm	

**NOMINATION TIMELINE AND PROCESS**

Nominations from teachers, administrators, and parents will be accepted in April and May.

**Step 1:**

Staff or Parent recommendation with the submission of the following forms:

- Recommendation form
- Updated report card
- NJSLA-Math and NJSLA-ELA scores (grades 4 and up) inputted on Recommendation form
- GATES form of GT characteristics with final score
- Work samples demonstrating the student's high academic areas (copies only)
- Parent recommendation form with signature for authorization of NNAT3 assessment (Nonverbal assessment) A parent permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian before a student can be formally assessed, identified, and services provided to a student.

All forms are submitted to the Administration of the Gifted and Talented program by the designated date. Applications are usually due in May which permits the administration of the NNAT3 assessment in June. **Incomplete applications will not be processed.**

**Step 2:**

A folder is created for each applicant to include all application forms.

Applicants are scheduled by the Gifted and Talented test coordinator for the administration of the NNAT3 assessment (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test) at their home school in June.

**Step 3:**

Once all applicants who have completed applications (all forms and the NNAT3) are reviewed for meeting the criteria of the program.

Acceptance into the program includes meeting 5 out of the 6 criteria below:

- Having A's or B's in all content areas on their report cards
- Having a Stanine score of 7 or higher on the NNAT3
- Work samples demonstrate higher academic achievement
- Parent referral
- Teacher referral
- NJSLA-Math and NJSLA-ELA scores of level 4 or 5

Note: A nonverbal test of mental reasoning ability such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test will be given to all students as part of the application process. Most children's scores will fall between 90 and 110. Scores in

this range are considered to be average. Fewer children will have scores that fall between 70 and 89, or between 111 and 130, and an extremely small number of children will have scores that fall below 70 or above 130. The criteria includes having a score of 110 or higher which is within the Stanine score of 7 or higher, and 75 or higher in the percentile rank.

Letters are sent to parents regarding the acceptance or non-acceptance into the program in June for the new school year enrollment.

Acceptance letters receive the following documents that must be returned back to the Administrator of the Gifted and Talented program in order for the student to start the program. Documents include:

- Acceptance letter
- Transportation permission form
- GT contract
- Medical form
- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) form
- Media Release form

Non-acceptance students may request another review of the application process by the parent/guardian which includes a meeting with the administrator of the GT program.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS:**

If a student transfers into the district during the summer, students may apply for the Scholars Academy program with the following documents. All materials must be sent to the Gifted and Talented administrator by September 30th. Students who transfer into the district throughout the year, may apply to the program and it will be at the discretion of the Gifted and Talented administrator for the timeline for processing the application.

- Parent referral
- Previous report cards from prior school
- State assessment scores if applicable
- Work samples

### **WITHDRAWAL OR EXITING THE PROGRAM:**

Parents must meet with the administrator to discuss the concerns regarding withdrawing a student from the Gifted and Talented program. Students cannot withdraw from the program nor can a home school teacher withdrawal a student from the program.

Students home school report cards and progress reports are monitored throughout the year. A student who is not meeting the criteria as outlined in the Gifted and Talented contract will meet with the Gifted and Talented administrator to assess the concerns. Parents will also be contacted to address the concerns. Students may be exited from the program should their home school grades indicate D's or F's. The purpose of this program is to enhance the learning process, not hinder other academic areas.

### **SCHOOL LIAISONS**

**Liaison:** A staff member at the home school responsible for direct communication with the Gifted and Talented administrator; monitors/supervises students dismissal and arrival from Scholars Academy; point person for parents to obtain information about the GT program.

Responsibilities for sending students to Scholars' Academy:

- Take attendance on sheet for students getting on the bus.
- Give attendance sheet to Bus Driver.
- Verify the number of students getting on the bus.
- Contact with Scholars' Academy administration or secretary regarding students not attending SA for that day. For example, student is absent or on a field trip.

Receiving students from Scholars' Academy:

- Meet them at the bus to receive the list from the Bus Aide or Driver.
- Verify the number and name of students getting off the bus.
- Students return to class.
- Keep attendance sheet for school records.

Other responsibilities include:

- Assist with getting the information out to the staff regarding applications for Scholars' Academy due in May.
- Forward the applications to Scholars' Academy by the assigned due date.
- Read and respond to email communications from Scholars' Academy Principal or Secretary. (Principals and Assistant Principals are usually cc'd on all email communication to keep them abreast of information.)

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PROCEDURES**

The Orange Board of Education provides bus transportation to all Scholars' Academy students. Under certain situations, parents may sign in their child with the Scholars' Academy Secretary so they can attend Scholars'. If the student does not get on the bus in the morning from their home school, alternative transportation will not be available. Promptness at the home school is essential.

### **Picking up students early**

1. If your child needs to be picked early from the Scholars' Academy, please send the teacher a written request. The child will be dismissed to the office and you or another adult must sign him/her out from the office. **NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO GO HOME EARLY UNATTENDED. The adult who is picking up the child MUST be listed as an approved adult for pick up on the emergency card at the child's home school AND have a picture ID. Students will not be released to any adult who is not authorized and listed on record at the child's home school.**
2. If someone other than the parent is picking up the child, a signed note from the parent must be in the office, and identification must be presented to be copied and filed with the note.

The process and procedure for monitoring student attendance at Scholars' Academy begins with attendance sheets giving to all school liaisons for them to take attendance each morning. Prior to students getting on the bus, the liaison (or school designee) is to check off who is getting on the bus. A photocopy of that list is to be made: one going to Scholars' Academy and the other remaining at the home school.

Once the bus arrives at Scholars' Academy, the staff receives the attendance sheet indicating who is on the bus attending the program. Attendance is taken again in the gym, photocopied, and one copy is given to the Principal with the other copy remaining with the staff.

At dismissal from Scholars' Academy, the staff uses the attendance sheet from the morning and calls each student from that list to get on the bus. The original sheets that were from the home school are also given back to the bus aide or driver and they return it to the staff member upon their return to their home school.

In the event that a student is picked up early at Scholars Academy, the home school secretary is notified who was picked up so they are aware and can adjust their records. On the opposite side, if a student arrives at Scholars' Academy late from a parent, the home school is notified so they can update their records as the student being present.

It is the expectation that the school liaison or designee takes attendance each morning for Scholars' Academy students, supervises them until the bus arrives, supervises them onto the bus, supervises them upon their return from Scholars' Academy, and verifies the list of students who have returned from Scholars' Academy. Students are not responsible for taking attendance at any time.

### **COVID-19 ADJUSTMENT**

For students' safety, to limit the amount of movement, and contact with others, students will not be transported to Scholars Academy for the 2020-2021 school year. They will receive virtual instruction via Google Classroom and ClassDojo. See the schedule above for instructional times.

### **CURRICULUM**

The Orange Scholars' Academy Gifted and Talented program recognizes that there are students who require differentiated programs and services beyond the core curriculum because of their advanced abilities in one or more of the following areas: specific aptitudes in Mathematics, Science, and related technical skills associated with the STEAM disciplines. These students also possess differential cognitive and affective characteristics such as curiosity, creativity, passion, and drive that require educational responses geared to their needs. Moreover, Scholars' Academy recognizes that gifted students may come from underrepresented groups that include diverse ethnic backgrounds, learning and physical disabilities, and non-native English speakers. These students also represent a range of giftedness within and across areas of instruction, dictating the need for more individualized approaches to be employed in working with them.

The Scholars' Academy learning environment for the gifted provides student-centered learning, and safe risk-taking in order to enhance the potential for creative production in their areas of strength and passion. Scholars' Academy believes that these students should have a focused and articulated educational program, designed to maximize their academic strengths and to enhance personal and social growth. The program incorporates going beyond 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and addresses academic needs for advanced instruction that are challenging, hands-on, relevant to real-world issues and problems, and encourages students to develop projects that are innovative. It encourages the development of higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills as well as the metacognitive skills that promote self-awareness of learning needs.

These guiding principles influence the program in its design, development, and implementation; and focus on the importance of flexibility in the provision of services. They ensure that top students in the core domains of Math and Science who could benefit have access to high-level learning opportunities at the Academy. English Language Arts is embedded throughout the program with reading and writing activities.

Detailed elements of the gifted and talented curriculum in Math, Science, and STEAM are available at [www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/2154](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/2154). Elements include objectives, NAGC standards, state standards, duration of lessons, topics covered, grade level, and authentic assessments.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Student progress reports are sent home twice a year after the 2nd and 4th marking periods. Parent teacher conferences are available at any time of the year. Students provide a reflection of their growth using the 4C's of 21st Century Learning skills: Collaboration, Creativity, Communication, and Critical Thinking.

### **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The Gifted and Talented Administrator shall coordinate the annual, ongoing process of evaluating all aspects of the Gifted and Talented services and make recommendations for upgrading those areas that could use improvement. Data collected in the annual evaluation shall be used to review the program and results of the evaluation shall be presented for review of instructional progress. The program evaluation process shall address:

- Overall student progress;
- Student, parent, and faculty attitudes toward the program;
- Community involvements;
- Overall quality of instruction and program personnel credentials; and
- Future program directions and modifications.

### **STAFFING**

The administrative and teaching staff for the gifted and talented program meet all the state criteria of highly qualified staff in their respective fields. Staff receive ongoing professional development through their memberships of New Jersey Association of Gifted Children (NJAGC), National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC), content specific professional organizations, district content training, and various current publications regarding best practices in gifted and talented education. Staff are also supported by the district with their enrollment into the Rutgers Gifted and Talented Online Certification program. Staff are mandated to meet the state requirement of 20 hours of professional development each year and the implementation of their professional development plan. Staff are also responsible and evaluated on Student Growth Objectives (SGOs).

Professional Associations

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/gandt/assoc.htm>

Professional Development

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/gandt/profdev.htm>

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

Extension activities are an extension of the work and academic growth that is expected of students who attend the Scholars' Academy Gifted/Talented program. Extension activities will be posted via , Google Classroom, Class Dojo, and discussed with students. Parents are asked to make sure children complete their extension activities independently, neatly, and correctly. Projects in various areas will be assigned at specific intervals throughout the year. These long term assignments will require students to efficiently budget their time in order to complete assignments as expected.

### **Students are expected to:**

1. Make sure they understand the assignment, its purpose, due date and how it should be done prior to leaving class.
2. Develop a personal system for recording and keeping track of daily assignments.
3. Remember to take home appropriate materials necessary for the completion of all extension assignments.
4. Organize their after-school schedule so as to provide sufficient time to complete all extension assignments.
5. Turn in all assignments on time and in proper form, assure neatness.
6. Do their own assignments.
7. Arrange with the teacher to make up assignments missed due to illness or other circumstances.

## **DRESS CODE**

Believing that school dress can significantly influence student behavior, the students attending the Gifted and Talented program will comply with the district's uniform dress code.

**Boys-** White or light blue polo or oxford shirt, navy blue (grades K – 4) or khaki (grades 5 – 7 only) pants, navy blue sweater, tie is optional.

**Girls-** White or light blue polo or oxford Shirt, navy blue (grades K – 4) or khaki (grades 5 – 7 only) skirt, skort, or dress jumper, or pants. White or blue tights or socks, navy blue sweater.

## **BACKPACKS**

Students are allowed to carry backpacks, slingback backpacks, cinch sacks, bags and purses to and from school. Students must place these items in their designated area before the start of the school day. Their name must be written on their belongings.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOR/CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Orange School District expects students to adhere to a “code of conduct” which has been fully outlined in Board Policy #5600 and Regulation #5600. Parents can request a copy of the policy and regulation at any time. All staff members have received and reviewed both and will implement the guidance found in each.

Based on the Orange School District board policy, the district has a code of conduct to ensure that each individual can thrive securely and safely.

Part of the growing process is the recognition of such rules and learning to live by them. Students are expected to:

- Be considerate.
- Be courteous and use good manners.
- Respect the work and opinions of others.
- Respect and care for materials and property.
- Follow safety rules.
- Be responsible for their own actions.

We expect that all of our students will demonstrate respect for every individual and the school itself. Disruptive behavior, either verbal or physical is unacceptable. If such incidents occur, students will be made aware of the consequences and held accountable.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Student misbehavior is handled directly by the classroom teacher and/or adult responsible for student supervision at the time of the occurrence.

All adults will discuss the student misbehavior with all concerned parties and assist students in resolving their concern(s) in a peaceful manner whereby all parties accept responsibility for their individual actions and understand what is expected of their behavior in the future.

*However, any student interaction that results in a physical and/or significant verbal altercation, disrupting and/or creating an unsafe learning environment, will be referred immediately to an administrator (with a discipline notice) for resolution.* The administrator will contact the parent(s) of all students involved and if deemed necessary, will schedule a meeting between all involved students and their parents.

Per the state requirement, Scholars Academy follows the process and procedure regarding Restorative Justice strategies which enhances accountability, community safety, and competency development.

- **Accountability.** Restorative justice strategies provide opportunities for wrongdoers to be accountable to those they have harmed, and enable them to repair the harm they caused to the extent possible.
- **Community safety.** Restorative justice recognizes the need to keep the community safe through strategies that build relationships and empower the community to take responsibility for the well-being of its members.
- **Competency development.** Restorative justice seeks to increase the pro-social skills of those who have harmed others, address underlying factors that lead youth to engage in delinquent behavior, and build on strengths in each young person.

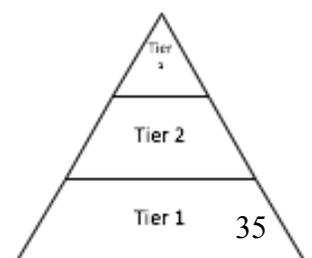
Refer to the district’s Student Code of Conduct provided to each student and posted on the website for more information.

**DISCIPLINE STEP PROCEDURE**

First and foremost, refer to the Student Code of Conduct District information booklet. The following is the procedure for offenses that disrupt normal school functioning. Major offenses may result in a suspension and/or recommendation for Administrative Hearing at any time, depending on the severity.

**Tier One:**

- Teacher conferences with student and documents student behavior.



- Teacher documents student behaviors and determines appropriate intervention strategies. Teacher contacts parents and possibly the counselor and administration.

**Tier Two:**

- Teacher refers student to the administration on a referral form and parents are contacted. This indicates that the student has not responded to Tier One interventions in the classroom.
- Referrals will result in a conference with the student/parent and assignment of a consequence determined by the administration. A review of Tier One interventions and alternate strategies may be considered by the administration and the teacher.
- For severe deviant behavior, incorrigibility, or repeated violations, the student may be temporarily suspended from school for a period of one to five (1-5) days by Administration.
- Continued referrals may result in progression to Tier Three

**Tier Three:**

- When the student does not respond to interventions, an Administrative Hearing will be requested for a further action plan.

**BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

According to Board Policy #5512, “The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

1. Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or
2. By any other distinguishing characteristics; and
3. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
4. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

“Electronic communication” means communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager. Acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may also be a pupil exercising power and control over another pupil, either in isolated incidents (e.g., intimidation, harassment) or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior (e.g., bullying).”

All Scholars' Academy staff are committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for all. Students learn best when they feel comfortable and safe among their peers. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated and will be addressed by all staff.

If a student feels they are the subject of bullying/teasing/harassment, they should report this immediately to their parent(s), classroom teacher and/or a school staff member or family member they trust. Once it is reported, the state regulations for Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) procedures will be conducted to include:

- An investigation to determine the specific nature of the teasing/bullying/harassment and make a note of the findings
- Parents/Guardians of the students involved will be informed about the investigation, the findings, and resolution to the matter.

It is our intention to determine the root cause for the bullying behavior and work with all concerned to resolve in a manner that is beneficial and restores a safe and risk free learning environment for all students.

### **FOOD SERVICES**

Breakfast is served to all students in PreK to 5th grade. For the students in the Gifted and Talented program, they receive breakfast at their home schools based upon individual school schedules. The lunch program is open to all students and utilizes a rotating lunch menu, which is distributed to all students at their home school. Students may purchase lunch at Scholars' Academy or may bring their lunch from home. **Lunch applications will be provided at each home school and it is expected that the forms be returned to the home schools.**

**Dietary restrictions must receive medical documentation which will be submitted to Food Services for review to see if accommodations can be made.**

The following rules are expected to be observed in the cafeteria:

- 1) Students are expected to walk in the cafeteria.
- 2) Conversational tones are acceptable.
- 3) The tables and floors are to be kept clean. Garbage must be placed in wastebaskets.
- 4) Students are expected to be courteous and use table manners during lunch. Any infraction of the rules listed above may result in disciplinary action.
- 5) Lunches brought from home should
  - A. avoid glass containers,
  - B. avoid unhealthy snacks and beverages such as soda,
  - C. **will not** be refrigerated or warmed up by staff.

### **COVID-19 ADJUSTMENTS**

The District continues to provide packaged ‘Grab-and-Go’ breakfast and lunch, during all virtual/remote phases at no cost to families, at multiple locations for pick up. The selected locations are

- OECC (includes students from Cleveland Street School), located 397 Park Avenue
- Scholars Academy, located at 268 Capuchin Way
- Forest Street School, located 651 Forest Street
- Heywood Avenue School, located at 421 Heywood Avenue
- Lincoln Avenue School, 216 Lincoln Avenue
- Oakwood Avenue School, located at 135 Oakwood Avenue
- Park Avenue School, located at 231 Park Avenue
- Rosa Parks Community School, located at 369 Main Street

Serving times for BOTH breakfast and lunch are organized by last name:

A-F: 7:30am – 8:00am (tentative time)

G-L: 8:00am – 8:30am (tentative time)

M-R: 8:30am – 9:00am (tentative time)

S-Z: 9:00am – 9:30am (tentative time)

Please be reminded of the importance of social distancing when reporting to all locations. It is important to note, once students receive their breakfast/lunch grab and go bags it is the expectation to return to their respective homes.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students will use electronic communication or data devices only in a manner consistent with instructional and testing activities in the classroom. These devices include, but are not limited to, handheld calculators, music playing devices, one-to-one computing devices, cameras, and laptop computers. Use of these devices must not violate any district policy or cause classroom disruption nor may they be used in the access, creation, or possession of inappropriate materials. Use of electronic devices in the classroom is at the discretion of the teacher and/or building administrator. Parents or students who bring any electronic device to school or to a school activity do so at their own risk – **Orange School District and Scholars’ Academy assume no liability for damage, theft, etc.** Videotaping or taking pictures are prohibited on campus unless approved by building administration. If the policies are violated, administrators will determine consequences based on the severity of the incident and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, on the first offense the device may be confiscated until a parent/guardian retrieves it from the front office/administration. District policy #5516 states, *Pupils are not permitted to use cellular telephones while school is in session. Cellular telephones must be **turned off** (not on vibrate) while the pupil is in the school building and may only be turned on after school has concluded for the day and outside the school building. Cellular telephones that are turned on are in violation of this policy will be confiscated by the Building Principal and the pupil will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include in and/or out of school suspension. Additionally, on the first offense the device may be confiscated until a parent picks it up. Students can request use of a telephone in the main office to contact their parent and/or guardian before, during and after school hours.*



If the policies are violated, administrators will determine consequences based on the severity of the incident and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct handbook.

### **Technology Guidelines/Internet Use**

All students and parents are required to sign an “**Acceptable Use**” policy statement prior to any student given access to our computer and internet services. This policy outlines the responsibilities of both students and parents in ensuring the safe use of equipment, searching functions, and computer internet safety. Students are provided numerous opportunities to utilize computers in their classroom and in our computer lab. Students will also be given the opportunity to use technology for homework assignments, written reports, and various other types of projects.

## **STUDENT AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **GIFTED AND TALENTED ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Our GT Advisory Committee is an organization of staff, parents, and administration to address the unique needs of gifted and talented children. The purpose of the GTAC is to stay abreast of current educational trends, stay connected to the happenings at Scholars’ Academy, and make connections within the community. Parents must be enrolled in Classdojo to receive updates regarding GTAC and check their child’s folder and backpack for flyers which will also be posted online. **All meetings will be held virtually for this school year.**

### **ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS**

Throughout the year, there are a variety of academic competitions to provide opportunities for the students in the Gifted and Talented program to become academically challenged in competitions. It is highly encouraged that students participate in these activities when they arise to excel and strengthen their academic drive and determination and to challenge themselves. It is also the expectation that parents will support the competitions with participation and assisting the student as needed with practice sessions and meeting the criteria for the competition when applicable. **All competitions for this school year will be held virtually.**

### **FIELD TRIPS**

A standard walking trip parental permission request will be sent home for parents to sign and return to the student’s teacher; giving the child permission to accompany his/her class on a walking trip.

Field trips requiring buses must be approved by the Board of Education. Parents will receive a permission slip with the purpose of the trip for approval at least two weeks prior to the trip from the homeroom teacher or the teacher that is supervising the trip.

In order to assure that students derive the greatest educational benefit from class trips and in order to assure the safety of all students participating, the following is required:

1. A signed field trip request with the signature of a parent or guardian must be returned no later than one week prior to the trip.

2. Proper uniform attire (unless specified otherwise by classroom teacher) must be worn on all field trips.
3. Parents who would like to volunteer to chaperone field trips will receive a contract that specifically outlines the role and responsibilities of being a chaperone. Parents must understand that they are making a commitment when signing up to chaperone a trip due to student to adult safety ratios. Parents who do not show up or cancel without 72 hours notice will not be able to chaperone future trips.

**COVID-19 ADJUSTMENTS:** There will be no field trips for this school year. However, students will have the opportunity for virtual field trips and virtual guest speakers.

**NOTE:** Scholars' Academy reserves the right to make amendments to the policies and procedures in this handbook throughout the school based upon the needs of the students and the community. In the event of updates, parents will receive written notification from administration.